

How to be happily single & avoid depression this Valentine's Day



While Valentine's Day is celebrated as a day of joy and romance, many single people spend the day feeling lonely, depressed and suicidal. Here's how to shift that...

WHILE Valentine's Day is celebrated as a day of joy and romance, many single people spend the day feeling lonely, depressed and suicidal. A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report shows that relationship problems are the top cause of suicides today and psychologists worldwide suggest that Valentine's Day on February 14 is the start of an annual rise in suicide rates that peak in April. It doesn't have to be this way however as there are many positives to being single, as Gold Coast author Louisa Pateman shares in her new book *Single, Again, and Again, and Again...* "It takes courage to be single and it's a big myth that when you meet 'the one', you will live happily ever after," Ms Pateman said. "Your ultimate goal should be happiness - single or not. We all have our own unique life journey. If I had waited for 'the one', I wouldn't have had such an amazing life." Louisa, 47, has travelled to 73 countries, had multiple properties and chose to have her son solo using a sperm bank at age 37 after stressing out about her biological clock ticking and having more than 13 failed relationships since the age of 21. A civil engineer for 25 years, she created exciting and rewarding life experiences through travel, investing and spending time with girlfriends. "I spent 20 years looking for my soulmate and my son, Nicholas, is now the love of my life. I wouldn't give him up for any man," she said. Her tips for being happily single include: Embrace/ accept your situation for what it is and what you have Learn to be present- enjoy the moment Find other single people you can relate to but don't exclude yourself from couple situations. Find opportunities where you can be around people you can connect with, who have lived part of your journey Love yourself and appreciate your self worth. You determine your own worth by what you will and won't put up with Find inner contentment and the good in all your challenges. Don't be a man/ woman hater or shun couples. If you are bitter, resentful or hold grudges from past relationship failures, that bitterness permeates your present experience. Find exciting and rewarding life experiences that you can do on your own. When you come out of a relationship, write down a list of all the things you want to do without a partner and do it, like going on a girl's retreat or writing a book (eg. I was up 10pm to 2am most nights when writing my book). Stay optimistic about life. Have an attitude of gratitude. Be grateful for what you have - big and little things. List things you're grateful for and realise things aren't that bad. Look at life from a macro perspective and realise how small your issues are in the overall scheme of things Remind yourself that not everyone in a relationship is happy. You may be better off than some people who don't have the courage to be single Ms Pateman's tips are also in line with Singles Awareness Day (or Singles Appreciation Day), which is celebrated on February 15 each year. "It is a celebration of love in all forms recognising the love between friends, family and loving yourself. You have to accept you are where you are," Ms Pateman said. "I'm not saying you can get rid of your desires. I'm saying if you don't have courage to live a rewarding life on your own, life could pass you by and you could miss out on a lot of opportunities." For more details or for a copy of the book *Single, Again, and Again, and Again...*, visit www.louisapateman.com ENDS _____ MEDIA CONTACT ONLY: AA Xpose Media Director/ Photojournalist Aldwyn Altuney ph: 0409 895 055

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