

Succeed by being single-minded

In the 1970s Skyhooks had a hit with “All my friends are getting married”, and even though it’s an old classic it stills rings true for many.

When you’re surrounded by people leaping off the singles branch and on to the marriage tree, life can seem to be moving too fast. So how does a single cope when surrounded by “smug marrieds”?

In the film *Bridget Jones’s Diary*, Bridget is the only single invited to a dinner party of insufferable smug marrieds. When questioned about her single status, she responded sweetly by asking whether it was one or two out of three marriages that ended in divorce.

That’s one way to put people in their place if they ask intrusive personal questions.

Remember, there are things you can do as a single that you may have trouble doing as a couple.

You may have a group of friends with whom you go out to dinner and have open conversations because you know one another so well.

If you add a couple to a group like this, the conversation may suddenly be different because they dynamics have changed.

Singles often crave being nurtured emotionally and it’s a matter of finding out how you can fill this need outside the couple state.

A group of women or men who meet regularly to talk about issues affecting them may fill this need for some people, and this can be a great source of emotional strength for singles.

Nearly a third of the population is single, but society can tend to place a lesser value on being single than being a couple.

Life in the 21st century is about options. Years ago the life path was more clearly marked: grow up, get a job, marry, have children and settle into family life.

Today you may do some of these, all of these or none of these – the choice is yours.

Society today puts a lot of emphasis on “fitting in”, and people do tend to embark on relationships to solve loneliness.

A broader vision of knowing who you are and how to fill that need by engaging with a wider group of friends may be more helpful.

A useful question for smart singles is whether being single is the destination or a place along the path of life?

Being single can be very comfortable, without a lot of attachments and responsibilities.

It’s a great stage in life and it may come to a natural end if you meet someone, or it may be what suits you permanently. Take the journey and see where it leads you.

One group are people who become single again after a separation or the death of a partner.

The issues for this group are different – it’s been a long time since they dated and there is a new learning curve to be negotiated.

These people really need to connect with others, but they may not want an intimate relationship.

Sometimes sharing houses with others is the way to go.

If you feel like trying the intimate relationship game again, it's important to realise it may not go smoothly at first. At may take five goes at a relationship and it's the sixth that works.

Our lifespans are longer and we have more single elderly people. Many solve the companionship problem by living near others in retirement villages, maintaining their independence but fulfilling their need for social contact.

Survival tips

- **Enjoy your single status, whether it's a stage in your life or a more permanent arrangement.**
- **Realise that a wider group of friends can fulfil emotional needs**
- **Don't let the smug marrieds make you feel less important – remember that marriages aren't always made in heaven.**