

Love Coach Lauren Frances:

The Bird Watcher

Lauren Frances, ex-life partner of "Simpsons" creator Matt Groening, works as a Love Coach in Los Angeles. The "Feminist in a Wonderbra" recently published a sex guide book, in which she likens men to birds such as an owl, eagle, or a vulture – and tells women how to care for them.

By Christine Kruttschnitt, Los Angeles

Lesson one. You're at a bar with your girl friends, a few guys hang around the counter, having lots of fun (loud laughter, puffed-up chest, etc.), but always surveying the territory with a slightly downcast glance. You're interested. You're ready. The guys pose, but nothing happens. What to do? „You do the following“, says Lauren Frances, and starts by lowering her long lashes halfway over her chocolate-mousse brown eyes, so she resembles a cat on a windowsill. She slightly cocks her head with the tousled, dark hair, purses her lips as if she were purring, then opens them into a soft, playful smile. She makes a sexy come-hither gesture with her index finger, as if she were roping in the testosterone-gang from the counter on an invisible string, and still manages, with this comical Marilyn-Monroe pose, to look like someone who's in a great mood, promises a lot of fun, and wears fabulous undies. (Note for beginners: Practice look and gesture in front of a mirror, or bar guests may call an ambulance for the poor short-sighted lady that's fanning herself and obviously close to a stroke...)

Enjoyable, life-long research

Lauren Frances Doesn't have to worry about the readability of her signals. She's a pro: She knows how to attract men, how to get rid of them, even how to train and adjust them, and how to notice when it's better to let them be. The American calls herself a "Love Coach" and shameless flirt artist, who claims to have gained and honed her abilities through enjoyable, life-long research. Even as a three-year old, she happily announces, admirers laid at her feet, and not just because they couldn't walk yet: "I was born to flirt." What better then, than to compile the results of her "studies" in a reference book. In the USA, where the rules of "dating" are more complicated than the voting system or the simple cohabitation of man and woman (or man and man, or woman and woman, or transsexual woman and transvestite man, or reversed) – where the daily romance is bombarded with general confusion: There, a sex-counselor is in high demand.

Target man: Lauren Frances knows how women can score the best hit.
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Of vultures, fledglings, and peacocks

And because there are so many of them, Lauren Frances – who was in a 6-year relationship with cartoonist and „Simpsons“ creator Matt Groening – thought of something comical: In her seduction guide she compares men with birds – an ornithological excursion into the world of vultures, fledglings, and peacocks; first she analyzes the mating behaviors, at the end follows a bit of bird knowledge. The Fledgling, Raising and Care. The Peacock, "Plumage: hair gel, more jewelry than you." The Long-tailed Bush Warbler, „Mating Ritual: When he says he plays nine holes, he's not talking about golf." You guessed it: "Dating, Mating, and Manhandling. The Ornithological Guide to Men" isn't exactly subtle, but that may stem from the heroine. The author – born end of the sixties in New Jersey as oldest daughter of a Jewish doctor couple – sees herself as a "Feminist in a Wonderbra", wants to help all women to "develop and act out their erotic power". She's not in the "woman-twiddles-thumbs" corner – will he call? Will he call? – but advises activism.

Flirting lessons in the restaurant

She lives with her white poodle-mix Penelope in an apartment in Los Angeles, just around the corner from a restaurant in which she gives flirting lessons. She shows up for the interview in a pink tunic even a

twelve-year old could wear (minus the impressive cleavage), and teeters on “flip flops” as she calls her approximate ten-centimeter high sandals. She swears by high heels. When she gives solo lessons to despairing singles she first enters their closet. “Men decide in the first second, whether they like a woman or not. Simply based on looks. Women are very different, they consider if the guy could be a serial killer or married. The right and left halves of their brain, logic and emotion, are practically connected by a six-lane highway. With men this connection is a seldom used gravel road”.

Just don't flirt like Snow White!

Lesson two. Finally the guy nears the table. Looks attentive, almost opens his mouth, you expectantly lower your eyes. He passes by. “That's Snow White flirting!” scolds Lauren Frances. „Snow White, as she lay in her coma. Most men don't see encouragement in a coma. Especially the nice ones think: Oh, she doesn't want me to chat her up, I'd better leave her alone. And we want the nice ones, don't we.” If Lauren – who moved out of her home and to Manhattan at sixteen, because of love – wasn't so charming, her tips might be considered pretty old-fashioned (“Pay him a compliment. Men love technical stuff. Comment on his watch”). Or men-hating –male readers consider their gender described as too simple; as underdeveloped species, to capture which is worth an inscrutable effort. Especially German women will ask what could be so damn difficult about making a date – because in the USA, the prey-principle applies, meaning only the hunter, HE can ask HER, not the other way around, never. And because the men often have to be carried to the hunt, teaches Lauren Frances to girls who are tired of waiting, to be equally hunter and prey. “They sit home alone and hope for the Happy Ending. Hope is totally overrated. Hope only makes you passive.

In a nutshell: “Many single women just sit at home and hope for the Happy Ending”, says Lauren Frances. But hope is completely overrated. “Hope only makes you passive”.

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How you establish eye contact with the hunter

Her clients are between 23 and 57 years old; the oldest currently has three candidates on her line. Lauren points out that she isn't just counselor, but her personnel – trainer in all things love-life: “I try to find the shortest way for them to evolve from the person they are to the person they aspire to be.” The pragmatist accompanies her clients to restaurants, shows them how to establish eye contact with the hunter (“Men like confident women that can look them in the eye”), and helps them to decipher Mating Rituals (“Men lie a lot, but always let slip a little truth about themselves. When they say something like: “I'm a little perverted” or “I live with my mom”, then she doesn't think it's meant as a joke. They are perverted. They are mama's boys. Hands off”).

Lesson three. What do you want from a man? That he's attractive and funny, kid- and animal friendly, patient and gentle, that he drives an Audi, knows Goethe, loves Italy, listens to Coldplay, eats Japanese...Make a list, says Lauren Frances. Write down your wishes. Then write down what you really need. And strike out everything that isn't on the second list.

Look for someone who has problems you can live with

Since she keeps a relationship column on the internet, women all over the world turn to her. Because they don't get any sex. Too much sex. Too little. Lauren – ex-model, ex-actress, ex-waitress, ex-rock singer – is at the brink of a new career: She wants to spread her message through a TV show. That will be called: We all have problems. Look for someone who has problems you can live with. Her most famous client is actress Kate Walsh (“Grey's Anatomy”), whose husband declared last year at the wedding that nothing impressed him as much as his bride's determination. “Right at the first meeting she asked me all these questions – how I feel about marriage, about kids. Wow, I thought, she doesn't hold back.” Bride and wedding guest Lauren Frances shared meaningful glances.

Does she dream of marriage? If he's the right one, she says. He, that's a rich New Yorker with whom she has a “hot relationship“, thank you very much. And she didn't entice him by crooking her index finger. Lauren Frances – of all people – was hooked up through friends. Last lesson. There is none. Because sometimes it just happens.

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