

## **Livin' La Vida Single**

Why is it that society pressures “thirty-somethings” to be mating or dating? When I am dating, the first thing people want to know is, “What does he do for a living?” Pressure from society, social status, and fear of being alone are all reasons people my age settle for less than perfect relationships.

There’s nothing wrong with me. That’s what I tell myself as I attend a bridal shower, baby shower, or holiday gathering. At first, conversation is light, focusing on work or school. Then, like clockwork, conversation shifts to, “So, are you married? Dating anyone? Have any kids?” No, No, No is how I respond, as the other person stares at me with the “I wonder why she can’t find a man?” look. This awkward moment is why single people feel pressured by society to have a beau at our side. The movie Bridget Jones’ Diary highlights this when Bridget is at her mother’s celebrating Thanksgiving. Bridget’s mother is conspiring to set her up with a divorced lawyer. Bridget’s mother feels sorry for her because she’s alone. Bridget has accepted being single but feels the pressure from society to have a man at her side.

Why is it that the person I date is judged by how much money he makes? Can’t people accept the fact that a garbage hauler might be a better family man than a doctor? Doctors are known for their high paid salaries, and, if I ever date one, my friends will be envious. I remember an episode of Frasier where Roz was dating a garbage man. She was embarrassed to tell her co-workers what he did for a living, so she ended the relationship. However, she realized that he meant more to her than what people thought, so they got back together. Television shows are usually fiction, but Frasier hit the nail on the head with that episode. Dealing with a significant other’s less than glamorous profession is often an obstruction to romance. Society gets so caught up in what people do for a living that we forget the most important thing: the person.

I often get down on myself for not having a man. I also see the bigger picture and know that I am going to benefit from having this time alone to become a better person. Single life is full of self-growth, discovery, and financial freedom. I am constantly learning new things about myself. I have a temper but I can only get mad at myself. Getting mad at myself is a waste of time. I learn to make light of situations that once made me upset. Being single allows me the freedom to travel. Whether it’s for a weekend or a week, I am free to go without having to worry about getting permission. Financial freedom is the most enjoyable aspect of being single. In 1960, the number of 1-person households in Wisconsin was 133,934. In 1990, that number increased about 400% (Bogenschneider 26). I know I have to pay my rent and utility bills. Beyond those responsibilities, I can spend my money however I chose. I have many girlfriends that have to hide receipts or shopping bags from husbands or boyfriends because they are afraid of them finding out how much money they spent.

Livin’ la vida single is hard at times, but I’m here to say that it’s ok to be single. I choose to make the most of it. In one of his books Shel Silverstein writes, “The missing piece sat alone waiting for someone to come along and take it somewhere...” I say, “So what if I’m sitting alone!” I’m never really alone. I always have myself, and, when I’m with just me, I can take myself anywhere I’d like to go.

**Works Cited**

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