

Introduction

We are a mating species. We strut, preen, fluff our feathers, displaying our finest qualities in hopes of attracting the attention of, and seeking the reciprocal approval of, potential nesting partners. The particular currencies deployed by the parties to this microeconomic exchange differ widely across cultures and generations, but the striving is universal.

Reproductive sex is the near-term objective in the most primitive, animalistic sense, which we have shared with our fellow mammals and their Jurassic predecessors for the past 200 million years. Building on eons of reproductive success, natural selection has made our particular species' methods deeply instinctive, not just personal style or idiosyncratic habit. Our primeval mating behavior is now foundational to our modern social functioning.

But we want more.

Friendship, beyond sex, plays a crucial role in the mating process among humans (some other species also appear to have "special" friends and even monogamous mates). Few of us are content solely with one-night, or one-minute, stands. We want emotional depth and stability, ego support to weather life's ups and downs, trustworthy familiarity, convenient cohabitation, and other ingredients comprising the soup of happy partnership. We want to be liked, loved, and securely cared for, and to reciprocate those bonding delights.

Even most successful singles who relish their unobstructed freedom generally yearn, even if ambivalently, for the intimate companionship of a best friend, most conveniently a domestic partner. Exceptions and variants occur, which prove the rule.

Nevertheless, finding, and sustaining over time, a "best friend" who is also our domestic companion, and typically our primary sexual partner, is a challenging project, as evidenced by high divorce rates and frequency of serial, quasi-monogamous marriages, which we generally regard as "failures."

This book offers a strategic approach to finding one's best friend that has proved successful in this male, pro-feminist author's long life.

This is my story.

