

FM UVBN86-D

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The Men's Dump Survival Guide and Field Manual

Mk 2 – version 2

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Sometimes, when a relationship ends, you can spend an inordinate amount of time and energy trying to uncover the reasons why. Sometimes, the reasons it ended had nothing to do with you. Sometimes, the reality is that the other person found it more prudent to not look in the mirror at themselves and seek change there, but to remove you from their lives and find someone which will allow them to do everything but face their inner self. The reality is that everyone has fears about looking themselves in the eye and accepting who they are, or where they are at.

Until you are ready to do this in yourself, your relationship can only be so fulfilling.

Thank you to all of the people who have walked with me on this journey through my life: friends, associates, passers by, and even enemies. You have all added to my existence.

Preface

The last book in *The Book of Five Rings*, or the *Gorin No Sho*, is the book of “ku,” or emptiness. In it, one point is that if you know form, then you know when there isn’t form.

It’s interesting because in these days and times, more energy? time? is focused on what are considered the standards of beauty rather than the depth within an individual? ourselves?. The basic analogy is that of houses. Some people want the grandiose places (houses) that are the results of either prefab construction or the products of the drywall revolution. The brick house with plaster walls and heat from radiators, has been replaced by the hollowness of plasterboard and the inefficiency of forced air heating. In this world, hasn’t it become all about the look?

I know that there are a ton of women out there who don’t look like Barbie, a runway model, or a starlet. And women wish that we would get this through our heads (actually, runway models tend to be too thin for me). On the flip side, what defines what a man truly is? People are people, and for the most part, it’s what inside that really counts. But there is always room for development and growth within all of us. And when you stop growing, you start plateauing, or worse, dying.

One major thing is that we men tend to want a woman who will go along with our plans, and women tend to want the same in us. Every plan should have some room for growth, contingencies, and alterations, however, too many of us are set in our ways, and may have some pretty damned high expectations. Ironically, we can’t apply those same demands to our own lives.

Now, many of us don’t know what we really need, though we know what we might be looking for. And in this [form] that we believe we are searching for, we might blow past some of the things that we need. In some cases, we might not actually pay

attention to warning signs that it won't work. And that's one thing that I want to bring up here: warnings signs.

Sometimes, it's obvious that you would get dumped, because if you look back, you'll clearly see enough signs that say this wouldn't work. But maybe lust, attraction and love made us look past that.

Summarily, you might get dumped because you didn't fit the mold, and sometimes because you never could fit the mold your lover was expecting. Sometimes, it's the mold itself that is incorrect, or the person who formed it. But life has many possibilities, and we all can change... hopefully for the better.

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Author's Notes and Manual Instructions

I must say that this book will definitely have some sexist passages, phrases and terminology in it. I am being a man to the core and speaking to other men at that core level.

I realized that I would have to write this and put this in the book somewhere, more or less as a disclaimer. In talking with several women about the book, and with several women on the man's side of the male-female dynamic, it's most interesting how some want to judge the thoughts of men as bitter, instead of hearing how men really feel.

I have been privileged to have been privy to the thoughts of men, as well as them opening up on their experiences, in my travels. Whether this exchange of knowledge and history happens in a bar, in an elevator ride, or while passing the time waiting for a train or an airplane, I have enjoyed the camaraderie of other men who are fighting the good fight in the war of the hearts.

I would just like my female readership, as well as those who want to be "politically correct" [in a slanted definition] to just read, let it sink in, hear it, and then just understand that you don't have to like someone's feelings to understand where they are coming from. They might show you something that you never knew, and until you bridge that chasm, nothing positive is going to come.

Of course, some people might want to confuse writing for men with writing against women. I have two points to say on that one. The first is that I immensely love women; all shapes, sizes, and colors. Can you hear me licking my lips? The second is: Just wait until I write the book for women.

Additionally, there is another instructional disclaimer to reading this book, and that is you should focus on what was said and/or written, and not on your? interpretation(s) of it.

This is one of the most important things in life, because perception truly isn't reality. If you see a man running down the street with an axe in his hand, and there is a woman running down the same street on the same side, about twenty feet in front of him screaming at the top of her lungs, you might come to several conclusions. The facts of the scenario are exactly what was written in the previous sentence. What most people would tend to do is to make a connection between those two people, the axe, the running and the screaming, and think that he is going to do her harm. What if they are completely wrong?

We tend to also make inaccurate analogies to prove our points. For example, I make the assertion that if two similar men were getting out of their cars, one a Mercedes Benz and the other a Yugo [in comparatively the same condition], that women will focus on the man getting out of the Mercedes. Numerous women have said that I am generalizing, and want to attribute a bunch of different scenarios. Let's face it, people are people and exactly what I said would happen, would indeed happen. The false analogies to disprove me then are things like, "What if two women were walking down the street, one fat and one skinny, which one would I focus on more?" Notice the main difference in the logic and the thought process; they have moved from something external to now look at the aesthetics of each individual. Everything has totally been changed.

One major thing is truly and comprehending what is presented; what is presented, whether in written or oral format. The other major component is truly understanding that we see tend to assume a lot based on a given set of facts, and in this, we need to understand why we assume that way. In fact, judging the messenger in some cases is more important than judging the

message. Understanding the position of the person talking will tell you more about what they are saying and whether or not it can be applied en masse. At this point, perception is reality, and there are times when it makes sense to “exit stage right” from a conversation or a scenario when you see that there is no way in hell that the other person will truly grasp what you are saying.

And in life, I am sure that we have each experienced that frustration more than once in our lives. And with that, I can let you get to reading this book.

Introduction

Everyone has probably been dumped at least once, and we men are dumped in higher numbers than women are. That's for many reasons, and each one has its pro and cons. In some cases, the women were right to get rid of a man who either didn't have his act together, or just wasn't the right fit. In other cases, maybe she didn't want to do any work. That's one of the funniest things that I have heard in my life, "I want a relationship, but I don't want to have to do any work." It's ironic, because relationships are nothing but work, whether in large or small part. And the older that you get, the more work you might have to wind up doing.

Why, you ask? The answer is that you may have become a soloist who only cares to hear their own performance; most times finding the other players and elements that will allow you to be comfortable in your own levels and abilities is difficult.

But what's this book all about, you ask? This book is for us men who have been dumped prematurely, justly, or unjustly. Where is our Oprah? Where are our interesting articles regarding relationships in magazines that cater to our fears and insecurities? And I don't mean those vacuous articles that an intern or bathroom psychologist could've written. You know those articles, you look on the cover of a woman's magazine and it grabs you.. You pick it up, and when you read it, it's four, if not two, pages of the most shallow and uninformed information regarding the subject. God forbid you find it before page one hundred. And then when you read it, it's some bunch of malarkey that has only a vague connection –read three tangents removed – from the title that got your attention on the cover.

No one speaks to us, outside of issues regarding porn, cars, fitness, and either gadgets for that part of our functional brain, or things that will make us attract more women if we get them. Oh,

you know what I am talking about: cars, planes, jewelry, fashion, etc. The only other things (messages?) information?) that are out there are magazines for subjects or hobbies that we actually might be interested in. However, I don't think that we should be getting relationship advice out of *Field and Stream*, or *Guns & Ammo*. Now when *Soldier of Fortune* starts publishing articles concerning mending and wounded heart, and I don't mean on the battlefield, then I will really get worried.

This book is for us men, real men. If you miss what I am talking about, go rent *Fight Club* and know what I am talking about. Real guys from all walks of life experiencing the dump, whether it's in a relationship, or during the courting and dating leading up to a relationship. Hell, I think most of us endure more premonogamy dumps than we experience getting commendations on the job. And with all those crash and burns, women realize why we're so damned gun-shy to just walk up and ask half of them out.

No, this is for us. Men who've had to recruit wingmen, or return the favor and be the wingman, even if our heart was then being skewered over the coals of hell by a woman who might not have known what she wanted anyway. This is for that guy who is trying to figure out whether he should just take the dump and walk away, or stay and fight for the woman he is in love with, whether or not she has found someone else, or time has passed since they last were together.

This is for you, guy. Emotionally confused or emotionally directed. About to get dumped, or just been dumped. Thinking about talking to that fine woman you see there, or settling for someone one grade below her. Trying to get over her, or looking to do something totally crazy. Read this, and maybe it'll give you some insight.

1. Overview

Men get dumped, and there is not one manual or book addressing what men should do next. Men have emotions, and when they are dumped, there is no way of telling where they are on the number line of the human emotional state. Some go to a catatonic state of zero, while some are on the positive side and can pick themselves up like it was just another setback, but knowing that the sun will come out tomorrow. Others tend to lean to getting in the negative range that includes basic feelings of hurt, to the higher negative numbers that are indicative of despondency and rage. The main problem with men is that they are generally not taught to express their emotions, so when they actually experience something that is emotionally taxing, they are ill-prepared to deal with it in the most expedient and emotionally healthy way.

Man driving down freeway followed by a bevy of police cruisers in California; of course he is suspected of killing his ex-wife and her [assumed] lover due to jealousy. Man distraught over the possibility and reality of losing his wife and marriage leaves pickup truck on commuter train tracks in California. Man holds ex-girlfriend hostage for several days, raping her repeatedly. Later on down the line, he escapes out of custody in the courthouse, several wounding the bailiff and going on a spree in which he kills several people over the next few days. Man wanted in the killing of his ex-girlfriend flees from police and sits atop an eighteen-story crane for over fifty-six hours. Man beats wife to death, despite having restraining order taken out against him. Man stalks his children's mother to another state, incorporating GPS and cell-phone technology in the process. Man commits suicide after girlfriend dumps him.

This sounds like some plots in some murder mysteries, or even tales of horror, but the reality is that these things happen so frequently that it is both morally repugnant and ridiculous, as well as frightening. What's worse is that many of us aren't that many degrees of separation away from a man who has committed an action similar to this, or thought about it, or a woman who went through this. And it hurts me more because I am a man, and know that women have to fear the dark side of men.

Even in the latest Star Wars movie, we see Anakin Skywalker give up his whole jedi training and philosophy, and destroy everything and everyone that stands in his way, just so that he will not lose his love. Who would've realized that Darth Vader did it all for love, and that after getting turned away because she saw the darkness in his ways, that he would really need some counseling, and a book?

No one realizes how fragile the emotional sensitivity of men can be, especially when it comes to rejection from a woman, and it's worse when that rejection is after you have developed a relationship that goes beyond casual intimacy. God knows that there are times I wished my life would end after a heart-wrenching breakup. There were times when I just wished someone would do or say the wrong thing, so that I could pummel them into unconscious submission, or destroy their joints in the process. The major difference is that while those thoughts might come to mind, I believe that with great power comes great responsibility, and that to take any of those paths would be ethically wrong, and in the case of suicide, to me it's spiritually a no-no. But, I do respect some of the reasons for seppuku in the code of bushido, the code of the samurai. Also, I was raised by my mother, and grew up with my older sister, and in that I developed an underlying respect for women through which I would never lay a hand on them. In addition, I also

hung out with guys older than me, and was repulsed by some of their ideas of, and interactions with, women.

Along my path in life, I have developed many female friends, and that gives me a better appreciation for women. Hell, I love women in all shapes, colors and sizes. But I can't protect them all. What's even more frightening is that while I have dated and befriended women who have suffered at the hands of emotionally distraught men, is that I have known men that have done that.

I knew the guy who raped and killed the mother of his children, as well as raped the woman who was sharing a house with her (they both had kids and figured that they could progress further if both of their family units shared a house with ample space). It's interesting when you open the newspaper and the picture of the person being accused of a heinous crime is someone that you chat with every time you see them on campus.

I befriended the incarcerated child rapist while I and twenty-three other men bonded one weekend while students at Penn State, giving our time to connect with young men "sequestered" at the Loyesville Youth Detention Center.

I have known the politically conscious and revolutionary brother on campus who had an alternate ego that beat his woman when he was frustrated; had he done that while I knew him, I would've put him down. I have been there when he got out of jail for sexual assault for something that happened before we met, and that he admitted he was guilty of. In his internal guilt and exorcising his demons, he went on to become a rape counselor years before charges were filed against him. I have seen him turn into a loving husband and father of a newborn girl, and hope that he doesn't regress into a beast, because then I am compelled to deal with him.

I have seen the guy who is either a bona fide pimp, or a certified player, as well as the many weak aspirants to either title, and realize that at some point, there is a man underneath who got dumped and had no positive manual, or manuscript, for emotional and romantic recovery.

I have known women who have been beaten to death by their significant others. I have sat and consoled three women whose good friend was beaten to death by her estranged husband. I have dated women who have had violent relationships in their past, where in some cases the terms “date-rape” and “rape” would be more than appropriate. I have suffered for the infamous actions that other men have committed against the women that have come into my life... and I want to cry from it all. Me: strong-willed, strong in body and mind. I want to cry, because I have lost love because of another man's inability to deal with rejection, and I know that there are a lot more women who have suffered who will cross paths with me.

I always believed that while we may start out on a path with a certain agenda, or focus, in mind, that the true reason will be revealed later. This can be in regards to dating, or even crossing the road. And in this, I wound up writing a book (*FM UVBN86-D: The Men's Dump Survival Guide and Field Manual*) that while I first looked at as an insightful and comical guide to help men deal with getting dumped, I later realized it had the chance to improve lives on a more important level.

What if that young boy who committed suicide after his girl had left him had read my book? What about that guy who turned around, abducted his date against her will and raped her had read it? The worst enemy on that battlefield is a man who knows that he has nothing to lose, and in life, the same can be said for the man that thinks that he has nothing to live for. Would those ten commandments of reformation and reconstruction have helped them? Would the five step plan that spells G.E.T. U.P. have gotten them past those thoughts of depression and futility that seized them and moved them to do

unspeakable things? Would the pyramid that I put together help turn them into a better person who could have found the woman that would have nurtured them and played the moon to their sun?

While I joked and said that I need to set up “dump clubs” akin to the various “fight clubs” in the movie of the same name, I never realized that that should be something that would be taken very seriously. I never thought that something that I would write would actually cut so deeply and address the darker side of a reality that just about every man goes through, but I do feel that I have opened the door to change men for the better.

While I joked with women who looked at the book to purchase it was something that they needed to give to their significant other right when they dumped them, I didn't realize how close I was to a pearl of wisdom. And even on the flipside, those men that are just hurting and won't give into darkness might still need the manual, not only to help them move forward, but to help them mend their ways.

This manual is designed to have you get on that positive side of the emotional number line. Through the use of a five step plan (GET UP), the ten commandments of reformation and reconstruction, and the “Next” philosophy, this book shall effectively give men a way to deal with getting dumped.

1.1 HISTORY (WHAT LED ME TO WRITE THIS)

I could joke and say that I am not only the author, but also the founder and president of this movement, just like in the Men's Hair Club commercials. The reality is that that is true.

My background is that I am romantic, and all my life I have looked for love, or for emotional intimacy and/or security. Whether or not that meant that I was in love with the person, or that they were only in love with me was not the most important

thing. Finding a woman that I could share and show some vulnerability around, cuddle with, and experience the intimacy of sex with no consequences (disease, pregnancy, etc.) was more paramount than necessarily finding the relationship that would last to the end of my life.

Let's be honest, we humans are still members of the animal kingdom, and we express different behavioral patterns of different insects and animals in a society that sometimes argues against what might be natural, but stated to be moral and ethical.

For me, the dissolution of a relationship, or more properly defined "relationship dynamic" has always been hard. Whether that dynamic was something that was more than just drinks, dinner and sex, or just that, it usually still hit me pretty hard. Even the end of the most casual relationship still signaled that I would have to replace that relationship, because it was something that I needed. When the relationship was much more than that, that is, when the woman meant a lot more to me, then the ending hurt just so much more. There were times when I just wanted to die, whether at my own hands, or at the center of some crazy traffic accident. There were times when I just wished the right person would say the wrong thing to me and allow me to just unload by tearing them limb from limb (I remember a day that two cops saw me after one woman dumped me; they thought better than to screw around with me when they looked into my eyes). And there were times when I just wished I could call up an old sensei of mine and have him beat me to a pulp so that the pain he inflicted was much more than the pain of my broken heart.

And I can tell you that I have felt the pain of losing a woman that gave me the best sex that I ever had. A woman who I loved more than I loved anyone, and that I could have easily seen myself marrying and spending the rest of my life with. A

woman that I pursued for more than one year, got back with, got dumped again by, got back with, and got dumped again by.

Hey man, I am there with you, and might be the best candidate for writing this book.

I have also heard the stories from other men of how they just wanted to choke the life out of the woman that broke their heart. In other cases, I know that men's thoughts can get even darker.

I wrote two books already, and for both of them, the major premise, or major theme easily seen was that of heartbreak. With those two books, I get a lot of feedback from men in regards to their having felt the same way, as in, they experienced the same pains that I did. What some of them noticed was that I have a unique way of getting past heartbreak and the breakup; I write. I do other things as well, but primarily I write. It allows me to get some of my emotions out and just drain them all away in the ink.

1.1.1 The Eulogy

This piece was intended to be added as a new section in my second book, *When a Black Man Still Loves*; however, after starting another book, I thought that it would work best in this one. The date that I am [beginning] writing this is February 16, 2005, as this piece probably will be revisited several times. It's taken me several days to write this, and in this is a myriad of points to examine and expound upon. Sometimes, it's like this for men: I finish something and there are more thoughts that come rushing forth that need to be added. The question is where to add them, and sometimes whether or not they should be added, or wait for some other vehicle to be included in somewhere down the line.

This time is an interesting time, because the feelings that are the core of this book have in several different ways returned to me. I call this brief section “eulogy” simply because two days ago was the funeral of my uncle. I have two uncles, and each one has a certain dynamic with me. This was the one who say things more than most people did, but he only talked certain ways with certain people. This was my uncle, Seymour Morris Jones.

On the morning of the 7th of February, something was niggling in the back of my mind; a thought to call my uncle. As I almost made way for the phone, I figured that I would not do it at that time, but a little later; I didn't want to wake his wife. Well, somewhere around that time, my uncle had taken his own life. I did not find out until around six o'clock that evening. When it happened, I didn't really have a response. My uncle was a grown man, and had made the decision that he felt right for him. What I started to remember was the good times that we had, namely the conversations that we had later on in life.

I had just interviewed my uncle again for a video project based around my first book. After the interview, he told me to keep doing what I was doing, because there was a strong need for it, on many sides and angles. I remember the last time that I had seen him, which was on Christmas. And I do believe that I spoke to him somewhere around the third week of January.

At the end of the project, my uncle stated how his main regret was that he did not spend as much time with me as he could've while I was growing up, and that he would try to change that in the future. What's interesting is that at the beginning of the video project, he and all the other gentlemen downed and teased about how it is when you meet me the first time. It takes awhile to get to know the man underneath the attitude, and truly, all people don't really need to know the man underneath.

I initially wanted to speak at the funeral, but decided against telling my aunt, his sister. What I would've spoken about were the memories that we have about people. I still remember many things about my uncle, and in many ways, we were a lot alike. I remember him jumping into a neighbor's swimming pool to retrieve a baby who had fallen in; my uncle can't swim, and I myself don't float. I remember the time that he had taken me with his family to Washington, D.C. when I was about ten years old. It shocked him the amount of detail that I remembered about that trip; where we ate, where we stayed, etc. I remembered so much detail because I usually received very little attention from that side of the family (outside of my grandfather – also a black sheep) until I was in my teenage years.

My uncle chose to end his own life, and it wasn't a snapshot decision. It was obviously something that he was planning for some time. None of us might understand the pain that he has enduring; spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically. He even had a poem clipped from a newspaper in his wallet that was placed in the funeral program. It took me a couple of days to just let some of the feelings course through me. I don't remember what was on the television, but I know that I was at my computer. For me, I let the pain come in waves and just cried a few times, silently and to myself. My uncle was suffering from prostate problems, and there might've been one or two other health issues, but he was also depressed. He had retired almost a year earlier after forty-two years of service with the post office. He had been married three times and was still with his third wife. He maintained relationships with the children from the marriages of his children, and kept relatives separated by divorce in a way as which there was no divorce at all. In many ways, my uncle was like his father, and I in turn am much like my paternal grandfather, as well as my paternal grandmother.

Sometimes, things happen. Sometimes the reason behind them is divine, and sometimes it is not. In all cases, there are normally lessons in each experience, whether or not they add to our knowledge, wisdom and experience, or simply reinforce it. For me, the week of my uncle's death and funeral holds many lessons. But alongside that, I received my Sleepy Brown album, as well as purchased a copy of *ESP* by the System. The latter album is unlike the other two albums that I have by them, and has moved me all week; I am playing it while I write this section.

One of the first things that I did was to alert those people in my life who had known my uncle through me. I let four women, and my best friend know what happened. Everyone was shocked to say the least, but the one thing that was interesting was the reactions that I received. However, only one person mattered, or should I say, there was one person who was more important than the rest. That person is of course the reason why the emotional part of this book exists.

Love is a funny thing, and sometimes, you are not with the person that you love the most. My loss is a tragic loss in losing my uncle, but there is also another tragic loss in my life, and this is of the woman who really owned my heart... and to some degree, she still owns it. Love will have you forgiving most anything, and your ability to forgive and forget might go way beyond that of the other person, and parties relevant to them. I sent an email, and received a reply and some condolences. And God knows how hard it is for me to just let things lie, knowing deep in my heart that I would rather be with her.

The bad meant nothing to me. As my cousin preached, it's the end that matters, not the middle. As I sat there during the service, I thought of her. I wondered if there could ever be a better time and brighter future for the two of us. Only God knows. As I drove down the highways to and from work, as

well as to and from the funeral, I thought of her. I remembered her smile, her warmth, her laugh and her embrace. I forgot, and forgave, the bad times and the actions behind them. I wish I could do the same with my enemies, as well as those that have crossed me.

I wondered how things might have been different between us, had my situation been different, and had I not made certain mistakes. My loss is a hard one, and I likened the experience to having had the makings of an unbeatable poker hand, but not enough money to stay in the game and win the pot. I wish that there were a way to find out what truly exists in her heart for me, versus the fears in trying to make it work with me.

There are a thousand and one reasons for me to trace and see why it didn't work. And I probably could come up with a thousand and one reasons why it could. In that, there is my heart and my foolishness. At times, I can look at what I endured from her, and that was not fair, nor just. I can forgive, and in forgiveness there is purity of heart, soul, spirit and mind. I wish that I could spread that to her... having her feel the same towards me. But that's life, and it is neither perfect nor ideal.

What hurts more is that in some ways I can understand her position with me, based on the roles being reversed with another relationship in my life. And it hurts for me to see their pain, because of their love for me, and them not being in a situation in which I am willing to see what can happen. I am tired, and I miss certain things; certain things that I experienced with her, that was unique to our dynamic. I couldn't move her in the ways that she moved me, and to me that is tragic. While nothing is perfection, I would've gladly spent the remainder of my days with her. And it's hard to ask someone to give up some thing that they could do easily with someone else for you. That hurts.

Now, I am at a point where I see a lot, and still want to fight. However, right now it's not in my hands for things to make a change. I can only entrust it to a higher power. And what I am feeling right now might lessen in time. He might send me someone who makes me feel how she did, and who I go better with as well as they go better with me.

One thing that my second cousin Harry said about my uncle was that he always had a smile on his face, but that just because someone is smiling doesn't mean that there isn't turmoil inside. The other cousin who preached the service talked about people hiding their secrets. It was by far very interesting; because I have gotten on people vehemently for not revealing what was really going on; if you are hurting, then let people know. If you are in need, don't hide it.

Well, in my case, I am hurting. I am trying to produce everything that I can, and in some ways I am scared. In several places I am unfocused. This whole thing is bigger than me and I need help. I don't have all the answers, and I don't have all of the angles covered. In several ways I am angry, and have a right to be. And to top it all off, I miss her and want her back. Or I want someone else who will touch my soul in a magical way. I need that queen, my queen. I am not looking to get caught by the wrong woman, and unfortunately at this time I am too bedraggled and tired to pursue anyone.

It's time for a new reality and I am waiting to see who will take my hand. There might not be only one person meant to be "the one." There might be a successive turn of folks. I don't know, but I am open to finding out and living life.

It's time for the old Zach to die, and a new one to be born.

1.2 THE PURPOSE

First off, let's remember that I am doing this for you; my brothers-in-arms in the struggle of the escalating wars of relationships. Really, it's mainly for those of you who have just been dumped, or those that will eventually be dumped. And remember, it happens to all of us. Relationships are like the quandary of riding a motorcycle, and that is that there are two types of riders; those that have been down, and those that are going down. **This book is to show you the light at the end of the tunnel. This book is to take you from the negative emotional number line of being dumped to being in the light; to get you to bounce back on your feet in the most positive manner and not give in to the dark side.**

Love is a battlefield; there are winners, there are losers, and there are a ton of wounded and disfigured combatants at the cessation of hostilities. For any man that has pulled a special combat mission, there is always a period where that person is given some time to reacclimatize themselves to the normal operations of the rest of the combat force. They might be somewhat quarantined by themselves, or with other members of the group that went on the mission. In special operations unit, these people might be given additional 'assistance' in making their transition to civilian life and affairs. I don't know if we can truly claim post-traumatic stress disorder after being dumped, but I have seen more than one man that has had that "shell-shocked" look in their faces. Several times, I have seen that man in my own mirror.

Now this book is intended to be informational as well as fun. The more that I have been talking to other people about this book, the funnier I make some of the arguments and steps. This tells me that I am really on the right path; finally, I am starting to get into my zone.

1.3 WHAT THIS BOOK IS NOT

As I go through life and talk to different people, I see where they like to take apart certain philosophies and realities and add their own personal slant. That's okay. I do it myself with things that are introduced to me. It's only natural to challenge something in regards to one's own perception, which is your? reality.

1.3.1 This book is not a call to religion nor will espouse spirituality as a way out

I came across a minister who saw my t-shirt for this book. As we had a brief conversation about some of the scenarios, or paths that dumped men might come to a crossroads with, she talked about how people might not have their priorities straight. This led to her talking about their relationship with God. Well, I believe that there is a place for everything, and this book is not one to espouse one religion over another, or to push religion at all. That's kind of weird when you take into account that one central piece that I, and a few friends, noticed while watching the movie *Waiting to Exhale* was that it didn't seem as though any of the characters had enough of a spiritual component.

While I might find some relevance to having a spiritual component (most notably expressed by praying) this can fail to allow the person to understand exactly what is going on with their inner self, as well as with the other person.

I hate it when you are having a conversation, or a debate, with someone and they pull out the "Jesus save." The Jesus save is when they are losing their ground and all of a sudden say something like, "Well, nothing matters if you don't believe that Christ died on the cross for your sins and that he is your savior." That's the biggest cop-out that I have seen. On the other side, I can see that easily being a philosophy that leads people to great acts of atrocity in the name of God.

Religion is one thing that can be twisted to make people believe that God is on their side, and only on their side. There was the issue of both sides believing their righteousness during the Crusades. The Nazis had a spiritual and religious doctrine. There were a ton of Christian slaveholders in the United States. And there were a ton of Africans slaughtered at the expansion and manifest destiny of Islam across that continent. Lastly, let's not even look at what has been going on in the Middle East for the past fifty years.

I will not espouse religion, or praying, as the answer.

1.3.2 This book is written for heterosexual men who were dumped by women

While much of this can be applied to other types of relationships, I am a heterosexual man, and in that, I am sure that I am wired differently from homosexual men, bisexual men, transsexual men, and any type of men not living the "normal" heterosexual experience.

While at Book Expo America 2005, one woman approached my booth and looked at possibly getting a copy for her lesbian daughter. My advice would be not too. I am not a lesbian, cannot understand anything about a lesbian besides our common attraction to women, and that's it. There is no way that I could honestly give a lesbian advice that I intended for a man. **This book is not suited to all people.**

1.3.3 This book is not a reason to not place some blame on yourself

No matter what the reason for your getting dumped, the reality is that you chose her, or she chose you and you went along for the ride. Sometimes, you have to make some better choices. Also,

it's very easy for people to place all the blame on the other person and never look at their own faults and issues.

There are a ton of women sitting around in church praying for God to send them a man, when in fact, they consistently choose the wrong men and/or are the reason why men don't choose to stick around or have a positive relationship with them.

1.4 WHAT YOU WILL GET FROM THIS

This book will take you through a program wherein you can recover from being dumped.

You will be given ten commandments that you can use for the rest of your life.

You will learn to get over the dump; that being dumped isn't the worst thing that can happen to you.

You will learn to evaluate the dump. This will be done through post-dump analysis in which you will look at the possible characteristics of the dumper, how the dump happened, and potentially, why it happened.

Lastly, you will be given the "next" philosophy that should help you deal with future situations more easily.

2. Our Acronym, Our Motto, Our Mantra: The Five Step Program of G.E.T. U.P.

Okay, so what we have here is a book, organized with an acronym that spells out how to survive with being dumped.

Don't you remember those funny little acronyms for other things in life such as the ABC's of CPR (airway, breathing, circulation) and the way to remember all of the classes of stars (OBAFGKMRNS – oh, be a fine girl, kiss me right now, slap!) or to remember the notes in a scale (EGBDF – every good boy does fine)?

Well, I had to come up with an acronym that can be used as a motto for us. I actually came up with two different ones that basically say the same things.

2.1 G.E.T. U.P

You been kicked in the groin, more specifically, your balls, and you're now metaphysically down on your knees, or just rolling around on the ground fighting the feeling of the fire in your testicles. Oh, chances are that you'll be okay, but it's going to take some time for you to get up and walk regularly again. Now let's explain each letter:

G – Get over it. You've been dumped. It happens. You're not the first guy that it's happened to and you won't be the last; that is unless the world ends tomorrow. There are many things worse than getting dumped and you'll come to understand and appreciate that as well.

E – Evaluate what happened; the good the bad and the ugly. In this, you need to analyze the dump and understand it through all its facets; the other party/combatant, yourself, and the dump. Do a “sitrep” on how you got outmaneuvered, outflanked, and outgunned.

T – Take action. At this point you cannot afford to just sit there like a lump on a log or a sitting target. That’s a good way for the world to just run over you, and for everyone else to just take aim and fire. Scramble man, scramble. There are many courses of action that you can take at this time, but you have to start by moving away from the scene of carnage.

U – Utilize what you learned in the second phase and make yourself a better person. You might need to change who you actually pick to get involved with, or you just might need to review what, where and how it went wrong, and not let that happen again. You might re-engage the same enemy or you might choose a different one to fight with; that’s your choice.

P – Proceed/Progress with the rest of your life. You are going to face many battles, and some of them you will win and some of them you will lose. Your life ain’t over and you’ll keep fighting until you find that hallowed ground that you can take, hunker down at, and keep and defend with ease for the rest of your existence.

2.2 R.A.M.P. U.P.

This one is the other acronym that I came up with. It was based on the premise that you actually want to become better because of what just happened.

R- Realize what happened. You’ve been dumped. Don’t try to fight it. That’s very immature and makes you look more clueless than your already dumbfounded state. It’s like George

in an episode of *Seinfeld* in which he's been fired, but he keeps finding a way to make it back into his office.

A – Accept that you've been dumped and that this is not the worst thing that can happen in your life.

M – Move. A rolling stone gathers no moss. At this point, you need to move, drive, breathe, soar, leap, dive, fly. Get out of your rut. Get out of the house. Go get some sex. Start to consider your next choice of action; move on with your life or try to win her back.

U – Understand everything around the dump. Figure out who you were involved with; figure out why you got dumped; figure out what you did or didn't do that factored into it. I would try to say figure out what she did that factored into it, but then we get into that nebulous area of truly trying to understand women; I am trying to help us, not sabotage our brains with grasping equations that are so complex that at the end of a lifetime of thinking that we have discovered the answer and solved the riddle, we realize that there is no equation for them.

P – Proceed/Progress with the rest of your life. You are going to face many battles, and some of them you will win and some of them you will lose. Your life isn't over and you'll keep fighting until you find that hallowed ground that you can take, hunker down at, and keep/defend with ease for the rest of your existence.

In the end, I would've truly liked something great like the 5 D's mentioned in the movie *Dodgeball*; "dodge, duck, dip, dive, and dodge." That was classic, but alas, I couldn't think up anything like that and I didn't have time to sit with some guys over a keg

of beer for that one (I am trying to lose a couple of pounds for the summer).

For this book, we will use the five-step program versus the six-step program.

3. The Ten Commandments of Reformation and Reconstruction

These are the laws of life, love, and dumping that will allow you to get through this ordeal. They are kind of like the thirteen rules of the sentry that the Marine Corps uses. The purpose of the commandments are to take you from being dumped to being on your feet. Once you have mastered them, you'll be able to shrug any dump off like brushing dirt off of your shoulders.

1. This isn't the end of the world for you
2. You might not be the first guy she dumped, and you might not be the last
3. Somewhere in all of this, there are lessons, or knowledge, that you can take from this whole experience
4. The reasons might've been you, and then again, they might not have
5. No matter what, this experience (while there was a relationship) has added to the sum of you. It is to be understood, respected, and appreciated on the greater level of you
6. There are other fish in the sea
7. Even what we call "going back" can actually be going forward
8. Become more than you were while you were with her
9. Success is the greatest revenge
10. Success is also the biggest turn-on

After all that is said and done, I have to explain the commandments to you, and the knowledge and wisdom behind them. I take this time to point out that there is a difference between knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge, or simply having knowledge, is the state of knowing things, whatever those things might be. However, I define wisdom as that component which allows you to use your knowledge to advance, as well as defend, yourself in situations in life. Different people receive wisdom in regards to different subjects not necessarily because of their physical age, but by learning from their experiences and actually using that knowledge the next time that same dynamic occurs. For some things, and some people, the lesson only needs to be learned once, and the experience felt, or played out once. For others, it might take several times for the lesson to sink in, that is if it ever sinks in at all.

3.1 COMMANDMENT 1: THIS ISN'T THE END OF THE WORLD FOR YOU

Out of all people that have gotten dumped, I can sympathize with what you are going through. However, I can also tell you that it's not the end of the world, especially not the end of yours. I know how it is when you can't get her off of your mind, and you think that you'll die without her. However, you'll live. You'll suffer emotionally, but you'll live. And if you don't do something like kill yourself, or cause some major catastrophe¹, you'll live to love again.

¹ On Wednesday January 26, 2005 at approximately 6:05 am two Metrolink trains crashed and derailed in the Glendale/Los Angeles area of California. The train crash resulted in eleven deaths and hundreds of injuries, many of them serious injuries. Juan Manuel Alvarez, a 25-year-old man evidently intent on committing suicide, drove his sport utility vehicle onto the tracks in the path of the commuter train. As the train approached, Alvarez abandoned his vehicle.

3.2 COMMANDMENT 2: YOU MIGHT NOT BE THE FIRST GUY SHE DUMPED, AND YOU MIGHT NOT BE THE LAST

Join the crowd, and wear your purple heart as a badge of honor. Okay, so you didn't win her hand. Or maybe you did, married her, and she just divorced you. Hell, wouldn't it be interesting if you ran across all of the men that your ex dumped as well? Go peep the movie *Whipped* with Amanda Peet in it; it's a riot.

In this, know that you are not alone. All things don't fit together permanently, if ever at all. Don't kick yourself.

3.3 COMMANDMENT 3: SOMEWHERE IN ALL OF THIS, THERE ARE LESSONS, OR KNOWLEDGE, THAT YOU CAN TAKE FROM THIS WHOLE EXPERIENCE

I remember talking to my good friend Barbie right after the second time I was dumped by the same woman; hey, it might've been the third time. What Barbie said totally cheered me up. She basically said that sometimes the purpose of a relationship is for one, or both, parties to learn something that they can add to their life. She also said that maybe the relationship wasn't about me, but for my ex to one day realize that there was at least one man who loved her above all else, and unconditionally as well.

If there was something for you to learn, look for it and add it to your arsenal of knowledge.

3.4 COMMANDMENT 4: THE REASONS MIGHT'VE BEEN YOU, AND THEN AGAIN, THEY MIGHT NOT HAVE

Again with learning from your experiences, you've got to look and understand what you might've done which precipitated this dump. And at the end of the day, if you comb through everything, you might even find out that it really wasn't you. Don't blame everything on you; sometimes that's not the case.

3.5 COMMANDMENT 5: NO MATTER WHAT, THIS EXPERIENCE (WHILE THERE WAS A RELATIONSHIP) HAS ADDED TO THE SUM OF YOU. IT IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD, RESPECTED, AND APPRECIATED ON THE GREATER LEVEL OF YOU

Look at everything that you have done, and then look at all of the people that added to that becoming a reality. Now, take a step back and look at everyone who has ever put you through anything. The reality is that you don't really learn and grow from success, but from dealing with loss and adversity. Nietzsche wrote that, "what doesn't kill you, only makes you stronger." It was true then, and it is truer now.

3.6 COMMANDMENT 6: THERE ARE OTHER FISH IN THE SEA

You've heard the song, and if not, pick up The Pharcyde's first album. She's not the only woman in the world, and sometimes on a metaphysical level, you have to lose something in order to make space for something better in your life.

3.7 COMMANDMENT 7: EVEN WHAT WE CALL “GOING BACK” CAN ACTUALLY BE GOING FORWARD

If you choose to re-enter a relationship with a woman who dumped you, you have all of the knowledge of what may not work, and advanced knowledge of her, for whatever the latter is worth.

I think that when you close off the chance of revisiting a relationship, you actually are limiting the positive possibilities that can happen in your life. Not everyone gets everything right the first time. It may have taken you more than five tries to learn how to ride a bike. I am sure that you made some mistakes along the way in learning math and the sciences. What makes you think that relationships will be any easier?

And if you tried to rekindle, and it failed, just pat yourself on the back. You might've been thrown off that horse, but you at least tried to see your time in the rodeo ring through.

Case in point: I know the story of a gentleman with a computer consulting business. He is married and has three children. His wife dumped him at one time because she wanted to get married. This was after the choice to marry her, or continue with the amount of time and energy that he was giving to his fledgling business. He allowed her to dump him, got his business off the ground, and then went back and married her. Obviously, he thought that she was worth it.

3.8 COMMANDMENT 8: BECOME MORE THAN YOU WERE WHILE YOU WERE WITH HER

Everything in life should inspire you to become more than you were the day before, and a relationship should be no different. Life is about progression, and as you progress from one thing to the next, you should always improve at least one aspect of who

you are. Become more than what you were when you were with her, and you'll attract the next woman in your life easily, or at least someone to have some fun times with.

I remember talking to Giz and another guy in the gym one Sunday morning; we tended to have deep conversations, especially after Giz read and loved my first book. As Giz relayed to us the details of a relationship that he had to leave, and I almost started crying thinking of the dynamics discussed and applying it to my past relationship (hey, I really loved her man), Giz talked about how one relationship actually made him a better man. Sometimes, joy and/or sadness with a woman can actually inspire you to do better. Of course, that usually happens after she is gone. However, use what you can.

3.9 COMMANDMENT 9: SUCCESS IS THE GREATEST REVENGE

This carries over from the last rule. You've been dumped, you're hurt, and you want to have the last laugh--somewhat. Go out there and win a marathon, or beat Mike Tyson in the ring. It doesn't matter if the problem was that you got fired from a job, or a relationship [which is a job of another sort], getting to a better position will always make you feel better in the end.

And don't think that women don't feel exactly the same way. If you should dump them, then the next time that they see you, they want to be married to a guy that is treating them like a queen and has a better body, face, job, car than you. Hell, they want him to be better than you in all ways. So, why shouldn't you feel the same way? You want to show her that she let the ugly duckling get away. You want to show her that you are now the swan with everything going on. You're no longer than ninety-eight pound weakling that got sand kicked in his face on the beach. You've trained under Tony Atlas and came back looking like the original Terminator. You've gotten rid of the

bucket and are driving a high-end car; extra points if you have something like a Maserati Quattraporte.

Your new lady either is a model, or looks like an actress. Oh, and she is talented and has a brain. You want to make her feel like Lucian did in *Deliver Us From Eva* when LL Cool J's character showed up and had the mayor taking pictures with the two of them, and inviting them up to his house. You want her to see that she made the mistake, and that you were truly the prize.

Note to ælf: at this point, you need to be humble and not let it get to your head.

3.10 COMMANDMENT 10: SUCCESS IS ALSO THE BIGGEST TURN-ON

It's no secret that women are turned on by powerful and/or successful men. The power thing is not necessarily the biggest turn on, but successes definitely make a woman look at you. And depending upon the woman, those successes might be large or small.

The woman in your life should always be your biggest fan, whether or not you're a garbage collector or a professional athlete.

4. The Dump Explained

Before I address the sections of this book, the first thing that I should do is define the dump. The dump itself both a verb and a noun; it is the state of the cessation of a relationship, whether simply dating and getting to know each other; a relationship that has gone past the casual stage; or even marriage.

I like to think that there are basically three types of dump: the pre-dump, the date-dump, and the dump.

4.1 THE PRE-DUMP

The pre-dump can happen anytime from the first meeting up until before you actually start to get nice and comfortable with someone. It could be before you ever have any sense of shared intimacy, or even after a couple of full blown-out mind-numbing experiences.

Normally, the pre-dump occurs when you just start getting to know someone, and for one reason or another, the communication just fizzles. Chances are, you don't fit into the mold that she wants you to fit in. Don't be upset, you are not water, and this is not an aikido class. It can happen after a few phone calls, a few emails, and/or a few dates.

The pre-dump will really just piss you off, which is why you never throw all of your eggs in one basket. Women are normally "auditioning" more than one man at the same time, so why shouldn't you do the same?

4.2 THE DATE-DUMP

The date-dump can be very frustrating for some men, and if those men already have either some issues with women, or some anger management problems, then the date-dump can really be emotionally disheartening and possibly lead to some disastrous actions.

This dump is not to be confused with getting turned down by a woman that you met while you were already out. This dump deals with being dumped while on a date, or right after the date ends.

The worst manifestation of this date could be that the woman walks out on you and takes a cab home. Okay, it could also be bad if she was the one who drove and leaves your ass right there. Another bad scenario would be if she hooked up with another guy while on the date with you. In this case, if you were a gentleman and she went for some other guy, be happy; she would've taken you through some crazy drama sooner or later.

Now takes pains to understand that you might have caused the date-dump, especially if you kept taking some calls on your cell phone, was ogling other women, or just said something stupid. Something stupid could be something like saying something that your date took offense to. I know several women who have told me experiences in which people have said things about Black people, not knowing that either the person is related to a Black person, has kids that have a Black father, or that they were married to a Black man. Additionally, with women, they might have alternative lifestyles friends and acquaintances, so it might not be wise to express any bias towards that group until you get to know your date quite well, and that does take more than one or two nights out.

Other reasons could be that you really screwed up the meal experience. The ultimate turn-off would be to take a woman to somewhere cheap that she wasn't into, or giving an insufficient tip, or no tip at all. Acting like an asshole towards the restaurant staff will also sink your stupid ass. The worst that I have heard is when a man is so cheap that he orders one entrée and a couple sides, and then expects the woman to share that entrée with him.

My advice is to always have a Plan B ready just in case your date acts up. Whether that secondary plan is another woman, some friends to hang out with, or just a place to go is up to you. A good friend told me a tale of how he picked up a date for a concert. While he was running a little late, he came to her door, helped her with her coat, and then helped her into the car. While in the car ride there, she complained about how he didn't give her a hug and a kiss when he came to pick her up and that she might as well have just stayed home. Well, he turned the car around, dropped her off, called another woman up, and had a wonderful time at the concert. If it were me, I probably would've done the same thing, but called some other woman while she was still in the car. Hey, if she was a total ass, I would've put her in a taxi and paid the fare.

Oh, I have date-dumped women.

4.3 THE DUMP

This is a more defined scenario by the fact that you are into a groove with the woman. You are either in a committed monogamous relationship, marriage (which is not necessarily the aforementioned), or in a "relationship" where you and the woman have a defined set of rules of engagement between the two of you.

Being "released" from your contract at this stage is when it really hurts. This can be complicated by issues such as you are

living together; and/or that you have purchased some things together, whether they be real estate, furniture, or investment entities (a business, t-bills , etc.).

This whole scenario is worse if you are at a period that you have made some changes in your life (personal, social, etc.) to accommodate having this woman in your life as your “woman.”

I remember one friend who took the time to get to know one woman, and then he made her his woman. Along the way, he let every other woman that he was dealing with, whether frequently or infrequently, that he was moving into a relationship and that he wouldn't be able to see them anymore. Well, the relationship ended in less than three months, and he had a bevy of people that he couldn't necessarily just pick up the phone and get some instant sex again. As I explained it to him, I think it's like being a basketball sports team owner and you start investing all of your resources into one star player. At some point you might feel obliged to release your other A and B level players, because you have put your faith in this one player. Well, in the case that your relationship with this new star player sours, you have a scenario where the other people you let go might not want to come back and play for your squad anymore.

Conversely, I once met a woman that I just knew was special, but also knew what could happen if I released all my other players “from their contracts.” Well, this probably backfired on me, but then again, the relationship probably would've eventually soured anyway.

All in all, these are the two forms of dump.

4.4 DUMP CYCLES

I started thinking about that book which was published in 2004 talking about “maybe he's not into you like that.” When things

like this hit the shelves, and are heavily promoted and talked about, there will be a ton of men that will be dumped. This is an example of what I would like to call the “publishing” inspired dump cycle.”

The caveat here is that women will dump a man when things aren't working out the way that they envisioned, but the fault lies in them. I don't agree with the issue that we are not that into them. I think that for the most part, every time that a woman interacts with us, she is afforded a chance to change our opinion about her. It just that after so many chances, if we see no changes, we more or less write it off that it's going to be exactly what it is, or even less.

However, the most important dump cycle to understand is the yearly one which consists of holidays and basic seasonal changes. Dumps occur at the beginning of spring as well as the beginning of summer, after Christmas and New Year's, and also before Valentine's Day.

The first two reasons deal with the ushering in of the new seasons is that women might be looking for something new, exciting and refreshing. Sure, you were cool to snuggle up with during the cold winter months as well as chilly autumn. However, they'll see what is now coming out with the spring thaw. Okay, we do the same thing as well, so can you really blame them for this?

The holidays are the other major periods. Before Valentine's Day ensures that you don't get too attached to her, and it also allows for her to potential spend that [magical (?)] day with someone else. Christmas and New Year's are also interesting; they get to measure up what you gave them and gauge that as whether it was worthy enough to keep you. If they are going to dump you, they might want to get their gifts first, and then dump you sometime in January-- before Valentine's Day.

Jewish women might dump you before Rosh Hashanah; not wanting to include you in their next year of life.

4.5 WHAT IF YOU KNOW THE DUMP IS COMING?

Sometimes, you know that the dump is coming, and at this point you can dump first, or just roll with it. A sure sign is that the level of sex changes drastically for the worse, or that she stops doing things for you, like talking to you as much. Another sign is that she starts reading a bunch of crazy women's magazine articles regarding relationships; or keeps talking about that book that I previously mentioned. A third, and most definite sign, is that she starts singing songs around you with some extreme conviction such as Gloria Gaynor's *I will Survive*.

One friend of mine gives the advice that if you agree to the dump wholeheartedly, then the woman is now befuddled that you are willing to let it end so easily.

I usually choose to let the woman dump me, simply because if she realizes that she made the mistake, she carries the burden of guilt (go to *What if she wants you back* in the addendum).

You do have another option, and that is to see if you can come to the table, both state your issues, and agree to try to resolve them so that the relationship can actually work.

Step 1:
G - Get over it

5. Acceptance of Reality – You've Been Dumped

I know that this one is sometimes a hard pill to swallow; Lord knows that I have been through this so many times that in many cases, it gets a little easier, especially if the person currently dumping you isn't the one you were most into. You might not have seen it coming, then again, you might have known it was happening and were just waiting for the axe to fall. Maybe it would be a relief. It's akin to losing a job, whether it's getting laid off or getting fired.

5.1 UNDERSTANDING THE STAGES OF THE ROMANTIC TRAUMA

The “experts” have defined that there are five steps in dealing with trauma, and being dumped is to experience a type of trauma, though depending upon the emotional involvement, the way it happened, and the psychological state and history of the dumpee determine what the severity is. Those five steps are denial, anger, guilt, grief and acceptance. I would be remiss if I didn't include the basic information about them here.

5.1.1 DENIAL

In many cases, you are likely to spend time denying the end of the relationship, or thinking of new ways to make it work. The full impact of the dump hasn't full registered and you may still refer to “us.” You may feel exhilaration because you're suddenly free to move on an experience other people, or at least to get away from some of the things that you didn't like about her,

including some things that she did. For example, I hated the way that one ex pronounced “balsamic.”

You may have feelings of despair and try to get them to keep the relationship going (one aspect of this could be to prolong a good sex life). This stage may last a long time, as you may have a hard time letting go of this relationship, which may in fact have been destructive. There may be several attempts to reconcile before you finally realize it won't work.

5.1.2 ANGER

Anger is the inevitable and natural stage. Even if it hasn't been good for some time, you might be angry/mad because of needs not met and expectations not fulfilled. I once got mad at someone who dumped me over dinner. While it wasn't a full-fledged relationship and I realized that they weren't the one, what pissed me off most of all was that they did it too late [in the evening]. While they were giving me a good “last meal,” but note that we kept carrying on with the hanky-panky, if they had done it earlier I could've gotten home in time to catch *CSI* from the beginning. I summarily called their answering machine and left a fuming message².

At this stage of the dump, the person claiming to have no anger toward the dumper might just be just bottling it up inside, thus becoming depressed and self-critical.

² As I said, the hanky-panky didn't stop. This woman called me back that night and expressed that she did not want it to end.

5.1.3 GUILT

No matter whose fault it was, each person is likely to feel some degree of guilt. Even though you may know that you'll both be better not dealing with each other, the guilt you experience is emotional, and no explanations will make it go away.

5.1.4 GRIEF

At this stage of knowing that it's over, you feel that deep sense of loss and grief. At this point, you have to just let go of the whole relationship dynamic that you had with the dumper. This is the most important stage for a person to experience in order to reach acceptance and begin building a new life.

During this time, you've got to bond with the people you love, as they will help to get you through this.

5.1.5 ACCEPTANCE

At this stage, you have gotten it through your skull that this is over. It actually might take you awhile to fully embrace this and not try to win her back; this might, of course, take some serious amount of time to let go. You should be ready to move forward with your life and move forward with other people.

While this is supposed to be the last stage, it may not be the last place [emotionally] that you will be; you'll be adjusting to this for some time. There is the possibility that while you know it's over, there will always be a spot in your heart for that other person. That's life, and nothing is wrong with that. It's just very important to not become cynical at this point in time toward love, relationships, and/or women. Developing cynicism cannot only destroy you, but also your potential for positive relationships in the future.

5.2 EMBRACE YOUR MANHOOD

Now, I want you to do something that no one would really expect you to do... take it like a man. Stand tall and walk tall. You're a man damn it!!! You've climbed the highest mountain, dived into the world's oceans, and braved the extremes of the weather and climates. You made it through childhood, which can be especially cruel. You passed the tests of junior high and high school. You might've gone straight to work, to the military or to college. Hell, you might've done all three.

You survived so far being in a dysfunctional family, and if your family is what people consider normal, than you've really got something to talk about.

You come from a sex that has harnessed the power of the atom, and the remote control. You know how to program the clock on a VCR and a DVD. You understand the artistic and aesthetic significance of works like "Dogs Playing Poker" and you've figured out how to put beer in a can; the Guinness can was ingenious dog. You learned how to brew beer, make wine and distill alcohol and make liquor.

You don't know the different between chiffon and saffron, because you don't need to.

But even more than all of your outright achievements, there are the things that you have survived that you have to consider and pat yourself on the back for.

You just got dumped, but you survived how many days and nights with someone who doesn't think like any of us? You were hijacked into events like antiquing and shopping at the mall, carrying the burden of her purse, world weary and relegated to some out of the way seats in a clothes or shoe store with other survivors. You had to deal with her girlfriends, some

who were hating you while they were indirectly hating on her simply because she had someone and they didn't. You survived comments and conversations in which the only person that had something sensible to say or think was you. Hell, you survived her outpourings about something that happened or was happening in her life that you had the immediate solution for, but you held your tongue because you knew she didn't want an answer. She just wanted to talk about her problems, and you giving her a viable solution would do more to bring about a climatic change in the air between the two of you than stepping into a meat packing plant's refrigerator.

You paid for events to go to, and for things that you saw no use for. Hey, you've even gone into the store and purchased her "female" products, feeling more the awkward when they didn't fit into the brown-paper bag, or when the label showed clearly through the cheap plastic bag that the store gave you.

You suffered her driving and her killer questions posed to you on whether or not something actually made her look fat. Either she was fat to begin with, or was not fat but still had a complex of being fat.

You're a man, damn it, a survivor and an explorer. You took the challenge, and you lasted as long as you did. Don't think that you're the only one who couldn't tame that shrew; there are other men carrying scars which they might also view as badges of honor; purple hearts showing that they at least entered the battle and walked out alive. That is all of them except those that she left like gibbering village idiots with post-traumatic stress disorder. If anything, have pity on those, for they tried, and failed, but they tried at least.

You survived the urges to either commit great acts of dishonor when she needled you to that point of no return, or acts of infidelity when she held out, either outright or by not wanting to

do that thing that everyone else is doing. Congratulate yourself, the experience of enduring what you did will make you a better man, if you don't let it destroy you.

5.3 BEING DUMPED ISN'T THE END OF THE WORLD

True enough reality; it isn't the end of the world. You now have some free time. You can now get back to finishing that project you wanted to do, or you can finally talk to that pretty woman that you pass regularly but were 'unavailable' to approach.

You will meet more women, and some of them will actually be interested in you. That is, unless you have been sentenced to jail for life without any chance of parole. Hey, one guy even had his penis cut off and went on to star in porno movies. You're a man; you'll persevere.

5.4 GOOD/POSITIVE REACTIONS

As you have been officially dumped, the best reaction is to look inside oneself and concentrate on getting all the lessons from the experience that you could possibly get, and applying them to becoming a better you.

Some major things that you have to remember above all are the good aspects about the person, as well as the good times that you had together. Treasure those things, and you will rise above it all with style and class.

You can find a litany of good things to do in the third step of our five-step plan.

5.5 BAD/NEGATIVE REACTIONS

The bad reaction would be a crime of passion, murder or any violent crime, or suicide. These are all bad, and you need to stop thinking about these things.

If you are leaning to this side, then you need to get you some professional help along with doing some of the things in the third step of the plan. In some cases, you might be able to turn to your set of philosophical, religious or spiritual beliefs. Hey, as my brother says, "whatever works for you."

5.6 WHAT'S WORSE THAN BEING DUMPED?

There are a lot of things worse than being dumped. There are flesh-eating viruses and other terminal diseases. There is getting hit by a car or a plane dropping human waste out a plane, which then freezes up and falls on you, making a very interesting obituary. There is catching your significant other with another man, or a woman. Worse if you catch them with a friend or family member. It's easier if you find out that they went back to an old flame; oh it hurts, but not worse than if it was your brother, nephew, cousin, father or uncle. Heaven forbid you find her with a horse or a mule. I am not saying I've heard a story or two, but in this day and age... just remember, the woman that turns tricks in Tijuana with a mule used to have a boyfriend.

You could always find out through someone else, which is rough. One of the worst tales I know of happened when I was a student at Penn State. There was a football player whose father was a professional football player. The guy had the body, the talent, nice car and a girl. Well, the girl wound up sleeping with another guy on the football team who taped the gross indiscretion; I believe without her knowing it. Well, said boyfriend found out with the whole team when his teammate

played the tape in front of the other team members, with him present.

Then, there is the case that she cheats on you and gives you a disease. Worse if the disease is one that you can't cure. Worst if that disease will kill you. On the former, I have heard about that case both from a doctor friend who had a patient whose knee condition was caused by her husband giving her gonorrhea, and the other from a friend who knew a woman whose man gave her a disease that made her infertile.

The person could cheat on you without you knowing it for the longest time as well. That would also be bad.

Then there is another scenario: you could be in a long-term relationship with this person that is the worst thing that you have ever gotten yourself into; that is besides that cheese of the month club, or that time when you turned 21 and had a serious case of beer goggles. Yes, we have all heard of the marriage that is the worst thing, but you refuse to leave it because of the kids, or she'll rake you over the coals in alimony and financial settlement. Remember Johnny Carson when she took half? She becomes undesirable (different meaning to different folks), bitter, nasty, and the sex life becomes rare and unimaginative. Hmm, how many men do you know of in this predicament? Now, how many besides the men in your family?

So, there are other things worse than being dumped. Hell, her dumping you might be the best thing that you needed, either to get your act together, or to get away from her before she becomes a morass that sucks some poor unsuspecting schlep down a life that you wouldn't wish on that stray dog that bit you and gave you rabies.

5.7 RECAP

We have learned some major points in this section:

1. You are a man, and in that there is a legacy since the beginning of the human species; embrace that and feel good about you
2. Being dumped isn't the end of the world, yours in particular
3. There are good reactions and bad reactions that you can choose to do
4. There are worse things than being dumped, such as terminal illness, death, being cheated on, and of course life with her in an unfulfilling marriage

Step 2: E – Evaluate

Those who don't understand the past are doomed to repeat it

6. Post-Dump Analysis

The main problem with most of us when we get dumped is that we don't do a good post-dump analysis. While this sounds like us recapping a bowel movement, I wouldn't say that; it's far from that. However, the crap is out of your system now, partner! You might actually feel several pounds lighter.

6.1 HOW SHE DUMPED YOU

The first thing to look at is how she dumped you. Was it:

- face-to-face?
- on neutral ground?
- at her place?
- at your place?
- Via email, fax or letter?
- through someone else?
- A fade-away dump?
- Over the telephone?

You have to look at this, and possibly respect her for way in which she did it, or resent her for that way. The key here is one thing that men don't realize: **men play the game that women created**. A lot of men have not figured this one out, and haven't realized that when it comes down to a relationship, with the exception of women who are of a weak mental state, everything is basically up to them. I say this in regards to there even being a relationship at all.

But, being dumped is part of the game of life. People say that they don't play games, but life is one huge game, with myriad

smaller games within it. Some of them are separate, and some of it overlaps into other games and shenanigans. The world is a stage and we are all actors.

6.2 WHY YOU GOT DUMPED

You might ask yourself, “why me, why did she dump me?” And of course, you have a ton of questions. I feel that in most cases, women dump men for a variety of reasons, but most of the reasons are good. We go onto this in the next chapter. The key is, if you are asking this question, than it should lead you to the next section of this chapter, which is...

6.2.1 Was it a justified dump?

Sometimes, the dump wasn't your fault. Sometimes people either run and/or put up barriers when they are scared... scared at the possibility that you might change your mind, and heart, in the future.

I remember being dumped by someone special. When it happened, she gave me a number of reasons, all of which sounded like total bullshit because there was no logic behind her reasoning. Well, after the dump I pursued her and after a few months we started to go out again. After dinner, she admitted to me that every reason she gave for dumping me was a lie, and that the truth was her own fears. (In the end it fell apart again, but in reality, wasn't that the writing on the wall telling me that it would never work out anyway?)

In other times it might be that they didn't listen to themselves, or if they did listen to themselves, it could possibly be a shallow reason for kicking you to the curb.

I tend to date older women, and one thing at the back of their minds is what will happen to the relationship as we both get

older. The reality is that no one can predict what will happen. No one wants to set himself or herself up for a future fall, but one aspect of life is about gaining and losing; the money you earned today you will probably spend tomorrow. The other issue is whether or not I might change my mind about wanting kids. Ladies, besides the sex, and my attraction to your physical beauty and mind, one of the best things about older women is that they are mostly past wanting to have kids. That's what I am looking for.

6.3 THE TYPES OF DUMPERS

At this time, I think it prudent to examine certain types, or characteristics, of dumpers; female dumpers that is. There are different types of dumpers, and in understanding this, it can actually make you feel better about yourself. As I said, one aspect to consider is that you were in the game with this woman that long, and that is something to be proud of. It's kind of like bronco- and bull- riding, you are judged by how long you stayed on that beast, and even if you have the shortest time, you were there while everyone else was in the stands being a spectator. You tried, you failed, but you were there, dog.

Remember, these characters, or roles, are the culmination of my own personal thoughts and experiences, but also from those extracted in conversations with men over a decade of conversation about love, women, and relationships.

6.3.1 Bitch General

One thing to note about me is that I hate using the word bitch. I feel that it is the worst thing that you can call a woman. Okay, there are some other things that you true haters and men who have been hurt can come up with, but let's just deal with this word. We know that when you call a woman a bitch, all gloves are off. She might let loose the nails and go for your eyes and

your jugular. At this point, you have just seriously changed the current and future dynamics of the relationship. (I love the poem, "And now you call me a bitch" by Philadelphia's own Kimmika Williams).

But let's get back to this character; the Bitch General is the woman that is always complaining about something. Nothing is good enough for her no matter what you do. This is different from the Career Colonel and the Nagger, because this person might not have any serious power behind her. She might not be high-powered in her career, nor highly educated, but she just has [what we feel is] a large axe to grind with everything.

Hell, I don't know how you even made it this far with this one, or why you went there. Either you were a weak character, or the sex was off the hook. Okay, it could've been both. I know one man whose first wife was like this. Of his marriage to her, he said "they both conspired to beat the crap out of him." In the end, his best friend wound up marrying her; his greatest loss is his best friend.

6.3.2 Career Colonel

I really wanted to call this character a commandant, but I made it colonel instead. This is that woman who is focused squarely on her professional aspirations first, her desires second, and her man third. Hey, he might even be down the chain of cares lower than that.

I remember talking to a friend in mine in Maryland on the cell phone one Saturday night while I was on my way to pick up someone. She had told me about an article that was in the *Washington Post* that was forwarded to her by a male friend of hers. Initially, she thought that he was the author, but came to find out that the author was a woman. The article talked about how Black professional women seemed to be having everything

going on in their lives, and were part of extracurricular activities, taking administrative positions and tasks in those endeavors, but still didn't have men in their lives. As the author discovered, men weren't interested in women who might handle them the same way that they handled their professional lives.

It's interesting, because I remember being asked by one woman in DC, "Why don't professional men seem to want to deal with their female counterparts?" This sister was a professional event planner who was looking for a doctor or an attorney. I wanted to tell her first that she was not their counterpart, but trying to rationalize some points with the other sex is sometimes one of the biggest exercises in futility. No disrespect ladies, but men and women think entirely different.

I proffered several scenarios and thoughts, one most relevant being that most men feel more comfortable with someone who is not in the same field and so won't or wouldn't be a challenge to them on a professional level. Arguments can get vicious, and the last thing that a man wants is a woman who might go there and say something related to his professional life when they are dealing with a personal issue.

Case in point: I dealt with one woman who, a month earlier, had worked for the same firm, in the same department, but an entirely different section than me. My boss did not like me, and so my contract was not renewed. She made the mistake once of telling me that if I had acted a certain way, I'd still be with the firm. Well, she immediately apologized after she said that, but the damage was done. More so, the damage affected her than me, because the sex definitely wasn't all that, and I found no more reason to revisit it, or her.

We all tend to like a little bit of the Career Colonel character in every woman, and if she is really on the ball, the sex is good. However, refraining from applying her professional skills and

attitude to her personal relationship with you is a hard task for her. Thank God that she dumped you--you already have a job.

6.3.3 Miss I Need Corroboration AKA Miss Easily Influenced

We've all met one of these women, and some of us have dated her. To my brothers in arms, I raise a glass of ambrosia in a golden goblet and pour it into the earth in a libation for our woes with this one.

Most every woman has this inside her, it's just the issue of how much. This is the person that listens to what their friends and family have to say about you. However, in most cases, she hasn't realized that none of them are dating you, and that she actually has her own mind. This is the person that will throw in your face how so-and-so is getting treated, or is treating someone else, or what they would've done in a certain situation. All the while, they are trying to influence you to do one thing or another, and the reality is that that won't happen.

I used to date someone whose wise cousin used to warn them of the perils of listening to single women, because those women didn't have a man. I used to add that they need to be very critical of what their attached female friends said as well, because while they might be in a relationship, I am sure that they are not going to talk about everything that is happening in that relationship, including the things that they are doing to keep that relationship on course, if it is actually on course at all.

This person will read magazines, listen to what is said on talk shows, and actually believe that some things that happen on television shows should happen the same way in real life. She will also look at other people and think that she should get the same treatment. The one major thing that she hasn't discovered is that she isn't the same as that other person. Chances are,

whom her girlfriend is dating wouldn't date her. Hell, he might've seen her and her friend at the same time and chose the friend. All people are not created equal; everyone is an individual. Therefore, the rules that apply to one group don't apply to another. That's life, it's just that she doesn't see the division between her and Halle Berry or Number Six (Tricia Helfer) on the new *Battlestar Gallactica*, or Seven of Nine on *Star Trek Voyager*.

But she just doesn't get it. She also doesn't realize that most of the magazines and books that she is reading with some breaking discoveries about men are written by women (who don't know a damn thing about men, or being a man) or men who are trying to write a politically correct piece. Newsflash: Relationships are not politically correct.

She'll listen to her friends and get their advice on what you should've done in a certain situation. I am not knocking this, because one of them might actually have a good answer, but with this person, it's best to leave her alone. Hell, her friends and family might just be like a damned cult.

If your act is together, then it's not bad that this person dumped you. You weren't dating her, you were dating her and the acceptance of her friends and whatnot. Find yourself someone who is an individual with a complete mind of their own.

Caveat: If you meet her friends and realize that they are not your type of people, leave her alone. She'll want you to be part of things that she does with them.

6.3.4 The Past She Sees is Your Present and Future

We all have baggage, as we all accumulate things from our experiences. Those without emotions are the people that we definitely don't want to get involved with at all.

This character is one of the most complex. Or should I really be calling it a characteristic instead? We all need to look at the past, so that we don't repeat our mistakes in the future, however, we also need to understand that different people are different people.

This characteristic allows that woman to look at everything bad that she has seen, heard about, and/or have experienced, and apply it to what is in store for the two of you. If her man or husband cheated on her, and you have some similarities, then you'll be pegged. If her father committed some transgressions, and you have some similarities with her father, then you'll be pegged.

You'll go into this relationship already drawn and just waiting to be quartered. It's an uphill battle with a rock and a hill and you're Sisyphus.

This is an interesting dilemma if the woman has so many things that you like, but this one trait (and it is expressed). Enter at your own whim; you might win the battle and show her what you're really made of, and in the process help her to get over whatever she is holding on to. On the flip side, she might turn against you like a dog when you're moving toward his food bowl.

If and when she dumps you... hey, I have no answer on this. At least I am honest.

6.3.5 Miss Insecure

I have to separate those that are insecure from those that are needy, because there is a difference. Insecurity is something that is hard to deal with. Insecurity revolves around the issue of trust, and whether she can trust you. If you have given her no reason not to trust you, or have resolved what she should be

worried about (excluding any incidents in which violence or infidelity might have been the central issue), then you should be trusted.

If she still has some reticence in trusting you, move on, you don't need the aggravation. I was watching *Love Jones* the other day, and I came to the part in which the character of Nina started tripping on the issue of a brief fling in Darius's past. When it came to a heated argument, he did the right move, telling her that the next thing to do was for her to get her belongings out of his place. He had no reason to be with a woman that didn't trust him. *Playa, playa!* I felt so good when that part happened.

Miss Insecure will drive you insane with her insecurity, and there is no calming it fully. Oh, and don't be a man that women are attracted to, because that will make her more insecure, especially if she feels that one a basic comparison, you are in a better package than her.

6.3.6 Miss Needy

Ah, Miss Needy, now what do we have to say about this one. Miss Needy is the one that calls you all the time and always needs you. She will pester you on where you've been, what you did already and what you plan to do, whether or not you are doing this with her or not.

She will need your constant attention and affection, to the point you'll wish that you had an independent cat (okay, so that's an oxymoron), or a dog who'd just listen and go lay down somewhere else. Miss Needy might drive you crazy with calling you twice in fifteen minutes, or wanting to be with you for everything you do. Oh, what she really wants is a short umbilical cord between you and her, or would really hope that you were Siamese twins who are joined at the crotch.

She might be a crybaby, and God knows that we can't take hearing a woman cry. Or, she might just be a great whiner.

If she dumps you, feel relieved. You no longer have to play ICU doctor and psychotherapist. Your electronic tethers (phone, pager, cell phone) are no longer connected to her conscience. You are now free to hang again with your friends, and let your balls descend back into your scrotum.

6.3.7 The Nagger

We all know the nagger. There is a little nagger in every woman. Some women have learned how not to nag, or how to nag less, or even to make nagging seem like something else entirely. To this gallant gaggle of wondrous women, I tip my feathered hat, curtsy and salute you; gotta give them a medieval address.

The nagger can come in handy as she might actually push your butt into becoming a better person, on any number of levels. However, the contrarian nagger will only beleagueringly implore you to do things in the ways that she believes are best for you. This is good if you really don't know what's best for you; bad if you have your own ideas about your life and what you want to do about them. The best thing for you to do is to challenge her to do the things that she keeps wanting you to do. And you'll actually wonder how in the hell she has best, or good, friends that are nothing like her at all. One answer is that she might be the person used as a safety device to keep certain men away when they hang out.

6.3.8 The Whiner

Not to be confused with the nagger, there is the whiner. The whiner will equally get on your nerves, but on a totally different level.

6.3.9 Miss Confused

Oh, we've all heard of this person before. They could be confused about where their life is going, confused about their sexuality, or just confused in general. Miss Confused will give you one reason day, and another reason the next. They might even say that the reasons that they gave you first were truly wrong, or in some cases, lies.

If a person doesn't know where they stand, then there is no way in hell you can stand beside them. This is not to say that you can help lead them out of whatever mental or emotional morass that they are in... like being an expert in martial arts and deciding when to use them, everything is a judgment call. It's up to you to decide to see if you can rescue her.

Summarily, I have outlined several characteristics of the dumper. This is not to say that whomever dumped you was primarily one of these, or had various amounts of more than one in them. We humans are complex, and that 46th pair of women leads to some stark variations between two different women. Hell, even two close sisters can be miles apart in certain areas, and I have seen this with my own eyes!

I myself love women, and have shouldered the burden of the aforementioned personalities on more than one occasion. I'll even admit that I am a fool for love. They say that love is a battlefield, and the strategist Sun Tzu would tell you to know your enemy and the ground on which you fight. This is not to say that the battle you lost with one person should warn you of the battle that you might fight with another person. Every woman is an individual, and though some might individually be stark-raving mad lunatics (ha ha), you just have to find the one whose insanity you can deal with without losing your own self-

control and mental state. And I am sure that there are women saying the same thing about us.

6.4 REASONS FOR DUMPING (NOT YOUR FAULT)

There are many reasons why we get dumped. Some of them are trivial, shallow and not even well thought out, and in other cases, it might be because they truly understand us and know that it wouldn't work out. Now, in the latter case, it might be because we are not what they want because they can't handle us, or it could even be because we are not doing enough with our lives. Oh, who wants to be in a relationship with a man with no initiative and a deteriorating hygienic condition? At some point, we have to grow up and be responsible; that is until we hit that lottery jackpot and afford someone to pick up after us and wash our dirty drawers. And that lottery might just be a woman, believe it or not.

In this section, I'll try to bring to light several reasons for dumping, though I could never get them all in. So, with no further interruption, here goes...

6.4.1 Money/Career (upward mobility)

In this case, you don't have enough money, or you're not going anywhere in your professional life. Now, some women are purely shallow here and will only date you for what you can give them on a materialistic level. It was your fault for getting involved with this golddigger in the first place, and you deserve what you got. Now, don't go out there and do it again.

In this type of relationship (even though most relationships have this component) you are judged more by your disposable income, and the more that you have makes you more attractive.

On the career side, either you got with a person who expected you to move up the corporate ladder at a higher rate, or you simply need to get out of that dead-end job. This is not to say that your job isn't going anywhere, but maybe she actually has a point. There are certain jobs that should really be transitional, and maybe you've been in that position just a little too damned long. And I know that it's hard out there dog, I've been a star office temp when push came to shove—and I shoved my ass all around.

Maybe you can take the initiative and get some additional training, or go back to school, or really follow that dream of yours and take that chance.

This brings me to an interesting scenario, that of the artistic type. Sometimes, you might be someone who produces art, whether something tangible or intangible. You might be a painter, photographer, actor, playwright, singer or musician... and your woman wants you to get a "real" job. At that point, you might have to consider a side-hustle, or square gig, to keep the minimums taken care of. Since I came back to Philadelphia, I had dreams of doing things in a variety of mediums, and I am doing that now, but I also have the day job. I have heard of people living without a television because they have sold all of theirs to finance one venture or another. Much respect to those that are willing to go this far in search of this dream.

There is a caveat in this piece, and that is the issue of emotional honesty between the two of you (look for this in the addendum to this book). Honestly, you might not have whatever it takes to achieve that dream of yours, and your dream just might not be a good dream. At this point, you need to do a serious evaluation of where your professional life is headed.

Additionally, in regards to your dreams, you have to respect where a woman is coming from in what she wants; that is if she

at least has her act together. As I was talking to one woman, she talked with me about how she expects a man to have certain things developed by a certain age. I can't disagree with her on that; that's her position and she is entitled to the cards of the deck she wants to play with. I always tell people that there is a timeline, and that we are judged by our progress on it Based on others' experience of that timeline. Sometimes, the day a person leaves is the day before your ship comes in. It's up to you to figure out whether or not you want to deal with them, or just use the "Next" philosophy.

6.4.2 Your career

As I was taking a brief walk, this one came to me. It's different then the previous reason, but it is a serious one. Sometimes, the career that a man chooses may stress the woman out about whether he is going to come home alive, shot up, or horribly disfigured from an accident.

The first things that come to mind are law enforcement officials and military personnel. Did you know that men in military special operations units have the highest divorce rate in America? A cop usually comes home everyday, except if they are undercover (remember what happened to Donnie Brasco's marriage?). The regular military man might be deployed overseas for a stretch, and it's worse for men in the Navy or Marine Corps who are on a ship or a submarine (but sub duty is not worse than a special ops deployment, though it has it's own inherent isolation and dangers).

Remember that I said that there are worse things than being dumped? Well, one is that your wife or girl starts seeing someone else while you are away; we have all heard of those "Dear Jodie" letters.

For the men in special operations, they can be called on at any time, and whisked away for an undetermined period of time, with their significant others not knowing where and having no type of contact with them. This can really affect a relationship.

Secondly, war and combat changes men, and some women might not be able to deal with what has returned in his place.

All in all, this is a justified reason for severing a relationship. If she is so worried about you that she can't be calm, then she shouldn't be in that relationship with you.

6.4.3 Different thought processes

Sometimes, two people think so differently and are so adamant about their positions that there is no way in hell that you two can make it together in a long-term relationship. I myself prefer a woman with common sense.

6.4.4 Different politics

This is different than the previous section in that sometimes, it's something as simple as politics that can separate people. The way one thinks is one thing, but the things that someone thinks about and how they feel about them are two different things. So much in life is politics that we don't even see.

6.4.5 Different religion

Sometimes, two people of different faiths can actually make it, and sometimes they can't. You can try, but the distance in the two religions is often the distance in the two people.

6.4.6 She got what she asked for but couldn't deal with it

Okay, this is an area in which I will have a lot of fun. There are times in life where I wanted that woman so bad, whomever I might have been dealing with at the time, that I was about to go to some priestess or shaman and get me a love potion. But then, common sense took hold and I remembered the old adage, "Be careful what you wish for, because you just might get it." In that fact, there was something that held off. I have won women's hearts back only to realize that I was more in love with who they could be, versus whom they choose to be.

In my opinion, many women want a strong man, but once they get one, they might not like how he sees things, acts on things, and feels how she should do the same about them. Chris Rock has some wonderful commentary about relationships in his comedy special *Never Scared*.

We all have fantasies, but sometimes the dream is a lot better than the reality.

6.4.7 Life obstacles and other stuff

While I'd really like to call "other stuff" something else, I am trying to keep this book's language a little bit aboveboard. Jay-Z rapped about a sister co-signing a car for him while his credit was bad, and many of us know what a burden bad credit and debt can be.

Sometimes, we have too much baggage to lug around as well as too many hurdles to straddle, and a woman just doesn't want to deal with that. It could be someone going through some legal or criminal drama, or just some family drama.

You really can't blame a person for this; we all have our limitations. What you can do is just realize what level of tolerance the other person had. And sometimes, you just need to correct, or straighten out, some or all of those areas so that you can actually have someone worthy in your life.

6.4.8 Her friends and family disagree with you

Hmm, we have all seen movies, or actually even know people where a woman marries a man against her family's wishes. In some cases, the family is completely wrong, and in some cases totally right.

Usually, in the former case (where the family is wrong), the issue might be that the man is different in class, race, or religion to the woman's family. Interracial dating poses this problem, and there are many movies that demonstrate this, like the classic *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*.

On the flip side, maybe there is actually something wrong with the family and the man is going to take the woman away from all of the madness. One great book that really shows this side of it is Dean Koontz's *Life Expectancy*.

Sometimes, people tend to go more with what their support system wants, or chooses, for them, whether right or wrong. Sometimes, the support system chooses someone who actually might be the one to victimize them. In either case, a person who lets everyone else make up her mind is someone that you are better off without anyway.

6.4.9 Your relationship with others

“The way a woman treats his mother is indicative of the way he will treat the woman in his life.”

This is pure bullshit, and I would like everyone to be real with it. After all, your mother could've been a stark-raving mad lunatic. She could've been the person that pushed your father away.

Some of us have complicated pasts and family lives, and I'll be big enough to say that I am one such person. People used to look at me based on how I treated some relatives until they got to understand the history; and then they knew that I was being the better person.

However, we are talking about women right here, and many of them have some storybook vision of how we should treat each other, taking the reality of the dynamics that we have with other people. The one thing that people have to understand is that we have different dynamics with people based on the past and the present; it's not their relationship with those people...

This is, however, one of those interesting variables, or equations, of life and relationships. "Is the enemy of my enemy a friend?" and all that jazz.

Now, let's look at the issue of the friends. I have learned that if I don't vibe with a person's friends, then I need to leave them the hell alone. These are their friends, whether right or wrong, and God forbid that you come with some views, or what not, that is different than what those friends and family are giving your woman.

I could just inundate you with the times when I have thought differently than a person's friends and family. And you don't even want to know the outcomes, and how right I was.

6.4.10 The relationship isn't going anywhere...

Or maybe it's not going anywhere fast enough. I have known of men who have been with women in excess of ten years before

they actually put a wedding ring on her finger. In some cases, you can get along with that, and in most cases, you'd be a fool for trying to run that game.

We men have to understand that women usually want two things: children and a husband. Be warned that women in this time will take the child over a husband any day of the week; it's a severe flaw in how far our society has degraded.

To everything there is a timeline, and that timeline exists for whenever she gets fed up with giving the milk away for free.

And you don't want to go to war with a woman's biological clock; you will wind up raped and your remains strewn upon a rat-infested alley somewhere behind some seedy bar. Oh, she'll milk you and toss you aside like a wilted head of lettuce. And don't think that women are not behind colluding with one another to get what they want from you; they will and you will be played for a bigger fool than the guy who believed that line, "I am on the pill."

At a certain point, almost all women want a diamond, a house with a two-car garage, and one or more children. It exists at the fabric of their very being. I believe that all women are crazy simply because they are born with all of their eggs; that's too much life riding around in one person!

And at some point, they are going to look at you to seriously analyze whether or not you'll be the one that can provide them with the lifestyle that they want, whether or not they are going to actually shoulder the burden with you. And if that person isn't you, they might marry someone that you would be shocked at, but you'll still occasionally fantasize about what it would have been like if you had been the one. Oh, don't think that you are all that! It was her choice to be with you, not the other way around.

Note that this subsection can be combined with the previous subsection on money and career.

6.4.11 She simply upgraded

Today, you've got that Honda, but tomorrow you can afford that Jaguar. Men do it, and so do women! We upgrade. Though we sometimes regret the upgrade because it might have more issues and bugs to work out, which might not be capable of being worked out anyway; you've got the Jaguar, but can you afford the upkeep and the maintenance... and how many people are looking to covet your ride? And then we realize what we had before, which we let get away. Finally, at this point, many of us are too proud, as well as too much on an emotional coward to get back.

Women meet new men on a daily basis. Each time is an opportunity to offer her some sexual gratification [or at least an experience because every experience isn't gratification for her] whether overtly, covertly or subversively. Women get at least five times the offers than the average man does. "Who chases who?" I ask you.

And if things aren't going as dreamy as possible, don't think that she isn't considering offers from men with more to offer her. A married co-worker used to always jokingly say to me, "If you're rich, I'm single."

The upgrade is the classic move that anyone who starts to outgrow the person that they are with will do. We as men, however, tend not to upgrade, but to just switch brands and models because we've gotten bored with the features of the model that we have. We had a reliable inline four engine, but we want to try that supercharged V-6 or that V-12 that can scale down the amount of cylinders that it uses. We didn't think that

with more cylinders come higher gas bills, or the fact that with more moving parts, maintenance issues can climb fantastically.

Maybe you got dumped because she upgraded. Don't worry; you can be rebuilt. Just think of yourself as the "Six Million Dollar Man" right at the crash. Now it's time for you to find the money, the parts, and the doctors... but I have faith in you.

6.4.12 She thought she was out of your league

I had to put this one in here, and I almost forgot to. When I am bored, I usually surf the Craig's List website. In their "Best of Craig's list" section, they usually have some very interesting and funny submissions. Well, I am going to quote one here; I can't find the author, so it will be from an anonymous source. The title was *Good-looking guys and average women*.

Dear Good-looking guys,

Thanks for ruining things for us average-looking guys. You, like all men, will tag pretty much anything female. So you go out to bars and other social venues and you go for the low-hanging fruit. You go for the average-looking girl. Why? Because they are easy and don't give you half the shit that hot women give.

So what's the big deal? The big deal is that average girls don't know their place anymore. They suddenly think that they are hot just because they have been banged by a hot guy. They are wrong, and they do not know it. We average guys, however, do know it. We know that the average girl -- in the long term -- is out of your league. We know that she is in our league, the league of the average. But she does not know that.

So the average girl goes on thinking she is hot and holding out for a hot guy to spend the rest of her life with. Yes, it's great for the ego of the average girl. She

bangs a hot guy every now and then, and she really thinks she is the shit. No one told her, though, that any guy (hot or not) will bang any average girl. Sadly, the average women develop this "I'll never settle" mentality. Average guys are suddenly not an option for them, leaving us average guys out in the cold. The genuine hot girls, of course, are not an option for us, so that leaves us with the fat chicks. Thanks. Thanks a lot, hot guy. Meanwhile, the really hot chicks are sitting around dissing us and waiting for you to come talk to them. (And we can only imagine the torture that the fat guys are going through as we average guys are forced to mack on their women.)

So do the social scene a favor -- stick with your own kind. Leave the average girls to us, and stop creating delusions of grandeur in their minds. The average chick is our niche. We work hard enough as it is for the average girl. Now you go work hard to bag the hot chick. Don't be afraid of a little work.

Now, I just loved this one, and you have to hope that you are not a victim of this. Hell, I probably have been an offending party in more than one case, but don't blame me, I am a man.

6.4.13 She exhausted you

This happens in the case of you hooking up with the gold-digger. If you ever watched the UPN comedy *Girlfriends*, there is one character, Toni, who is definitely chasing the moneyed man. Well, she does catch one, a Jewish plastic surgeon who was totally in love with her. The funny thing is, that after they got married he told her how much in debt he was; debt that he racked up chasing her. There are also women out there that will leave you after they have bled you dry.

6.4.14 She couldn't satisfy you

There are two paths for this reason; one is sexual and the other is just basic. On the former, the issue does arise if a woman cannot satisfy you sexually, it can lead to her having feelings of inadequacy. Those are the last things that she needs to feel.

On the latter, if a woman feels that nothing she does is good enough for you then there is that serious problem. One variation of this path is when a woman tries to do everything for you, either to impress you, or to make you feel special. This doesn't work if all that you want are the basics, or you have had top-flight things and either don't want them, are not impressed by them, or will get them yourself.

Examples of this that I have experienced are women taking me to "gourmet" restaurants, or buying me an expensive bottle of wine since they know that I like certain wines. Unfortunately for them, I can't stand going to a gourmet restaurant but would rather have that stuff at home; at the restaurant your pockets get lighter but your stomach is still wanting. On the wine piece, an expensive bottle of wine might not actually be pleasing to everyone's palette, and I have come across wines for under ten dollars that put shame to ones that run forty dollars.

6.4.15 It was too good to believe

I just had to add this one, because there are people out there who will totally screw up something good. They might've never had a man that treated them so good, or didn't have some crazy demons with him.

You might not beat them (there are women out there who have come to deal with abusive relationships so much that if they deal with a man that isn't abusive, they believe that he doesn't love them), you might not mistreat them, and you actually might have

a pretty happy life. Believe it or not, this sometimes scares people who aren't used to that.

It's like taking someone out of a bad situation and putting them in a good one; the complete difference in the experiences might shock them and there are some that will gravitate back to the bad experiences.

There are women that can't see, or understand, the reasons that you are with them. They look at you, and their own inferiorities creep up on them. They might worry if they are the right height, have the right measurements, the right skin complexion, the right weight... and the list goes on and on. Basically, no matter what you do, you still might fall short of convincing them that you love them for them.

6.5 SELF ANALYSIS

Being turned down for anything affords you an opportunity to not only look at the situation, but to also look deeply within yourself. **Don't beat yourself up, because sometimes not winning this one has nothing at all to do with you.** You might be the person who has so much going on that the other person just feels somewhat inferior and insecure with you. It happens.

However, to be sure, you do need to do some self-analysis. Now, this is the hard part, because it takes a lot to really deal with who you are. Not many people are ready to face themselves, and sometimes, the people who are close to you are the last people who are really going to tell you what you need to know or hear.

There is one good question to ask, and that is, "How did I contribute to me being dumped?"

6.6 REASONS FOR DUMPING (ON YOU)

Okay, barring you did everything right, there is the other side of the coin, that you were actually the main reason you got dumped.

6.6.1 You were inattentive

No woman can take it when you don't show her enough attention. The problem is that the amount of attention they need and the times where they need that amount is a multivariable equation that takes the elements of quantum mechanics, fourth dimensional quantum physics, and the basic knowledge of the proper measurements to use in cooking recipes. If you can time travel, be in two places at once, read her mind, and also know the difference between a pinch and a dash of salt, then this wasn't something that you failed on. Also, if you are the type of guy that spends a lot of time with his boys, and not enough time with her, then ultimately you will get dumped and should.

Note to you in this case: you aren't sleeping with your boys. Well, hopefully you're not.

6.6.2 You had no initiative

This is a good one and is reserved for those people who just do what they do, which might be just enough to get by. If you are living in a relative's garage or basement, living at home and not paying rent or helping out with any utilities, or just meandering around in the same dead end entry-level or just above entry-level job or transitional job for a little too long, then you have no initiative.

6.6.3 You have no purpose

This is probably worse than having no initiative. You might be the guy who actually goes to work on time, is a good neighbor, and all the rest of the stuff that Ward Cleaver was, but you might be missing that positioning in your life. They say that if you stand for nothing, then you'll fall for anything. Sometimes, a woman appreciates a man who believes in something, whether or not it's something that she believes in or agrees with. The characters of wimp and momma's boy both go under this section and the aforementioned one as well.

6.6.4 You think or talk too much

In my travels, I have come across people who talk just too damned much. This can be a pain and will make you kick them to the curb. If you are a man who talks too damned much, then you've got it coming to you rightfully.

The other aspect is that you think too much. It could be on something as significant as what's going on with the country, or something that is affecting people on a more individual level. I remember during the early to mid 90s, there were so many women who were revealing to me the sexual injustices and outright crimes that had been perpetuated against them. I mean rape, date rape, incest, molestation, etc. and it got too much for me.

I would of course talk to a woman that I was dating about this, and it wasn't something that she wanted to hear about (Note: people don't want to hear about something like that until it happens to them or someone that they feel strongly about; it's the hypocrisy of the human condition).

The second aspect of "thinking too damned much" is that the woman just wants to enjoy life. After business hours, she

doesn't want to talk about anything that makes her use her brain, but just have fun.

6.6.5 You were abusive

This is the one that I hate to talk about, because I loathe domestic violence, but also know that women can turn almost anything that you say into the translation and accusation that you are being emotionally abusive.

If you have been physically abusive towards a woman, or have been verbally tearing her down, then you need to get yourself some help, as well as it was justified that she dumped your ass. If you are in a relationship where the woman abuses you, then you need to step. And if you are in a relationship where she takes you to the point that you want to get physical with her, then you need to walk away.

Now, there is a flip side. You could just have been more honest with her than all of the people in her life. People love to live the lies; no one wants to really look in the mirror (hey, I've got some choice words to curse myself out with at times). Damn you if you've been honest!! Haven't you learned anything from the generations of men before you?

6.6.6 You were trying to play her

Women know when they are getting played, and some women will go with it as long as you are meeting all of their needs. The unfortunate side could be that she finds a man who doesn't want her money and doesn't use her, or you mess up her credit so bad that needs to ditch your ass just to get back to zero.

6.6.7 You weren't right and other people ratted you out

The worst thing that can happen to a player is that everyone loves the main woman that he is dating and rats him out. They don't want to see her hurt.

I remember in college I was living with several other vets. One was a German-American Green Beret from Western Pennsylvania who was dating a very attractive Italian girl. Well, the problems started when I moved in, and she got to know me, and started confiding in me. I finally had to rat him out because I got sick of seeing her get hurt, and her talking to me about him. Hey, every man has his limits. He finally got found out but he couldn't come at me; he couldn't whip my ass.

I have heard of cases when a man's own momma has ratted him out. Hey, it happens.

6.6.8 You whine too much or are too sickly

Remember the guy that Meg Ryan was dating at first in *Sleepless in Seattle*? Well, if you are a wimp who whines, and you are allergic to everything, chances are that she wants to trade you in for a more robust version of the male species. Hey, even I can't help you here.

6.6.9 You complain too much

This is almost as bad as the whiner, but it more annoying in that you are always complaining about something. I had a road-dog who used to always complain about one thing or another, usually the price of something, and that got on my nerves.

6.6.10 You're cheap

Worse than complaining is downright being cheap. Nobody likes a cheapskate, and if you are that man, you can forget on a woman really wanting to be with you. You can't go to the same restaurant repeatedly, because the servers will remember you're cheap ass. I had a road-dog once (the same cat I mention in the previous paragraph) who was cheap when it came to tipping.

I remember being in NYC on his birthday at a nice little restaurant where our table was in the middle of several tables filled with some very beautiful women. Well, first of all, his cheap ass wanted to get dinner at Blimpie's; I have never eaten at Blimpie's, which is not to say that they have bad food, but I didn't drive to hang out in Manhattan clubbing and what not to load up my gut on fast food prior to hitting the spots. Anyway, I was going to treat for the meal, and when the time came to tip, he pulled out like three dollars. Well, even though I more than made up for his shortchanging – I should say shortcoming – all the women basically scoped out his cheap ass, and that probably ruined my chances of meeting any of them. There was no way in hell that their “wingwoman” would take one for the team in that case.

What's worse, this guy has been occasionally hanging out at one of the local watering holes and for as long as he has been coming there, no one remembers him ever giving the bartenders a good tip, or ever even buying and sharing a pitcher of beer, let alone treating his own frat brothers to a pint. To top it off, his glass is always there to partake of a pitcher purchased by the rest of the crowd. The last time I checked, one of the guys was ready to step to him and slam him for it.

6.6.11 Your grooming and wardrobe standards

My best friend is sure to laugh at this and the prior two sections because this whole line of thought reflects a person that we both know.

I used to have a road-dog (damn, I know you are saying, “Just who the hell is this character?”) who was not only cheap and complained about the price of things, but also needed some attention in both the clothing that wore and his grooming and hygiene.

On the former, he used to wear this one black shirt with a Chinese collar that had lost its luster years ago. Pair that with some basic black slacks and some shoes that had definitely seen better days. The shoes, or his lack of knowledge of shoe care and what they say about a person was one of the most lacking things in his arsenal and we’ll come to that.

When I travel, even away for a day, I normally come with several different changes of clothes; usually having redundant items (two pairs of shoes, two bottles of cologne, two pairs of dress slacks). You never know what can happen, and the last thing that you want is to be so far away from your own stuff and have a wardrobe malfunction.

Anyway, this friend would always say that I packed like a “bitch,” referring to women; this is a faux pas and reminds me of something else that I’ll bring up in the next heading. Back to the story: we were at a friend’s apartment in Maryland. She used to let me and a friend crash there anytime we wanted to go to DC to party. I usually shine my shoes that I am going to wear out before I leave home and store them in a shoe bag after I shine them. Well, after I take them out of the bag to get ready to put them on, I usually hit them with another layer of polish. As he so indignantly spoke with disdain about the level of vainglorious

attention that I was showing my footwear, my friend admonished him on his ignorance in regards to presenting yourself in good footwear. As he exclaimed that women can't see the shine on your shoes in a crowded club, Cathy went on to explain to him that women look at the condition of your heels and can see the level of shine on them from the light which reflects off of them. What's worse is that while this cat might be a C in looks, if he dresses up, he doesn't present a bad picture. It moves him up to a B or B- at least.

On the flip side of the coin, we have to look at grooming and hygiene. The two most important things that can dampen a relationship are your body smell and the smell of your breath. On one side, deodorant itself doesn't work well on a man who has been sweating his ass off on the dance floor; it only masks the musk so much. At that point, it would be a bad idea to try to approach, or near, a woman in any way, shape or form.

Do I need to actually go into the issue of halitosis (bad breath)? Obviously, no one likes kissing a mouth that offends their nose. It was also funny on one occasion when he asked to use my cologne; luckily I had two bottles, because I didn't want him smelling like me.

6.6.12 You refer to women disrespectfully

Men are men, and we make mistakes, errors and omissions. However, there are certain words that women should never hear you say, especially when referring to them even if you are thinking it. "Bitch" and "ho" are two of those words. If you use it around a woman enough, she is just going to wonder when you are going to call her that. Hell, I'd dump your ass too if I were her.

6.6.13 You refer to other people disrespectfully or insensitively

Not only is disrespect towards women a no-no, but so is disrespect towards other groups of people. Not everyone might share your own personal biases and you never know who is a friend to, or related to, whom. This includes using racial stereotypes and slurs.

6.6.14 Your financial status isn't measuring up to her expectations

Maybe you've got some jacked up credit, or aren't making enough money. In this case, take the time and get your stuff together, and also, date a woman who will be with you while you're getting your act together.

6.6.15 You cheated on her

Enough said already.

6.6.16 You didn't satisfy her sexually

Tough position to be in amigo. Sometimes, no matter what you do, you're not going to make her propeller twirl.

6.6.17 You badmouthed her friend and family

You actually might have said the truth. Tough one here as well.

6.6.18 You keep talking about your ex, or other women

I am not going to front. I don't know how many times that I made this mistake. The reality was that I wasn't over my ex, and it was very apparent. You are due for either the pre-dump, or the dump with this one player.

6.6.19 You actually answer questions truthfully

You want the truth!! You can't handle the truth!!

Famous words that couldn't be any more true in real life. I could put this under reasons that aren't on you, but you should know better. Honesty, or you being honest, and women aren't two things that go together all of the time. It's hit or miss. It's like when a woman asks you if a dress makes her look fat. You and I both know that her fat body shows that she is fat, and that the dress is not a miracle worker. Ask yourself, "Do you really tell the truth in this case?"

6.6.20 You have priorities that come before her

No one likes to play second fiddle, but there are a ton of people out there who will detract and distract from your progress. These are the ones to stay away from. If you've ever seen the movie *One Hour Photo*, the husband makes a good case for cheating on his wife; everything that he was working his ass off for was what he wanted, and he truly needed an escape from her and her goals.

6.7 RECAP

In the evaluation phase, you looked at many things. You:

- examined the way in which you got dumped
- analyzed the personalities of the dumper
- explored reasons that she might've dumped you that weren't your issue
- considered reasons that she could've dumped you that were on you through self-analysis

most importantly, you realized that sometimes, you'll never get the reasons why you were dumped

Step 3:

T- Take Action

At this point in time, you have to take some action. You have been dumped and have started to understand why; however, you can't just sit there like a lump on a log. You have to keep on movin' like Soul to Soul sang on their first album.

Quick Analysis of your Reaction

Okay, the first thing that you have to do is to understand the severity of this dump, or more so, how this dump truly affects you.

If it only hurts your pride because you got dumped, proceed to Step 1, and then after completing this step, give this book to the Joe who could use it. You need to either find the woman for you, or become a little less shallow.

If the loss of the relationship really hurt you, proceed to and fulfill Step 1 and then read the rest of this book. However, in this case, it is wise to really look and see that while the loss of the relationships hurts, if that person was honestly not the person that you really get that electric feeling about, then you need to follow the advice in the preceding paragraph.

Get some sex, quick

Getting dumped is like getting fired--the first thing that you have to do is to get back up out there and find out where the next paycheck is coming from. Well, let's be honest, in most cases, a central part of being in a relationship is that you have a steady source for sex. But we all know that the emotional part of the relationship dynamic might throw us for a loss akin to breaking ourselves off of an addiction to heroin or crack cocaine, or dealing with the loss of a relative or good friend.

However, the first thing that you need to do is to go out and get you some bomb-ass sex. I am talking about the type of sex that actually has you laying completely exhausted on a sopping bed drenched in sweat and the juices produced by two people. Hey, if you can do more people, I ain't mad atcha.

Anytime that I got dumped, my next thoughts were concerning where I would be getting my next nights of pleasure. Sure, you can hopefully always find a sex partner, though they might not be the person that you most desire. But to get what you had, what you lost? Now, that's the hard part. It takes a while to come up with a good sexual chemistry between two people, and also in this world, you have to contend with the issue of finding someone who is disease-free [or in some cases find someone with the same disease/condition as you], doesn't have any extra guests like body lice, lice or chiggers, and is open to doing the things that you like to do. Hell, that's only part of it, you need to be able to do the things that they like to do well!!

We are not all sexually compatible, and sometimes having someone who is willing, but just can't satisfy you is worse than having no one at all. I'll be the first to admit that there are things that only one person did, or that a handful of people did, or even things that I could experience on a regular basis with someone that was way beyond the sexual scope and abilities of the total sexual partners that I have had. What's the greatest irony is the amount of articles written in women's magazines that talk about great sex acts in comparison to the amount of women who read these articles and still can't either perform them, or won't.

Luckily in my life, I spent very little time in committed monogamous relationships so there were always partners that I could turn to when one relationship, or dynamic, ended. Sure, it might have not been everything that I was looking for, but it got me through. If you are used to driving a Jaguar and all of a sudden it dies on you or gets totaled, don't tell me that you'd

rather taken public transportation than cop a Hyundai or a hooptie³ until you can get back to where you were before.

The important thing about going out and getting you some new sex is that it might just take your mind off of the other person, especially if this new sex was better than the sex that you were getting before.

The main caveat that you have to hold dear and true is to not lead anybody on. You can either let them know that this is just for sex's sake, or it's to get over someone. You'd actually be surprised by how many women will try to screw the memories of the last woman out of you. This can be a very enjoyable experience.

I remember once where I was pining heavily over one woman and was hanging out with a friend, helping her get a 32" television set. After we got it hooked up, I hung around for ten minutes or so, and then went home. On my way home, I checked my answering machine, only to hear a message from her talking about how much she wanted to take me into the bedroom and just screw the hell out of me. I still hold her in contempt for not proceeding with her naughty thoughts.

In another case, I went from one woman, to another woman, to another woman in the course of maybe three months. The first relationship ended simply because of woman A's own issues. At her behest, we were supposed to be an exclusive sexual item, but in her wanting to be driven from one place to another place, she called up her old boyfriend/lay and had him chauffeur her, and of course gave him the goods in the end. I actually discovered it the morning after, and told him he could have her. This led me

³ Hooptie, or bucket – a car that has definitely seen better days. Please listen to *My Hooptie* by Sir Mix-a-Lot.

to woman B, another older woman who was the same age as woman A, and who I had had a crush on since I was in high school. We only did the do twice in maybe sixty days as she was going through some major issues with taking care of an old family member, and I was actually somewhat shy towards her. In the end, I wound up connecting with woman C, who I had a crush on since meeting her two years earlier. This led to some damned good sex... many times, and a relationship dynamic that went on and off for the better part of a decade.

In my last case, it was hard filling the void, and I truly have not filled it to the level of experiences that I had in my prior relationship. Oh, I searched high and low for people, places, and experiences that would really sate my desires and make me stop thinking about the woman who truly had my heart. I found people and groups that you would have only dreamed about, but in the end, did very little with them and kept my own composure. Hey, there are just too many diseases out there, and also discretion is key.

Anyway, I did wind up finding a good fit with one person, and while it was supposed to last just a summer, it wound up lasting for a year. While this person is now in her own relationship in another state, we are still the best of friends.

And along the way, I did run into those who desired more in a relationship than I was willing to give at that time... for multiple reasons.

Also, be very careful that you don't say something more than you mean while in the act. This has happened to me one at least one occasion while engrossed in the act *flagrante delecto*. Delectably, I started saying the things that were meant for my ex, but tailored to the woman in the bed with me to just be on the sexual nature. Oh yes, if you mix alcohol and heartbreak together, it can have you in some very interesting scenarios; like

the time I was sucking on someone's fingers at an after-party in front of her husband. When they were talking about the incident later, I thought that it was my best friend who had did the deed, and not me. Luckily all was forgiven, and actually, no one was angered anyway.

But the reality is that right now, you are walking around with a loaded gun. And the more you let it get back up in there, the more harm that you are gonna cause when you finally let that flow, flow. Who knows what you might do with all that pent-up sexual energy and aggression?

While I was at Penn State, a friend of mine came up with the concept of the "suicidal nut." The concept was quite simple, especially since he wasn't getting any action with anyone right then. He would stave off any forms of self-gratification and wait until that right person came along. Along the way, he would eat healthy and exercise regularly. In the end, he figured he'd have a good amount of seminal fluid and sperm stored up – sure, we know that this is not truly the case physically, but it makes for a pretty interesting story. When he did find that person, and he finally released, the force and volume would be so much that it would probably blow his "peter" apart as well as the rushing jet of spume would seriously overwhelm her, possibly making walking very difficult for her for some time.

Anyway, as I close this section, I'll leave you with the best word of advice, which is also "man lore:"

The best way to get over a woman is with another woman.

7. Dealing with the Dumping

Dealing with being dumped is something that you have to do by yourself, as well as with loved ones... and it's never the easiest thing to do. The things that you do can lead you to both extremes and excess, which can result in permanent situations that you don't want to actually happen.

The main things that come to mind are:

- Drinking [and crying it out of you]
- Good sex
- Fighting or getting beat up
- Music
- Roadtrip
- Working out/physically exhausting oneself
- Moving away
- Entering a competition
- Party spree
- Long talks with friends and family
- Writing a book or song, that is channeling it constructively into an artistic output
- Actually listening to what she said and acting on it

These are probably the main things that we do when we get dumped; we might not do all of them, but we'll do several of them.

7.1 DRINKING

Nothing like a good bender to start the healing. Johnnie Walker, Jack Daniels, Captain Morgan; friends in times of need. Okay, I am not advocating alcoholism, but nothing like a good cry that came out while looking at the bottom of an almost empty bottle. Hey, in Japan what do you think some of those men do up in those geisha houses? Sometimes, they just get bombed on sake and let it all hang out. And there's nothing better than having a nice rack to lay your head on when you're not feeling good; "Momma's gonna make it all better."

And there is nothing wrong with crying. Athletes cry when they didn't make the cut, or their team lost the championship. Warriors and soldiers cry after they have lost brothers-in-arms, whether at the end of a skirmish, or at the end of the hostilities. People cry when they lose someone that is close to them, and sometimes in being dumped, you are losing what became part of your spirit.

As far as drinks chosen, I myself prefer beer and wine, but will know that a finger or two of bourbon will open up the soul in a minute.

7.2 GOOD SEX

I mentioned this before as Step 1. Get as much of this as possible.

7.3 FIGHTING OR GETTING BEAT UP

Now, I know that some people out there will definitely try to rake me over the coals for this one, but sometimes, you have to result to more physical means to work out that aggression. I would recommend going to a dojo or a boxing ring to do this, not out in the streets.

Man, I hurt so much from my last dumping that I wanted to track down my old sensei and have him deliver me a good whumping, not enough to leave marks and leave me partially disabled for life, but to give me enough pain where I could stop thinking about the pain which my heart was experiencing. Too bad there isn't a real *Fight Club* in every city.

7.4 MUSIC

Sometimes, you have to mix this with some of the other ways of dealing with being dumped. There are tons of tunes to either help you get out of your rut, or that will sympathize with your non-unique plight. I stay away from country music, but I'll be damned if almost half of that doesn't deal with heartache. If I see a guy go from Brooks Brothers to Stetson and spurs, I think that I'll know what happened.

7.5 ROADTRIP

This is by far one of the best things that you can do. Take a trip somewhere, and if you can't afford the islands, gas up the vehicle and hit the road. And it's always better to get at least one state away, and to a place that has tons of hot women.

Oh, and always make sure that you have a good wingman when you do this.

7.6 WORKING OUT OR PHYSICALLY EXHAUSTING ONESELF

The workout, while it does nothing for me personally, many people actually say that it is a way to workout stress. I do remember hitting my best bench press [at that time in my life] right after getting some bullshit answer from a woman that I was very much in love with.

And working out might be the start of getting yourself into a better physical you, which is not a bad path to follow.

7.7 MOVING AWAY

Sometimes, love hurts so much, that you can't even be near the person in any way, shape, or form. I wound up meeting one bartender who left either Scotland or Ireland for America, just because his girl broke his heart. Now, that was some pretty drastic action, but sometimes what you do need in life is a totally fresh start. I love the story in *Love Actually* when Colin realizes that he is a sex god, but just in the wrong country. He winds up flying to Minnesota during Christmas and hits it big.

7.8 ENTERING A COMPETITION

Hey, you're not spending money on her anymore, nor are you spending your time consumed with her presence. Why not enter a competition? Chances are you'll meet someone new, or at least new people in the process.

Note to all: Food-eating competitions are not deemed positively here.

7.9 PARTY SPREE

At some point in time, just painting the town red might make you feel better. Grab a limo and some buddies. Who knows, you'll probably meet at least one new woman.

7.10 WRITING A BOOK OR SONG, THAT IS CHANNELING IT CONSTRUCTIVELY INTO AN ARTISTIC OUTPUT

Quite simply--turn that frown upside down. I wrote two books based on love not going the right way, and it led to a number of other things, including this book. There are a number of hurt

men before you in the history of man, or dumped man, that have taken that feeling and turned it around into something special. A concerto or other musical opus. A work of art. A book, or something else that has moved people, and possibly made the creator some money in the process.

As long as you don't hurt her in the process, seize the initiative and the opportunity. Some of the most successful people have started their roll after being dumped.

7.11 ACTUALLY LISTENING TO WHAT SHE SAID AND ACTING ON IT

Now this final path is one that many of us neglect all along. Probably the woman that dumped us saw something in us, besides the golddigger looking at our financial profile. And in the end, maybe one or more things that they said to us had a ring of truth in it. While women are unique, they do have certain common denominators, and the advice and insight of one might help you with a plethora of other women.

This really is a part of the next section of this book.

7.12 PAYING HER NO MIND ON THE VENOM

Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned... or a woman who dumps you and is pissed because she had several expectations of what should've become of the whole enchilada.

At this point, your name might be dragged through the mud and you would be surprised that she didn't want you drawn and quartered. That is, of course, after the flailing followed by a rubdown with salt and vinegar and a mild boiling in oil.

The most interested caveat to this, however, is if she wants to get back together with you, whether for a romp in the sack, or

another full go-round. At this point, she'll have to eat some crow, not only in front of you, but also towards all the people that she bad-mouthed you to.

If anything, if you were so bad, then why in the hell did she want you in the first place?

7.13 GETTING RID OF MEMORIES OF HER

This is one of the most important things that you need to do. Mementos will only screw you up even more. I myself choose to just put things in a box, seal them up and store them somewhere. Of course, there are some things that you just don't want to store away (vcr/dvd combo, entertainment center, radar detector; okay, the radar detector finally went bad), and you have to be realistic about these things.

Women usually will either sell your stuff in a minute, or give it away just to get rid of it. In this, you might want to look ahead in regards to putting some things in a shared living space, or in her space.

I prefer storage to throwing things away, because you just never know what might transpire between the two of you in the future.

Hmm, that reminds me, there is something else that I need to toss in the back room.

7.14 BE PREPARED TO CEDE SOME OF YOUR PROPERTY

Possession is nine-tenths of the law, and unfortunately you might have left some gear in the enemy's territory. You could try to see if they will do either an exchange, or allow you, the winning side, to get your kit. Otherwise, just be prepared to let it go.

8. Damage Control

Damage control is one of the most important things that you must do after you get dumped. Not only do you have to deal with your own feelings, but you also have to deal with the thoughts of others who knew that you were part of a “two.” The fact is that now you are flying solo.

The first thing to understand is that like any tragedy, or news story, people will think the worst before they look for some level or shred of understanding. One aspect that people don't factor is that one person can have two sides: the side that he shows the world; and the side that he shows his romantic partner. These two don't have to be the same. If you treat the one who has your heart the same as you treat everyone else outside the relationship, then what makes the other person feel special?

In my quest, and struggle in dealing with mixed messages and signals from one ex-girlfriend, it was my best friend who set me straight. He said something to wit like, “no matter what that person says about you, the people who know her, know her... and in that they can detect what's more likely going on, as well as what probably happened.” Corroborating that, my cousin was talking to my uncle about what I was going through, and even she said that while everyone is quick to assume that I was the problem⁴, by listening to me she could discern that it wasn't me.

⁴ I am known to be very particular in choosing women, or more aptly, in choosing one who will go to the next level with me – a committed monogamous relationship.

Step 4: U - Utilize

This is the turning point in your life, what mathematicians and scientists will graph out as the point of inflection. It is at this point that you look at everything that you saw in the "Evaluation" phase and start incorporating lessons learned into your life.

This should be a period of bettering yourself, above all else. In this stage you should try to just get a little better in one or more areas of your life. You might want to read a few books, or take a few classes. You might want to try to cleanse yourself of some of your sins. You might even need some professional therapy. (The brother of one significant ex of mine once said that his sister meets nice guys and then drives them crazy. I am here to say that I am yet another victim in her swath of destruction.)

If she dumped you because of something that you can easily change, like your physique, or your sense of fashion, then it's time to get to the gym and also do a major wardrobe makeover. For the latter, if she wants you in all of the designer duds and what not, then you are better off without her.

During this period, you don't have to go dateless or womanless, you actually might find someone while you are on your path to make you a better you. If you're taking a few classes somewhere, I am sure that it's not all men in the class; this is of course outside of the support groups that I will start running shortly.

If you notice, the Utilize section is short, and this is simply because the message is so clear.

Step 5:
P- Proceed/Progress
with your life

*It doesn't matter that you've fallen, what matters most is that
you got back up again*

9. Improvise, Adapt, and Overcome

That is the motto of the Marine Corps' elite Recon units. Quite simply, it's one of the best mottos that there is in life.

9.1 HIS NAME IS "CHESTER CARLSON"

Chester Carlson was his name ("His name was Chester Carlson!"). In 1937, he was an American law student who got sick of the whole mimeograph process. He invented xerography, which led to the Xerox machine. Chester was turned down 59 times, including by the U.S. Army Signal Corps and IBM. I often wonder how Carlson's personal life was at that time.

You are now Chester Carlson. You will get up over and over and present you to the world until you find your queen. You will not give up, though you might be exasperated at times. You will have at least one good friend who will be completely honest with you, whether that friend is male or female. If she is female, and "nice," who knows, she might even become your wife over time.

You have been dumped. You have realized that your life is not over. You have realized that there are worse things than being dumped. You have evaluated the dump. You have started taking action to heal your wounded heart as well as to make sure that your other "brain" has been, and is hopefully still being, taken care of. You have utilized what you learned from your evaluation and started to refine yourself a little bit better. You were a first generation jet airplane, but now you have learned the advantage of swept-back wings, and have revised those turbojets to include an afterburner.

You were a basic four-cylinder car, but you've learned the art of turbocharging and have placed in an intercooler as well. You've "pimped" yourself.

You have bled in combat, and taken the lessons to revise your training. You will bleed less the next time.

Now, it's time to move on with your life. You will re-engage the enemy, take names, and grab their hearts so that you will also have their minds. If you get wounded again in combat, you know how to perform combat medicine. You are a corpsman as well.

You will take what you learned, and you will spread the gospel, for the world is filled with men who have also been dumped.

9.2 YOUR WISH LIST

At this point in time, you need to put together a wish list. I used to have a wish list on the website for my first book but I decided to take it down. I will be putting my wish list up on the site of this book. Hell, who knows, someone or more than one person might contribute to helping me fulfill it. I want to be your Tyler Durden; that was Brad Pitt's character in *Fight Club*. I want to be the guy that helps us men get in touch with our deeper levels. And I also want the perks of that: free food; knowledge of what food not to order; and the list goes on and on. I essentially want to sing the song *I Want it All* which is the last track on Digital Underground's album called "Future Rhythm."

These are my wishes, and everyone should have some:

- 1) Party on a yacht.

- 2) Hang with Ludacris (the guy is a genius lyrically and his "Red Light District" album has some classic hits that you need to pump).
- 3) Do a roadtrip in the United States, Canada, and in Europe, using some phat cars along the way.
- 4) Become swept up by a gorgeous aristocrat, or powerful businesswoman, and have some exciting times being wined and dined, and flown to exotic locations.
- 5) Meet the group Swing Out Sister and get to do a jam session with them.
- 6) Own another Oldsmobile Aurora, but I want a 1999 equipped with that high performance 450HP version of the Northstar engine that required a heavier crankshaft. Oh, please throw in the crankshaft as well.
- 7) I want to go to Brazil and learn how to play samba better, and party to the long hours of the morning in Salvador de Bahia.
- 8) I want some of my quotes, as well as some photos [that I have taken and photos that my best friend has taken of me] on some billboards in several cities.
- 9) I want to make love to a woman named Karen along the mountainside of the town of Graz in Austria. Anybody wanna help with plane tickets?
- 10) I want to see my music, film, art, and video ideas come to life.
- 11) I want to party in South Beach, maybe hanging out with Uncle Luke.

- 12) I want to experience my own *Hav Plenty*-- watch the movie to see what I am talking about.
- 13) I want a Cadillac CTS-V.
- 14) I want to meet and hang with Larry Ellison, the CEO of Oracle.
- 15) I want to start giving out Chester Carlson awards to deserving men.

Everyone has their dreams and their desires. I once hit four numbers out of the five required to win powerball; I was eight off on the powerball. I want it all baby, but I'll also open my mouth and ask for help. Any angels out there?

P.S. To contact me to make some of my wishes come true, email me at zacharymc.harris@verizon.net

9.3 GET YOU SOME THEME MUSIC, AND A PERSONAL MOTTO

While I mention music as a way of getting over the funk of the relationship, it is something that you should go forward with until your dying day. Music can inspire you as well as let you release.

I think of all of the songs that I like to ride with that just allow me to look for the next big thing in life, or to enjoy the moment. Remember Robert Duvall's character in *Apocalypse Now* playing Wagner's *The Ride of the Valkyries* while his unit was heading into combat. Well chief, life is war, and you need your battle hymns.

When I am working out, I love rap music for the heavy lifting, and house music when I have a long set (300-500 reps) of some of my killer triceps pushdowns.

There is music that will help you get over the woman who broke your heart, as well as music that will allow you to go into the deepest recesses of your broken heart. For each purpose, there is a proper tool to use, and music can be the answer. One friend of mine can regale you with stories of me driving down Kelly Drive in Philadelphia in the winter of 2003. I was playing Lenny Williams' *Cause I Love You* with the windows down in cold weather, singing it as I careened down the path until I got to my next destination.

On the flipside, it also helps if you are a musician. Really, I guess it helps if you play drums, or perhaps bass. I play drums and percussion from Africa, Brazil and the Caribbean. There are rhythms which you can form your four to seven line phrases to and when you lock into that, you are a madman; you can play for hours so energized that it's totally ridiculous. I remember while being part of a senior class project for a dancer in my instructor's African dance and drum company, I switched instruments to play the larger bass drum called the djunjun (pronounced *june-june*). As I was trying to get the rhythm down, Joe Bryant, a phenomenal drummer from Philadelphia, gave me an alternating four-word phrase to keep me there. Actually, it was hilarious. He had me singing [in my head], "Now what you say, huh?" and "Back the hell up, what?" But in the end, I learned the rhythm perfectly in less than one minute.

Believe it or not, in West Africa they have a wrestling season where people and their entourages, as well as legions of fans, come from far and wide. Well, there is one major rhythm that is played which allows wrestlers to dance off and show their prowess and heart. That rhythm is *dundunba*, which is central to the djunjun. It's one major dynamic that has been imported over

to the states, first with a stop-off in Brazil through the art of capoeira. We have seen it transform into the dance-offs between individuals and groups in the world of hip-hop. The most exemplified example as of late was the movie *You Got Served*.

I think that at the formation of different “Get Up” clubs, as Chester Carlson/Tyler Durden, I will have to make sure that everybody learns how to dance and dance off against one another for a total period of thirty minutes at the end of each session. Oh, we will also have a Soul Train line and get some dumb-dancing in. If you don’t know what dumb-dancing is, then you’d better either watch the movie *Hitch* and watch the wedding celebration. Or you can watch the video for *Summertime* by DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince.

Along with the music, I would go for a motto. At home, I have at least eight books of proverbs and quotations, spanning a number of peoples as well as subjects. Sometimes, the Asian parables are good, and then some of the African ones really hit home. For example, “he that tells the truth is not well liked” comes from the country of Mali. How many times have you told a woman the complete truth and you got exactly what you didn’t expect?

I like the motto of the United States Marine Corps’ Recon units, “Improvise, Adapt, and Overcome,” as well as that of England’s Special Air Service; “Who dares, wins.”

Also, you can put your motto on your business card, and as part of your special footer in all of your emails.

For the most part, there is nothing new under the sun, and by reaching back, you can also learn and apply it to save your butt in more than one occasion. My best friend usually craps out at least one pearl of wisdom a year. However, since this year came

after a leap year, he has been dumping out at least one or two a month. Next year he'll be down to just one again.

Just wait until I do "The Men's Almanac," that will truly be a riot.

So now, you have the urge to get some theme music and some mottos.

Oh, and at the beginning of each Get Up club meeting, you have to present your personal motto, or get a stupid nickname, so come prepared.

9.4 RECAP

After all that you have been through, you should now realize that to really keep on keeping on, it's best to:

- look at some person that has triumphed over adversity and succeeded in order to find strength in their trials and tribulations. You realize that if they could do it, you can do it, and also you can get past this.
- put together a wish list. You need to look at some things to achieve and attain in your life, as well as to just make yourself feel happy.
- get you some theme music and a personal motto. It can keep you going on when the times are tough.

10. The GET UP Pyramid

Maslow's Pyramid of needs has seven levels (survival, safety, belonging, esteem, knowledge, beauty, self-actualization) and we have our own corresponding pyramid. Hey, I am not trying to give you half the knowledge and charge you another half later.

Here is our pyramid (from bottom to top):

- Spirit and Mind
- Body
- Education
- Housing
- Finances
- Transportation
- Wardrobe

Now, here they are explained:

Spirit and Mind: To achieve anything, you have to have belief that it can be done, and the belief that you can actually do it. This is primary to all things.

As I was riding to work with my new boss, we were talking about this pyramid, and he said that he thought that this first level actually could surpass all of the other levels, and in a way, he was/is right. You see, the whole concept of game, or true game, is derived from this one level, and there are men with nothing at all (no house, no car, bad dressers, broke as hell), who can still run some of the greatest game there is and get the

woman who has it all together. “Macking,” “pimping,” “slangin’ that bullshit,” whatever you want to call it, it all exists at this level. Now, having all the other pieces of the pyramid can enhance your game, but true game is formulated from this lowest level of our pyramid.

Body: In the immortal words of George Clinton, of the P-funk Nation, “Free your mind and your ass will follow.” The next thing to do is to get your body in shape. This is not to say that you need to be a world-class athlete, but you need to get your body in some sort of decent shape. Cut down on that fatty foods and watch your cholesterol level, dog.

Education: If you think that education is expensive, try ignorance. The more that you know, the more that you can earn. And above all things, the woman that likes a stupid man really doesn’t consider you for much more than grunt labor and sex. She’ll ditch you for a smarter man, as well as possibly set you up for a fall. Go watch *Employee of the Month*, *Suicide Kings*, *Wild Things*, and *Trois 2: Pandora’s Box*.

Housing: At some point, you’ve gotta get you some housing. Whether or not you have roommates, or your own spot, you need some housing. However, don’t be upset if you have to forgo this and live with family and friends while you are building yourself up. I know cats who are making 15k a month and above who were once homeless and living on different people’s couches. Also, this can be reversed in order with the next level, which is...

Finances: There are two things that you need in life, money is one of them; credit is another. You can screw up your credit, but still have money, and you can also be broke, and have excellent credit. It’s a toss up; I know people in the latter position, but they’re always broke. However, they could easily get a mortgage or car with no problems.

Then there are the people who are making good money, but have lousy credit. That doesn't matter much if you can pay all of your bills and do the things that you want to do. For the most part, I fall into this category.

What really matters is disposable income, as well as what you do with what you have. There are a ton of people who have excellent credit who will do nothing but work their whole lives. They will never produce anything, holding neither copyrights nor patents. They might make some money from real estate or the stock market, but when that bubble bursts, they are right down here with all the rest of us. Hell, in some cases these people might be totally overextended with their available assets, as well as what they can liquidate, versus what they have debits with.

On the issue of disposable income, what matters most is your ability to make purchases and spend money on recreational pursuits. Women are really going to look at you on these things more than anything else. And if you meet a woman who expects you to spend more than you can afford, and won't do the latter for you, get rid of her ass; she is what we like to call an extreme financial liability.

Transportation: This of course can be switched with the next level, and that is solely up to you. Having transportation is a major plus in life, especially in certain parts of the country. More so than anything else, having a driver's license, and when you do own a car, having insurance is paramount. Now, in the issue of transportation, we can reflect back to the prior level's issue of disposable income. Having a paid off car is more important than having something that's new and hot, but that you are paying a premium in monthly payments and insurance for. I drive a 1994 Mazda 929; I bought it for \$1600 cash with 85k miles on it. It has run great and the only money I have had

to sink in it were for things that any owner would when their car reaches the 100k milestone.

Luckily, I live in a big city with an extensive public transportation infrastructure. The part of the city I live in has me in the middle of five bus routes, and a major train system. Add the ability to pay for a cab and I am good to go. However, you can't go to all dates using public transit, and women ain't really too keen on that either.

In any case, a reliable set of wheels is what you need. And if you are saving money for bigger and better things while driving a "bucket," then just keep your head up and remember who really saw you for what you had inside.

Wardrobe: This is the last piece. I argue that if you have a nice body, women will notice. At that point, you don't need to spend on all the designer gear and what not; hey, you'll have more disposable income.

It pays to have a couple good suits, or pants and jacket combinations that you wear to more business settings. Also, a tux should be something that you should have at least one of.

If anything, as long as you're clean, your clothes actually fit you and you actually can coordinate the items in your outfit (you'd be surprised by the amount of men who will actually try to mix patterns that don't go together; it's an epidemic; however, they always find clueless women who look at them and still want to give them some and change them – this is of course if they have a decent body and somewhat attractive face).

As you can see, this pyramid is more realistic of what we deal with in life as men in relationships, and in picking oneself back up. I think that Maslowe had it all screwed up.

11. Now what, move on or try and get back together?

I had to put this section in here, because now that you have been reborn, you have a decision to make.

This is a very important thing to consider, and one that can be very complex, or very simple. On one side, you might have to examine yourself and wonder if you are just letting good ones getting away, and this could be for a number of reasons (chasing perfection, just personally unhappy, no damned good common sense, etc.).

The fact is that you have to also consider why this woman dumped you, and whether it is really worth it to you to be in a relationship with her. She just might be the person that you really need, and she might be the person that will ultimately lead you to your destruction. Then again, she just might be the person that you need right now.

I think that in most cases, I chased the woman who dumped me. One thing to think about is that she dumped me, so she must be good enough to have around. Okay, stop laughing, that was just a joke.

Getting back together, or attempting to, is a serious endeavor. This can be done sometimes alongside, without, or after the take-action phase of getting yourself back together.

12. The “Next” Philosophy

I decided to place this at the tail end of the book for several reasons; the main being that no matter what, sometimes you have to just say “next.” The “Next” philosophy actual came from a business card idea that my best friend had made for me. I can’t say that I am hard on the women that I date; let’s just say that I am looking for certain things, just like women are looking for certain things. I have been known to let certain desires go when I found someone that truly makes me happy.

The concept was for me to have a business card with my name, phone number and the word “Next” printed on it. When it reached a point when I didn’t want to deal with them anymore, whether or not we had only been talking, I would tell them to read that word, and I would keep going.

In all honesty, the “Next” philosophy grows from the frustrating times that we have finding a partner. There are times when you go to meet someone and you feel that you want to know her better and something happens. On one side, it might be something that she does, something she says, or something that she reveals that you just don’t like. On another, it could’ve been something that you do. I wind up usually getting the brush off when I don’t have the same urge to be in a relationship with them, and they want one with me (Note to all men: take your time before going into a relationship, it can save you a lot of drama and hassle).

Not everything is going to work, and not all situations really require you to go through the five step plan, though knowing and embodying the ten commandments of reformation and

reconstruction will definitely allow you to keep your sanity as well as your confidence up.

The caveat is that you might actually need to know what things that you can change and what things you should change. We all have character flaws as well as room for improvement. On the flipside, there are certain things that you might not want to change, and if that is the case, you have to understand and be fully aware of what dynamics will have occur in your life. Not everyone might like your “variances” and what not, but then again, why try to please everyone? That’s something that it seems like women have a tendency to do, and it doesn’t necessarily make them win every battle, does it?

Allow yourself to know when to easily say “next” to dynamics and relationships with women, whether they are intimate or platonic, or even if she is the woman that you are dealing with in a monogamous committed relationship.

Again, I cannot stress how important it is not to harbor negative feelings within yourself, or towards the other person. Just say “next” and let it go. Of course, there is going to be some level of bitching, but that’s just life. And remember, saying “next” doesn’t allow you to be an insufferable asshole.

13. Summary

So there you have it, the full dump manual and survival guide for men. It's taken you through everything that you need to understand about the dump, and a lot of things that you need to look at within yourself. You now have a five-step program, ten commandments, and a philosophy to move on past situations that don't pan out the way that you would like them to.

It took me a long time to even look at writing this section, as along the way, I did some more soul-searching to see exactly where I am at.

Getting past someone is not an easy task, especially when having them in your life brightened it immensely. Yes, I am the author of this book, and I am also a man who has had my heart broken numerous times. I would say that the last time was the worst. However, as I cherish the good times and the good things about that person, I realize that it is cool to keep those things dear to oneself. And at the same time, you have to look inside and relish the fact that now that it's over, all of the drama that you dealt with is no longer part of your experience at this moment on this planet.

As I look at many women that I have shared time, and swapped fluids with, I look deeper and understand why things didn't progress to a certain level. In almost all of those cases, it was my decision not to press forward. Oh, there definitely were times when I was like Mars Blackmon in *She's Gotta Have It*, trying to get them to stay in my life. Mostly, it was for the sex, but also for the emotional and intimate security of having someone there.

It has taken me a long time to get past that last relationship, and in some ways, parts of it still linger inside, and I guess that is just reality. It's best with this to not be bitter, but to just accept the fact that it is over.

When I look back at all of the dealings that could've been something more, and understand why they weren't from my side of the equation, I just try to put her in my shoes, and I understand without anger or guilt why it didn't work. Above all, that is one of the best stances to take, especially if you didn't have some issues that led to the dump.

That's my story, and I hope that in being honest with you, it allows you to reach inside yourself and start to climb out of the emotional pit that you might possibly be in.

I hope that this book has helped you in some way; better if to a significant degree than to a lesser degree.

I am signing off now; best wishes in your next endeavor.

14. Worksheet

Your Name:

Dumper's Name:

14.1 G – STEP

Have you accepted the fact that she dumped you?

Were your reactions good or bad, or both?

Is this the first time that you have been dumped?

Could you see something worse happening than being dumped?
Or did something worse actually happen (you caught her being
lustful with the neighbor's girlfriend, or flirting with that police-
horse?)

14.2 E - STEP

Length of Relationship: _____

How did she dump you?

Was it justified?

Dumper's Type (Whiner, Nagger, etc.)

Type of Dump: (Pre-dump/Date-Dump/Dump)

Did it occur during a dump cycle, and if so, what kind of dump cycle?

Did you see the dump coming?

Reasons (obvious) for the dump:

Reasons (said) for the dump:

Why you think you got dumped (attach additional pages if necessary)

14.3 T – STEP

How does this really affect you emotionally?

Have you gotten some good sex yet (found another source or two)?

Were you honest with that source where you were emotionally?

Was the sex better, the same as with her, or worse?

Did the sex make you want to go back to her?

Did you get a good drink-and-cry on?

What poison (drink) and where did you do this?

Roadtrip yet? And if so, how was it?

Been to the gym yet, and if so, any new personal bests?

Do you find it necessary to move to another town, state, or country?

Have you considered entering a competition? If so, what kind and when (drinking and eating don't count)?

Any artistic output?

Have you listened to what she said and started to act on any of it?

Damage control and spin doctoring: Did you let people know what happened, and how forthcoming have you been? (Telling about catching her with the farmer's pony is not a good idea.)

14.4 U – STEP

What did you learn in the Evaluate phase?

How are you going to utilize it to make yourself a better person?

14.5 P – STEP

Have you put together your wish list?

Are you doing what it takes to make some of it come true?

Got theme music?

What's your personal motto?

Are you going to move on, or try to get back together with her?
Explain why (add more pages if necessary):

Addendum

What if she wants you back?

Women make mistakes. We all do. Sometimes, they dump for the wrong reasons, and sometimes for the right ones. At this point in time, you have to decide whether or not she is really worth it. She dumped you once, who says she won't do it again? If she really thinks she made a mistake, did she learn from it? And, did she dump you for a shallow reason, and now she needs you back because she is looking for a meal ticket?

After an interesting first two weeks I had on one consulting job in which my supervisor didn't think that I had a grasp of the situation [and was surprised that I had a bit more on the ball to which she squashed the unrest that she caused], I learned to always be several steps away from someone else dropping the hammer on you. In this, always have a backup plan, or at least be prepared for a repeat of what went down earlier.

It might work; then again it might not. It's a judgment call for you to determine how much of your heart and soul that you really want to put in this. Do an analysis and wonder if it's worth it. Size up the situation and never shortchange yourself, but also don't over inflate who you are either. And if you think that it would be impossible to be with her, then don't do it.

In any case, if she dumps you and wants you back, than she should be prepared for some good makeup sex there and then. In fact, you should be whined and dined and then rocked out of your world. Anything else than that should be highly looked down upon and not accepted as all. And don't be afraid to tell her that you expect that of her from the door.

Still being friends?

This is an interesting dilemma. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. The real dilemma is whether or not

emotionally it will hurt you. If not, and you have nothing to lose, than why not? On the other hand, if hearing about her with another man, or woman, will get to you, than keep your distance my friend.

Emotional Honesty: The Good Foundation to a Relationship?

I had to throw this section in, because it came from several conversations with friends over the course of about a month. It came from different angles and allowed me to look at past and current relationships, as well as possibly what to look for in future relationships. It gave me a better glimpse of what went wrong in the past and for what reasons. And in that, actually allowed me to look at every relationship that has ended in a different light. Take note of the fact that I did not say “failed” relationship, but just that they ended. In life, not every relationship is supposed to be around forever, just as it is rare that you go to work for a company when you leave college or high school, and then stay there until you are at the age of retirement. That’s just life.

What I am talking about, and what I think is the basis of a good foundation to a lasting relationship is that of emotional faith: trust, truth, honesty, support and confidence based upon the acceptance and understanding of each person’s visions and goals.

Okay, I know that is one hell of a whopper for you, but let me slowly start to break it down and piece it all back together. Mind you, that while I am doing this, I am somewhat biased to my own state of affairs; the risk taker who believes in building an empire while starting out with very little. The maverick; the rogue; the mustang. The guy who can’t fit into the normal system not just simply because it doesn’t suit him, but the conventional system will not accept him anyway because of his independence and ability to cross fences, jump hurdles, sidestep catastrophes and always be the biblical David slaying some encumbered behemoth of a Goliath. Okay, maybe I am building it up a little, but damn it, I am the author. Laugh dammit.

It all started with this: A good friend asked me do I think that women settle for men that are beneath them simply to have a man in their life. My answer was a resounding yes. No one wants to be lonely, and of the two sexes, women definitely dominate the demographics of settling for less. I can still remember my buddy Tyrone saying to never underestimate the generosity of a woman. It's true; we all know cases when we look at women and wonder why the hell are they with the guy that they are with. It always isn't an issue of the sex, is it?

But therein lies the problem. I believe that to make it, people don't necessarily need to have exactly the same goals and visions, but at least be accepting and supporting of the goals and visions of their partner. Yes, you do have cases in which the goals and visions are headed in two separate places, but as long as they don't conflict with each other that might not be a problem. Not every has big goals either; some people are content with working a "regular" job, having a house or an apartment, a car, and taking the daily happiness that life has to offer. And then, your partner might not be able to help you in all the ways that you need to achieve your goals, so what does that leave?

Well, I believe that the answer comes down to that concept of emotional faith. I know that I am putting many different components into that term, but I believe that is truly the key.

Sometimes, it doesn't matter if a person is the same as you mentally, financially, physically, etc. What matters might be how they make you feel in spirit, and what they bring to the table. How many of you have dealt with a partner who has emotional insecurities? You know how much stress and drama that that can bring to a relationship. We all have baggage and it is only a person who is "unconscious" (word for the day, which means that they lack consciousness in some areas) who believes that they bring none of that to the table.

Emotional faith entails the concepts of truly believing in that person and offering them what you can from the heart and soul, and nothing else. However you manifest it is up to you, but you know when someone is really in your corner and also when they are not. But let me give you a little corollary to that, or really an exception. We all are not going to understand the visions of others, or even be able to picture them achieving all of their goals. Everyone has goals and dreams, and not everyone has the talent, the drive, the urge, or the complete package to pull it together. That is life. Just because you can sing your ass off doesn't mean that you are the material to be the next big thing in music. Just because you can play ball like no one else in the NBA doesn't mean that you'll be the next Jordan. Life is not filled with simple equations, but a lot of paths that can be traveled with a lot of obstacles along the way.

Additionally, along with the concept of vision is also the issue of goals. Goals and vision are not the same concept, nor are they so far removed from each other. Goals might take the form of steps to achieve a certain vision, or just things that a person wants to have attained or accomplished. Goals might be something on the order of just having visited so many countries, or the desire to go on vacation each year to the same area. A goal can something like wanting to get a master's degree, or having a room in the house that is totally color coordinated. The basic array of goals for men and women tend to be split along well-defined areas, and in that it is normally pretty easy to help the other person meet their goals, at least the ones that require no great output of anything more than some cash and maybe some elbow grease.

Now let's throw in vision. Vision is more or less the understanding and imagining of a path that allows for a future that leads to other things. The execution of vision can allow goals to be attained and acquired, but will also allow for continuity and advancement. Very few people have vision,

while a lot of people have dreams, wants and desires. A goal might be the desire to purchase a million dollar home. Vision would look forward and not only seek to attain that home, but also to facilitate the mechanisms to maintain having it for as long as the desire is to occupy it. A goal might be to have a job or a career, but vision might involve wanting to own your own company, if not multiple ones.

If you take a look at entrepreneurs, you'll find that the most successful of them disdain being in a basic corporate environment. You can also easily see the difference between vision and goals in employees and the types of jobs they seek out. Sales is one of those areas where the most successful people have no umbrella, they work entirely on commission. While they might not be their own entity, they have a vision that takes them far and allows them to achieve their goals.

Now, this is where we have the breakdown factor. The Bible has a verse in it regarding yoking uneven oxen, and somewhere in that passage we can surmise and liken the issue of matching up people who have visions and goals. Take one of vision and one of goals, and depending upon the details of each, we can easily analyze what the end results will be in most cases. Not all relationships last, and some relationships change dynamics as time goes on, or shall I say that the feelings of the people in those relationships change over time. If one person had vision, and another person had goals, and if there was a lack of emotional faith between the two of them, then what they have is a shell, and an empty shell at that.

Here is where I look at me... I have vision, always have, and always will. Some people I dated had it, and most did not, but they all had goals. For some, depending where they were in life, their goals were well defined. To me, they were irrelevant because what I want and was planning was so much more. I have been able to not pay attention to certain areas of cosmetics

in my life simply because my mind was focused on steps in the bigger picture. This is not to say that I dress(ed) shabbily, or didn't take care of myself, because that is quite the opposite. For me, it manifested in my not really working about always repainting a room, hanging drapes and/or curtains, or stripping down woodwork to its natural finish. I could not care less about yard work or whether I had grass in my front patch; my answer was to just throw some weed-killer on the whole thing and keep on going. The car is a means to get around, not some baby that needs to be washed and detailed every other week. Besides focusing on business, learning more, and upping my skill sets, the only other focused time was in the gym; not to look good but to be physically effective at whatever I set out at.

Now, how does this affect my relationships you ask? Well, being that most of the women that I dated were older, depending upon what they have achieved in life, their issues might creep in enough for the relationship to develop cracks and fissures. Some women are looking for a man who is going to walk into their house, and their heart, and start to act like they are their husband and as second nature start to attend to the chores around their house. Depending upon where the man's mind is (getting back to goals and visions), some of those things might be the furthest from their mind. For me, I will gladly say that I do not automatically assume that role of "pseudo-hubby" and have dropped the ball more than once in this regard. However, I have said that if one needs some help in that area, just ask.

Their goals might be to plant some flowers out in the front, or in the back, while I might be thinking about programming a web portal that could allow me to not have to work for the better part of a year or two.

Their goal might be to just bring up their property value by making home improvements and also looking at the resale value of their car. My vision might be to facilitate business along

several areas that will allow me to purchase the house that I want and have all of its bills taken care of for the next three years. And in regards to the car, well I will dog this one and then purchase a better one once I have made that first good deal. They might want to dine out every week and go to the movies; I might be comfortable with renting some DVDs and watching movies on my home entertainment system in my bedroom. They might want to go on vacation, and I might look at the possibility of losing several thousand dollars worth of billing clients.

This starts to get to the point of emotional confidence and support all over again, but much more on the issue of confidence. That person has to be confident in your vision, and seek to understand what it is that you are thinking and accept it for the good points and the bad. And they have to understand that it will take awhile before your life gets to the point where you can easily take time off and just do something "normal." That seems to be the funniest dilemma I get in with women; they are cool when you are spending time with them and money on them, but let them not get to see you because you are working your butt off and that you might have to conserve money for awhile and the dragon rears its ugly head. I once officially started a monogamous committed relationship only to be able to see the person once a week because I had so much stuff to work on for a client and had bills to be paid. We lived about an hour apart and had two different schedules; if I spent time with her at her place, then I was losing precious time programming for the client in the commute and acquiescing to her schedule. Not that I didn't mind spending time with her; I loved it. However, I had my own house, car and bills to worry about which no one but myself was going to take care of.

I think that right here I should state that sometimes the responsibilities and demands that accompany vision can be overlooked and not understood by the other person in the relationship. That is not to say that goals also don't carry them

same demands and responsibilities, nor that basic life doesn't carry them also. I have to mention for the benefit of all the single mothers that the men who date them don't always realize that her kids come first, and that spending time with them is more important than spending it with a man.

This all deals with the issue of understanding the vision of your partner, which is the most important component of emotional faith.

Conversely, sometimes part of being emotionally faithful is being honest with someone who doesn't want to hear the truth. If you care about someone, you owe it to them to be honest with them. If you don't understand their vision, then try to learn what you can to better understand their potential to live up to their dream and achieve their goals. Once you understand their vision, then you can assess their odds of achieving it. This is your judgment and it might be right, or it might be wrong, but it is yours to make. Not making an assessment is more detrimental to the relationship and really lets the other person know how much you actually consider, or respect, their goals and vision.

Now I want to get back to the issue of women settling just to have a man in their life. This is my book and I can choose to vent where and when I want to, and of course some people may rebuff me on my venting, but that's cool too. What peeves me is the women who put their emotional faith behind a man with no vision and only mediocre goals. It's true that you can only lead a horse to water, but I mean there are people who might get it and be inspired, and people who will never get it. Now this is not to misjudge anyone, nor underestimate someone's potential; I think that we all have potential, but to be able to manifest it kinetically is another thing entirely. It usually takes someone believing in another to get that second person to flower and bloom; the hard part is finding the person that can get that out of a person. Then, we also have to come to grips with the fact that

some people just will never do certain things barring an act of God.

But I am talking about those women who invested themselves and more behind those men who didn't have a vision, if they ever had any goals at all. Am I upset? Hell, yes. Don't think I would not love to come across someone who could help me realize my dream; someone who could bridge the gaps in making the connections that I have not made yet. Hey, I would love to live the life of either lead character in the movie *Cocktail*; one winds up a boy-toy to a wealthy woman, the other married to one. Ladies... men have fantasies too, just my luck that I am not attracted to the women who come across my path , or it's the wrong time and the wrong place. Women, if you are going to back someone, back someone with the drive, the passion and the forethought to go and learn that what they don't know, and think and act outside of the box. I remember Jay-Z's *Song Cry* in which he talked about that woman who backed him when his program wasn't in the best straights, financially. What's he worth today?

And sometimes, it's not even about that. Sometimes, you just need that person who spurs you on to bigger and better things and lets you know that you are on the path and that they believe in you. She might just be the woman to come over with a six-pack of beer, a bottle of Chardonnay, a big bag of Swedish fish candy and give you a back massage. She knows I am talking about her. She might be the woman to come over with three bottles of wine, and you watch a movie and provide your own other more stimulating forms of entertainment. She knows I am talking about her.

She might just take you out for some quick drinks and a nibble to eat to cheer you up. She knows I am talking about her.

Oh, this section comes from many parts of my heart. For me, I had finally met someone who moved my heart in so many ways it was ridiculous, and my life started to fall apart. Besides that, not only did we have some areas of conflict within our own dynamics, but I did not know how to overcome those things, or shall I say change the dynamics. Hey, I remember a question into my goals that turned into a huge blown out argument on Christmas; if I could've only had the time to show her the other side of the question that she asked (and yes dear, it was something that involved learning the major points of, because the question was truly ambivalent to many things – this is a note to her).

As I said before, I will put myself out there, because someone has to lead by example, or at least let others learn from them. In this, I am an emotional cadaver; pick me apart and learn what you can doctor.

Back to the issue of emotional faith; it involves not only being honest with someone, but also truly coming to understand their dreams, goals and desires. It's one of those things where it's not just about you anymore, but it's about the two of you. It's where you make a stand and honestly give one hundred percent. It might be just your heart, it might be more. You might hold some things in reserve, but as long as you give your heart and are honest with what you can and can't do, what you will and won't do, then you have laid the groundwork for a good relationship. If that is less than the person can accept, then hey, you tried.

Yes, I have fucked up my credit rating by taking a gamble on someone, and I know that many sisters have done the same for a ton of brothers. In my case, the money wasn't the issue, after loading up some of my credit cards the IT bubble burst and I was without a job; so it wasn't her fault. Hey, but I was at least willing to gamble on that person because I had the vision to see

where and how she could succeed with that talent that they had, despite what they didn't have.

Emotional faith involves truth, trust, honesty, support and confidence in your partner. You know if you ever take a typing test there is a sentence that talks about how Mark Twain said something in regards to how a compliment can fuel him for two weeks. We all hear so much bullshit lip service, but to have someone really be there for you and give you words of support, words that will spur you on, words that uplift you when you are down is what's important.

It involves trust that the other person is there for you, and would never do anything to intentionally hurt you. They are not going to cheat on you no matter what comes their way; and if someone cheated on you in the past you have to be open and honest to understand why they did it and that this person is totally different from them.

Emotional faith also involves understanding the goals and visions of your partner and being honest with them about their limitations when they don't see it for themselves. Being that truthful consists of being confident of the relationship that you have and their acceptance of the level of intimacy, emotional intimacy that you share together. But sometimes for that to happen, your partner has to have the same background and experiences as you, because then they can easily relate to you.

And in the case that the person has had emotional faith in someone before you, and it didn't work out as planned, then they still need to be open to giving you 100 percent of their emotional faith. You are someone different, and if they can't give that, then what do they really expect from a relationship with you anyway?

Rearward

(interested March 27, 2005 9:00 AM

I construct chapters in my head...

I do this all the time, and sometimes in the most interesting places. I wish that I had a thought recorder that was hooked into my head so that I wouldn't lose any good material. This weekend proved to be an interesting one so far, and one of internal learning and development on my end.

Friday had me going down to DC to see Sol Elder perform at Pearl. The ride down was easy, nice really; and I only saw maybe two troopers. I had three different people to catch up with, besides catching the performance; okay, they were all women.

Saturday had me attending a concert for Allo Brazil, a slammin' group made up of local Philadelphia musicians; a couple of them I have played and performed with years ago. It was an interesting night in that I was still tired from the day before and hadn't properly re-floated my brain after all of the drinks that I had consumed the prior day. I was actually thinking of not attending the concert, writing off the ticket price as a loss, and then spending the evening with a female associate. Well, for some reason, I made the decision to go, and figured that I would leave around eleven and spend the rest of the evening--and the next morning--with the aforementioned associate.

Good thing that I went to the concert; I not only met someone, but also had a good look inside and outside at myself and also at life. This book represents not only another creative effort on my part, but also hopefully a turning point in my life on several levels. On the emotional side, it will allow me to look better at some of my own issues and make some changes, as well as let

go in other areas of my life. Maybe this is the book, and the time, that will propel me farther down my path, or allow this side of my life to take off to a nice height and airspeed.

Lately, I've been explaining *The Book of Five Rings* to someone I know, and also showing them it's relevance to life in general, as well as enlightening them of things in life. As I sharing some of my own knowledge and insight, I also have to realize where I have stunted myself, or even walked away from other things that should be addressed. I have a plan; I have always had a plan, but like anything else in life, sometimes plans get changed and you have to modify them. Well, I don't think that I modified mine as well as I should have. It actually might not be that, but the fact that I have not given myself one hundred percent of effort and willpower.

As Allo Brazil entered the dance floor, before they came to the stage, several things happened. The first was that the music moved me; I am both a musician, a drummer, who can also play samba, but I also love to dance--heavy rhythms descended from African drumming will make that ass move. As the procession made its way through the crowd, I acknowledged those that knew me as they passed by. One interesting aspect was that one of the two trailing dancers I also knew; she was co-founder of an African dance company along with my drumming instructor. To say the least, that dance company split up under some interesting circumstances, and I lost respect for her; actually, I have a slight animosity towards her, or at least a very strong uneasiness with her.

Before the group entered the stage, I actually was "remembered" by someone who attended Penn in the early 90s. She came up to me and introduced herself to me, thinking that I wouldn't really remember them. Well, I remembered whom their half-sister was, where they were from... and thirty seconds later remembered their name.

Cross back to the group on the stage. At this point, a phenomenal looking dancer comes out in carnival attire, and “shook it like a Polaroid picture.” Of course, I thought to myself, that’s the type of woman that I need! As the night progressed with the first set, I started to wonder how good I would be at drumming if I poured in practice like other musicians. I have my talents, and probably would go a lot further if I do that now, and would be a lot better if I had done that just half the time since I picked up the drum in 1992. As I looked on the stage, I saw the cohesion of the drummers and other musicians in their polyrhythmic expanse. With that, I started to look at what it takes as a team to pull something off. I started to wonder if the team of friends and associates in my life can help me pull off my goals, and whether or not we can collectively help each other to achieve our respective dreams. OK, thoughts of going to Brazil to get a woman like that one on stage did go through my mind several times; as well of thoughts of going to Brazil just to learn and play.

I thought of how people are given second chances, because the past is the past, and I looked at that dancer and wondered if it was in me to let bygones be bygones and one day be able to work with her. The counterpoint to this was that I looked at the issue of integrity, and that once a person does something that offends you, you never put yourself in that position where it can happen again. But life is full of second chances; I still have love for a woman that dumped me three times.

This leads me to the question, “At what point do we reset the counter on people’s transgressions?” And at that point, I had, and have to constantly, look at my life and how I have been one-sided in many instances. I’ll say that I have been blessed throughout my life, and I have been especially blessed during the past ten years. I’ve been playing out a long run of rolling the dice in life’s craps game. I have been up, and I have been down, and while up, it took time for me to make the right decisions,

especially in financial matters. I know that at the end of this run, I have to have enough to take care of things that I should've taken care of years ago. The piper is coming. I also know that part of my path is in repairing old associations and settling some old karmic debts, balancing out everything once more.

Minutes later, the group invited some of the audience to the stage... and there she went up. She reminded me of that one that still has pieces of my heart, and I wondered if I could ever exist with a woman like her. I had been looking at her, and several other women on the front row, and just musing over the thoughts of a reality of me, and one of those beautiful goddesses. As she took the stage, I noticed two visible tattoos, something that I am not into, but I looked past that and saw... her. It's funny, because I have seen her before; I don't know where and in which context, but this is also a small city. And she could dance; she could easily dance me under the rug any day of the week. And I thought, "what if I had a woman like her in my life?"

Now, I must admit, there also was a beautiful woman standing next to me, who I had just met, as well as another beautiful one standing next to her that I had seen before. When it rains, sometimes it pours.

What I started looking at next was the dedication that it takes to get damned good at something, namely playing an instrument. The fact of the matter is that it takes time and dedication, two things that I have not given it totally in my musical side. It's true that music is only one facet of my life, and only part of my path; a component of my character and my spirit. But I realized something else; a relationship is like playing an instrument in that to really get all that you can out of it, you have to give it some serious dedication and work. However, there are two things that are also true: Firstly, is that what you are playing might not be the best instrument for you, for a number of

reasons; and secondly, there is always a limit to your talent with something--we just all have different levels.

At that point, I looked at my past relationships, and the last relationship that I had. I had to admit that I didn't give my all, and that was a major factor. I might have believed that I was giving my all, but I wasn't. It was another chance in life to get something right, and with several tries, it was like I broke the instrument and would have to start with a new one.

But also, a relationship between two people is also like a duet, whether you have the same musical styles and interests or not. Whether the instruments you play belong to the same subclass, or even the same family. At some point in time, you are a duet, and if you can't get your melodies and rhythms to co-exist, then the relationship will end. It's just a matter of when and how. I look at that relationship as both a cacophony [at times] and something lacking correct syncopation and synchronization as well as not having enough harmonization.

And then, as I reflect on the fact that it was a group on stage, you have to realize that in most cases, that duet that you have is also part of a bigger ensemble. In most cases, you aren't lucky just to have you and your significant other, but also have to hear the erstwhile crescendos of the relationships of friends and family in her life, she yours. And there are a lot of factors that can affect how much those other players affect your precious duet.

Just some things that you might want to consider.

What I am hoping is that in knowing this, and working to better myself, I finally can take my proficiency to the best that it can be, and either pick up that instrument again, and do it right, or find the instrument that's best suited for my spirit, body and mind.

I am just wondering what it'll be.

This weekend, I was blessed to be able to listen to Tweet's new album, and let it soak into my soul, have conversations with a plethora of women, both ones that I had known before, and those that I just met along my journey, here the wonderful Sol Elder and the phenomenal Allo Brazil, and most importantly, look inside and look forward.

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