

## Keys to long-term love for gay men

**Guest: Lamont White**

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**Meagen Gibson - [00:00:09]**

Welcome to this interview. I'm Meagen Gibson, co-host of the Relationship Super Conference.

Today I'm speaking with Lamont White, the owner of [betterwaytomeet.com](http://betterwaytomeet.com), which is a professional matchmaking, dating coaching and couples counseling service for gay men in the United States. Since 2014, Mr. White has matched hundreds of single guys and even helped a few get married. Mr. White is also the host of a new show, *Shoot Your Shot Wednesdays*, where single guys answer insightful, funny and spicy questions about being single. Mr. White has an undergraduate degree in psychology and graduate degree in professional community counseling. He lives in Atlanta, Georgia, with his husband and their two nephews.

Lamont, thank you so much for being with me today.

**Lamont White**

Hi, Meagen. Thank you for having me. It's so weird hearing you call me Mr. White because you know, I'm recently married, so I'm like, who is Mr. White? That's me.

**Meagen Gibson**

I love it. Well, congratulations.

**Lamont White**

Thank you.

**Meagen Gibson**

So what do guys really want in a potential partner? Let's just dive right in.

**Lamont White**

I love it. So, listen, I do a lot of research, and I do a lot of asking questions to gay men all over the world. Like, really, what do you want out of a guy?

And what I have found, based on the research, it's not just my opinion so don't kill me when you hear these responses. Okay? There are a couple of things that gay men really look for.

One is they're looking for a guy to be attractive. They're looking for him to be independent. They're looking for him to be a little masculine. And also, sexual compatibility is really key when you talk about gay men and our relationships.

Sometimes people think, oh, just because you're two gay men it will work. No, it really depends on some sexual compatibility, the masculinity, masculinity level, if they're independent and also a level of attractiveness.

**Meagen Gibson - [00:02:07]**

And I would love it if we could break those down even further. So let's not bash attractiveness. Everybody has an aspect of shallowness. That's the thing we see. Right? The first thing. Is someone attractive

And a lot of that can be energetic, too. It's not necessarily surface, it's how you carry yourself and your confidence and those kinds of things that are attractive as well, right?

**Lamont White**

It has to do with how you're keeping up with your appearance. So are you taking good care of your skin, your hygiene, your health, your physical health? Typically guys, we're visual. We like to see things that look where it's supposed to be.

And it could be different for each guy. So it doesn't mean you have to be a model. You could have dad bod. And that is sexy. It really depends on how you're keeping yourself up.

**Meagen Gibson**

Yeah. Attractiveness is really defined by the individual who's seeking somebody, not necessarily some socially conformed derived version of attractiveness.

**Lamont White**

Exactly. But we do tend to lean towards what is mainstream, but then others push the envelope and say, no, this is what I find attractive. So that's one of the majors.

**Meagen Gibson**

Yeah. And are most of the people that you're coaching ready to be in serious, committed relationships? Or they also just browsing the dating scene?

**Lamont White**

So the guys who approach me for dating coaching, it just varies. Some are still working on coming out of the closet, accepting who they are. Some just don't know how to date, Meagen. And so, they're like, hey, Lamont, how do you flirt with a guy? What should I talk about on the first date? How do we define a relationship? How do I figure out what I want in a relationship?

Others, they're like, hey, I'm tired of dating. I've been married. I don't want to get back out there. So we talk about ways to reinvigorate them and make sure that they have some hope in the dating field. So it really varies. But they're all looking for help to improve themselves.

**Meagen Gibson**

And regarding an independent aspect that you were mentioning, say more about that. What does that mean?

**Lamont White**

So, for gay men, we're looking for a guy to be financially secure, for that person to have a good sense of self. So they're not really depending on another person to succeed in life or drive where they are.

Gay men really appreciate someone who has a backbone, who's self-confident and really self independent. Yes. It's attractive.

**Meagen Gibson - [00:04:58]**

Absolutely. And then that sexual compatibility, as you were saying, it's not necessarily, there's a lot of assumptions around gay men or gay sex drives or sexual compatibility. And so just making sure that you are actually compatible.

**Lamont White**

Right. So, when they get in the bed, it's like, how does it go down? You can spend a whole day talking about this, okay. But really, who's the top? Well, who is? Who prefers the top? Who prefers to bottom? Or if there's some flexibility in there.

And we talk about what is a top? That is someone who primarily likes to be the insertive partner. Bottom means the person who prefers commonly to be the insertive, so receiving. And then versatile, that maybe a new term for some folks, but they like, kind of both.

**Meagen Gibson**

Not just in one category.

**Lamont White**

Right. Right.

**Meagen Gibson**

Alright. So once you've figured out, and I'm sure a lot of the beginning conversations that you have with people are figuring that stuff out. Maybe they've never even thought about it that deeply. What do I want out of a partner? What is attractiveness in a partner?

**Lamont White**

Right. So, we really go over from the beginning to the end. First, I always focus on itself. Like, what do you value in life? What is most important to you? Because if you can't identify those things, it's really challenging to figure out what you want in a partner.

So if fitness is important to you, if faith is important, if advocacy, if health, identifying those first, then talking about what do I expect in a partner? What do I want my relationship to look like? How do I want us to make decisions? How do I want us to argue? How do I want us to flirt with each other?

Those are things where you talk about compatibility, you really have to write a list and say, these are the things I expect in a relationship. That will help singles to figure out how do I pick the right guy?

Because sometimes guys will date any and everyone just because they're attractive and what they find is they pick up, or they find themselves in relationships with guys who are not compatible with them because they haven't honed in on what really works for them.

**Meagen Gibson**

And I imagine as well that if you haven't asked yourself those questions and haven't established that, then how are you going to actually have the conversation with someone else?

Having the conversation alone is difficult. Okay, so how do you like to argue? What's your style of arguing? When you get stressed or when you get triggered how do you react? And how can I bring you back to a place of calm when we're heated?

**Lamont White - [00:08:05]**

That's important and how to look for that when you're on a date. Because dates are supposed to be fun, but you're in the interview stage. You're trying to figure out how does he spend his money? How does he communicate well with me? Does he argue? Those are things that you need to look for when you're on a date. And if you haven't taken the time to figure out what you want in a relationship, then you're just kind of winging it and hoping that something will work.

**Meagen Gibson**

And I imagine a lot of that is because, you said it so well that it is really an interview, right? All dates are interviews. And what we're looking for is the same thing that somebody interviewing or recruiting in a company is looking for, which is an open minded attitude and somebody who's willing to explore things they are unfamiliar with or learn or maybe be interested in the same, passionate about the same things that we're interested in.

**Lamont White**

And that's the dating process. But I tell guys, yes, look at dating as an interview, but don't treat it like that.

**Meagen Gibson**

You don't want it to be an interrogation, right?

**Lamont White**

You don't want to sit down on your first date and say, Meagen, how much money do you make? How do you argue? No. What you do is more experiencing the person in their element. So, have fun with the person. Go bike riding, go axe throwing and grab some coffee. But in your interactions pay attention. Pay attention to how he speaks to you, how he talks about his family, what he talks about, what he does for fun. Those are going to be signals that tell you this guy is a good fit for you or that you're just not compatible.

**Meagen Gibson**

Or even how he talks to service staff, things like that I'm sure.

**Lamont White**

Are you rude to the waiter? Oh it's not going to work out, right? Because then that's how he's going to speak to you. What do you think?

**Meagen Gibson**

So true. That's one of my biggest things that I look out for with everybody. People that I want to be friends with or anybody. If you can't treat service people with respect, then this is not going to go very far in a relationship.

**Lamont White**

Or how he will treat your family members when you butt heads.

**Meagen Gibson**

Not if, when.

**Meagen Gibson - [00:10:29]**

So now that we know your self-evaluation and the things you're thinking about, maybe in the background, not as an interrogation when you're dating, how do you actually go about meeting people?

**Lamont White**

Right. So listen, it is 2021. This is the age of social media and dating apps. Okay? You can find love on dating apps and social media. It's just about how you use it. It is really, and I tell my clients who work with me, and when I tell them this, they're like, Lamont really, it's that much work? And I feel like I'm selling myself. You are selling yourself. You should have clear, recent, engaging pictures that say who you are on social media.

They shouldn't be blurry, they shouldn't be like these weird angles, they should be from 5-10 years ago. They should be current. What guys are looking for on social media and apps is, can I see myself in your life? Can I see myself in our world? What am I signing up for based on what you're presenting on social media?

And so often, guys only show their career and you're like, okay, you're a great lawyer. Okay, you're a great real estate, but what do you do after 5 O'clock? What do you do on the weekend? Who are your friends? Who are your family members? What am I getting myself into?

So it's really creating that narrative for guys to say, you know what? He likes to go hiking, he likes to travel, he likes to eat some really good food. I want to get an invite. So I think if people market themselves that way, it makes it so much easier.

And I tell my clients this, that it gives a person an excuse to flirt with you. It gives them an excuse to send you a message on social media to say, hey, I see you like that amazing wine place. How is it? Can you invite me next time? So it's that simple, but it's work and its effort.

**Meagen Gibson**

Absolutely. So many things that you just said were so great. Can I see myself in your life? I immediately have a sense of, I'm not in the dating world right now, but if I were, I can immediately understand how I would apply that. The full picture of my life, not just the selfie taken from a high angle. It's, what am I telling you is important to me? How do I fit in?

And also, it gives the person on the other side of the app that way to get in, that conversation piece to start, because that's probably the hardest part is just starting the conversation and then getting the first in person.

**Lamont White**

It is the hardest part because if you're only posting once a month, then it seems kind of creepy if I'm interested in sending you a message to like your picture from last month to comment. So it does mean you have to post things at least two or three times a week.

That's a lot. But if you go hiking or if you go running, you go to the grocery store, that's content for people to flirt with you. So do it, please.

**Meagen Gibson**

Yeah. And I heard somebody say recently that it's not even so much content creation as it is just documentation. Just document what's happening in your life, even if it's the shallow TV show that you guiltily watch.

**Lamont White - [00:14:08]**

Put your feet up, have your glass of wine, take the picture watching Real Housewives of Atlanta. Oh, I'm watching that show, too. I'll slide in your DMs. Yes.

**Meagen Gibson**

Exactly. Right. Because especially with those shows there's always some controversy that you can connect about.

**Lamont White**

There's always drama.

**Meagen Gibson**

Always some drama.

And then what was the other thing? And the focus on career. So I assume that because one of those things is independence and financial security that we're looking for maybe that's why men are focusing on that career aspect, or do you think they're just not considering that people want the full picture of your life?

**Lamont White**

So I think it depends on certain careers, because certain careers it's looked down upon that you actually have a life. You're allowed to have a personal life where you actually like to travel, that you might like to do anything out that's not related to your work. And so they only focus or post things that are focused on real estate or being a lawyer or a hairdresser. And it's like, no, you can't post that. And it's looked down upon if you say, here's the key thing is, that you are single and you're looking for love.

People are afraid to show that on social media. What is this saying? I'm single and I'm looking for love and your messaging. That's the only way you're going to find love on social media.

**Meagen Gibson**

So what do you think is the fear there? That it seems desperate?

**Lamont White**

It's the rejection, and they don't want to seem like it's a thirst trap, like, you're just so longing for it. I think there are ways that you can post things that look like a thirst trap and desperate. But there are appropriate ways that you can do it. Like writing a poem about finding love. That's simple, right? Or making a meal and say, hey, I'm husband material because I know how to cook.

Those are classy and in the middle ways of articulating that you're single and you're looking for love.

**Meagen Gibson**

Posting a picture of a couple that you admire and listing the qualities of their relationship that you really respect and look for. Yeah.

**Lamont White**

And someone will say, oh, I agree, because we share those values. Well, that's great. Let's talk. Let's meet up for brunch.

**Meagen Gibson - [00:16:57]**

Yeah. Because I could see just saying that you're single and looking for love, depending on the tone of voice that the person seeing it reads it in their head, there's so much interpretation that can happen.

**Lamont White**

Oh, my goodness, why is this person posting this again?

**Meagen Gibson**

Right. You're like, oh, here they go again. The last relationship didn't work out, here they are. So I love that perspective. And it also grounds a person in their self and what their perceived value of themselves is. Which is such a great signal that you're ready to be in partnership and that you might be a great partner for somebody.

**Lamont White**

Yeah. It shows that you've done the work. And what I will tell you is gay men really appreciate, and other singles, is that people have done the mental health work to be who they are.

As gay men we have been taught a lot of unhealthy things about who we are and what we like. So it is amazing that people are going to therapists and coach to unlearn some of that crap and say, I want to be a whole person. And that, Meagen, is what is sexy and that's attractive when you're looking for a partner.

**Meagen Gibson**

Absolutely, 100%. And the funny part of doing work on yourself and going to therapy is that you're still you at the end of the day. You just drop all of the unhealthy coping mechanisms, if you will, or avoidance tactics or all the things that are getting in the way of intimacy and connection.

**Lamont White**

And intimacy is what people want. And then sometimes that can be a block because of fear of rejection or we've been taught some unhealthy things. But once you get into a relationship, it is so endearing that you can be vulnerable with your partner. And that helps couples to stay in long-term relationships. And you learn more about who you are. So that's key.

**Meagen Gibson**

Absolutely. And the things that you'll need to be vulnerable about in the future of your relationship, like you're not even aware of the vulnerabilities you have that are coming down the pike. Just as relationships change and grow and you as a person, as an individual in a relationship change and grow, there are vulnerabilities that come up that you couldn't have seen coming. So that's so important.

**Lamont White**

Yeah. And one thing when I do my couples coaching, I always coach my couples, I say, hey, look for changes in your partner. Look for, as they evolve, right? You have to look. Their likes, their desires, their breaking points. They change over years. And that is okay. It's really key just to see how you can adapt, how you can support or you say, you know what? You've changed significantly. And I'm not okay with that. It's like, hey, I didn't sign up for that. You've evolved so this is not going to work anymore.

But I think successful couples pay attention and they try to modify and support each other.

**Meagen Gibson - [00:20:20]**

Grow together vs grow apart, right?

**Lamont White**

Yes. And you can grow together appropriately. You can have your own goals that you want to achieve, and your partner can have separate ones. It's about how do you support each other with their aspirations.

And sometimes it can be challenging because someone's career might take them far away from the relationship. I've seen couples who are like, hey, I need to do 2 years in this city. And then how do we make this work? Because you want to support each other careers. But it's about navigating those challenges appropriately.

**Meagen Gibson**

And what are some of the traps in online dating, especially for gay men? I know, I had a conversation with somebody else a few weeks ago and he was talking about phishing scams on dating apps and the way that people bait people. What does that look like in the gay men's dating app world?

**Lamont White**

Lord, today, I will say. So the dating apps, they are challenging for some gay men because the majority of the dating apps, I would probably say, and people might kill me for this, but I'll say it anyway, 70% of the guys I would say are looking to hook up. So it is what it is. I'm very sex positive. Have at it. Enjoy the apps to meet someone casual.

However, a lot of people are using apps more and more to find love. It is again about how you're packaging yourself. Because say if you live in Jackson, Mississippi, as a gay man, you probably don't have a thriving gay community over there. It's not supportive. However, you might want to find a partner or you want to find a friend. The dating apps are perfect for that because you can put your face picture out there. You can say who you are, what you're looking for love and sell yourself as someone who's genuine, who's authentic, who's not looking for a hookup. And that's a great way to find love.

There are a lot of gay men who have met their husbands on dating apps because they did it in a way that they were their authentic selves, and they put it out there in a way that a guy who's looking to date will respond.

**Meagen Gibson**

I love that. And that response must be pretty clear, right? There's not any ambiguity there. You can tell by the response language whether somebody is looking to hook up or whether they're looking to get to know you for something more long-term.

**Lamont White**

You can tell from the first two messages that go back. If it's an x-rated picture or is it, "hey, I love the content on your page. Oh, I see you like bike riding. Oh, you have a great smile". You can tell within the first few interactions what the guy is looking for.

And what I tell my dating coaching clients is just if you're trying to look for a relationship, weed out those other guys, just delete, block and then focus your time and your energy on guys who actually want to be in a relationship.



**Meagen Gibson - [00:23:39]**

Fantastic. All right, so we know how to navigate the apps now, and that's your primary recommended methodology. So what kind of dating changes have occurred because of COVID-19?

**Lamont White**

So there was a survey that was done that said probably about 20% to 25% of gay men didn't meet in person because of COVID-19. What they did was just have more conversations back and forth on the app, or they would do virtual dates. I want to see who you are. And it showed change, that guy's dated long distance more than they would have before. So if you lived in Philadelphia, you were open to dating someone who was in New York. Because guess what? You aren't going to see each other in person anyway. So you're like, hey, let me establish something.

That has really changed now that there's a vaccine and cities are opening up more and more, guys are going back out into public to meet each other.

Listen, Meagen, I push for guys to meet in person. So literally, if you see someone in the grocery store, giving him a compliment, saying hello, asking for his number, flirting with him. And with gay men it can be tricky because you might not be like 100% the other guy's gay, right? You can see an attractive guy, you be like, oh, he's cute. I wanna say hi.

**Meagen Gibson**

Talk about vulnerability.

**Lamont White**

Right. Which team are you playing for? And I want to put myself out there. So I teach guys just to be like, you know what, so, Meagen, say if I saw you out at the grocery store, right? I will say, that's a lovely color of lipstick. Where did you get it from? Where did you get it from?

**Meagen Gibson**

I think it was from Walgreens.

**Lamont White**

Really! You see how you laugh back and forth? I'm going to look in your eyes, I'm going to smile, I'm going to say, oh, I didn't know that. You know what? You have good taste. If you are interested in me, you're gonna keep this conversation going. If you're straight, married or just not interested, you're gonna say thank you, and...

**Meagen Gibson**

Walk away.

**Lamont White**

Right. So that's a great way to put yourself out there without being overly aggressive or inappropriate. And you're not being passive. It's not the, let me just look at you in the eyes.

**Meagen Gibson**

Right. I'm going to send you energy, and you're supposed to interpret what I want or need from that.

**Lamont White - [00:26:19]**

That's creepy. And it doesn't work.

**Meagen Gibson**

Right. We don't need to be staring at people from afar, uncomfortably for too long.

**Lamont White**

Agree.

**Meagen Gibson**

Great. And it's really interesting what you said about people being willing to expand their circles, especially geographically, because if we weren't seeing anybody to begin with anyway, so we might as well widen our pool of potentials.

**Lamont White**

I think the dating market can be very small, so the more that you push your preferences there are more options. And one of the things I encourage people to do is push your boundaries. You know, we have a box of what we say, hey, this is what I like, but try dating different types.

Like, my husband was not the typical person that I would have dated at all. We went on some dates, I was like, oh, my goodness, I actually like this. And I love it and we're married. Right, so push.

**Meagen Gibson**

Obviously that worked out well for you.

**Lamont White**

Yes.

**Meagen Gibson**

And let's, for a second, talk about accessibility, because you mentioned the person that might be in a very small town, there's not a lot of accessibility to people in person to flirt with and to practice with. So I can see those virtual dates being really useful. It's like why would I want to spend a bunch of time in transit or getting to know somebody when we could do a virtual date?

So I'm going to put you on the spot here, but do you have some suggestions for things that people can do on virtual dates? Or ways people can interact on virtual dates? Or that help you get to know somebody and know if you want to travel a few hours in the car to go meet them in person.

**Lamont White**

Definitely. So I plan amazing virtual dates. I do matchmaking and especially during COVID a lot of places, like in New York City, nothing was open, so I still did matchmaking but I planned virtual dates.

You can do icebreaker questions where some are funny, some are insightful. You gotta have some spicy ones, though. Okay. You want to have something that's gonna make, the questions they should make you smile, they should make you get warm and fuzzy on the inside. It's okay to be a little erotic on those virtual dates because you're going to find compatibility. But make sure there's some great icebreaker questions.

You can also cook together on a first date. Like, literally say, hey, here's a recipe. You go grocery shopping, I'll go grocery shopping. We'll put the video up, and we'll cook together and have a conversation. Throw in some wine. It'll be amazing. Okay. Yeah.

**Meagen Gibson - [00:29:16]**

I love that. And now, I think it's Netflix party, you can even watch something together after you've gotten done cooking. And it's always interesting to, cooking is a great example because you really see, if the pan's too hot and somebody starts burning something, you get to see how they handle it when they're freaking out or if they're out of their comfort zone. That's a great one.

**Lamont White**

And Meagen, you get to see their body language because you're not in person, so you get to see how they move, and you can be like, I wish I was there.

You want to find ways that you can show your sensual side without being overly sexual, but ways that you can flirt appropriately.

**Meagen Gibson**

Yeah. I mean, the way a person walks or stands or carries themselves or just sits in a chair can often just tell you so much about about them.

**Lamont White**

Instead of doing the boring Zoom date where you can see head up and you're just talking. That doesn't work.

**Meagen Gibson**

It doesn't. So what are your suggestions for single people that want to date out of their race or ethnicity?

**Lamont White**

This is another Lord today one, because I think sometimes we don't do it appropriately.

So, one thing I would say is be your authentic self, show up as who you are. Also, before you say, hey, you want to date outside your race, it's really important to see how involved you are in that community already. Do you invest in those communities? Do you go to events? Do you have friends? That's the first step before you want to venture out into a different race or ethnicity. Because if not, if not, you can come across as just looking for a new flavor of the week. Or you could look like you are trying to get into a fetish because you are not really connected to that community.

Also, some things I've heard is, and this is all races, you don't want to, when you go on a date, you don't want to lead with that. Like, oh, I'm into Asian guys. I date all Asian guys. Okay. No, don't lead with that. Don't lead with that.

**Meagen Gibson**

Red flags.

### **Lamont White - [00:31:36]**

Just lead with who you naturally are. Hey, you know, this is the type of work I do, these are things I like to do for fun, these are places I donate, these are places I like to hang out, these are restaurants I go to. Those are things that you lead with, so you don't come across inappropriate or you rubbed the person the wrong way. I hope that makes sense.

### **Meagen Gibson**

Yeah, absolutely. Okay so, there's an example of a huge error that you can make when you're dating. So, what are some of the other mistakes that singles can make when they're dating?

### **Lamont White**

So I think singles, the mistakes that they make, one is they give up too quickly. Dating is like a marathon, and sometimes you get tired because of the rejection because of the mishaps. And I hear all the time, Meagen, single's are like, you know what? I'm taking a break. I'm not going to date for the next 5 years. I'm going to go back to school, or I'm going to focus on my career. No, don't give up. Don't give up too quickly.

Also, I don't think singles sometimes know how to communicate appropriately. So they're texting each other about everything, and it's like, no, pick the phone up, give the person a call. That's gonna build connection. You're gonna learn more about the person. You can't do that through text message. And sometimes in this new age, singles like to just text back and forth.

### **Meagen Gibson**

And so much to the nuance of language and meaning and interpretation. You have to hear someone's voice to know if there's sincerity there or sarcasm.

### **Lamont White**

You will miss it. You'll miss it.

Also, I won't say if, I'll say when there are mishaps in the communication or someone showed up late or someone did something that rubbed you the wrong way on the date. Sometimes we don't communicate well about that. Where we don't say, hey, you know what? You were rude to the waiter or you used a term or you did something that was weird. We don't say that.

And it's okay to set the environment on a date to be like, hey, you know what? I'm definitely interested in getting to know you. If you're not feeling this at the time or something weird happens, say something, speak up because you're learning a different person.

And sometimes communication might be weird, but it's about bringing it up and addressing the elephant in the room and not ghosting the person and giving up because the person said something or did something weird.

### **Meagen Gibson**

Right. Absolutely. I can see avoidance being, and that's prevalent everywhere in the ghosting and just not giving people the personal respect that they deserve. I just don't think this is going to work out or really saying, I really didn't appreciate the way that you treated that server. It's really important to me to treat everyone that I interact with with respect. So I would either love to hear a little bit more about what was going on with you in that situation.

**Lamont White - [00:35:05]**

And they can say, you know what, I was having a bad day. I was having a bad day, or I took a medication. You could find out more about what happened in that moment. Or maybe he knew the waiter, right?

**Meagen Gibson**

Right. You never know.

**Lamont White**

But bringing it up to figure out what happened.

**Meagen Gibson**

Exactly. And what are the tendencies? Because when I hear you say, don't give up too easily, I'm going to take myself totally out of the dating scene, but also staying with it long enough to get to know somebody well. How do you prevent yourself from, especially in loneliness, and COVID made us more isolated than we've ever been, and especially for single people, people that lived alone. So what's that line between giving something enough time, committing to getting to know somebody and giving them that respect, but not finding yourself accidentally committed and in a relationship with somebody you were never compatible with.

**Lamont White**

Right. But here's what I will say is, particularly for gay men, we didn't have role models or blueprints for how to date another guy. We didn't. Brokeback Mountain, that doesn't count. Okay.

**Meagen Gibson**

Didn't do it.

**Lamont White**

Didn't do it. No. No.

So, there are going to be hiccups. And for some gay men they have come out of the closet later in life, like in their 30s or 40s. So they're still really trying to figure out how to date. So mistakes occur.

So I say give the guy at least maybe one or two times to make a mistake. Give them one or two to be like, okay, that was strange. But address it. And don't give up. When it's time to back out is when you're not feeling appreciated, when he's not returning calls, when you're putting all the effort into this relationship. I do think it's okay for you to make the second, the third move. You're like, oh, I planned the last date. He should plan the next one. No. If you want to see him plan the date. It's okay for you to court and chase each other.

But when it becomes, he's not responding, he's no longer interested. That's when you back up, you back off. And it's okay to address it first before moving off.

And Meagen, it's okay to date multiple people at the same time. It's called dating.

**Meagen Gibson**

And especially if you're clear about that. There's no false commitment, there's no deception. It's I am dating multiple people and here's what that looks like and feels like. And here's what that means for me and what I expect out of my other partners.

**Lamont White - [00:37:56]**

And here's when we can shift, here's when I will say, hey, this is just you and I. It could be time. It could be commitment. It could be we graduated to this level because now we want to be more intimate. And then I no longer date those other people. But have those transparent conversations up front so that you know what you're getting yourself into.

**Meagen Gibson**

Absolutely. And I love a lot of the things that you just said about the signs that you're looking for and that you're in it for the right reasons and the confirmation that you're getting along the way. But then once you're in a relationship, how do we stay in healthy relationships?

**Lamont White**

So if you want to stay in a healthy relationship, number one, and number one is focusing on self. Like literally I say focus on self. Put yourself first.

When I got married, part of my vows, I told my husband that I promise to take care of me first because if I don't take care of myself, I can't be a good partner. I'm gonna bring in some toxic things. I'm gonna be dragging you down and saying, hey, I need X, Y and Z, and it's gonna impact our relationship.

So, make sure you're mentally, physically, financially and spiritually working on yourself. You don't have to be perfect, but you should be having some goals. That's key.

Also, you gotta date each other. When I say you have to date each other, you still have to be like, let's go outside the house. Couples get into relationships and they think Netflix or having dinner at the house is a date. It's not a date. It's not. Get out the house. Go for a walk. Go to the park, go to the picnic, do something like when you when you first met each other. You courted each other, planned things. So you got to do that.

And then also, I talked about earlier is focusing on your partner to see how he or she is changing. Because you are going to change. So it's being in tune to what they might like now or what they might not like anymore and being able to support your partner and those changes. I think if you do that you will grow together, you will be more connected and your relationship will be more satisfying.

**Meagen Gibson**

I love that and the dating and keeping track of how your partner is changing. A lot of those changes, there's so many factors involved in being a human being and aging and growing. So some of the things, some of those changes or tendencies might feel really vulnerable. Inviting your partner to pay attention and be tuned in is such a great framing.

**Lamont White**

Yeah. One of my couples I did a session with recently. They've been together for 10 years. So I said write a list about how he has changed. They're like, oh, we haven't thought about that. Well, he's different. He's different now. So write that list out so that you can be like, oh, that's accurate or no, I don't like that anymore. So you can support each other and modify things.

**Meagen Gibson**

Absolutely.

Alright, so what makes a power couple?

**Lamont White - [00:41:24]**

Lord today. You can hear me say that, I'm sorry.

So power couples are, some people I hear all the time, I want a partner where I can build with, where we can open a business together, we can own property and do X, Y and Z.

**Meagen Gibson**

We're going to build an empire.

**Lamont White**

Yes, we want to be Jay-Z and Beyonce, Michelle and Barack.

So here's my question. Do you want a business partner or do you want to lover? Sounds like you want a business partner, get a business partner. Get a business partner and get a lover.

Because here's the challenge with that, if you go into a relationship just expecting to be a power couple what happens if you get sick? What happens if he loses his job? Are you no longer compatible because he can't achieve the success that you wanted? No. You're going into your relationship, and I know I'm judging. I'm being judgmental, but that's what people pay me to be.

I feel like you want to find a deeper way of connecting with your partner. What does he like to do? Who is he on the inside? And not what can he do for me? Or what can we build together? No. Because at the end of the day, all that can change within a second. And then if that is a priority for your relationship, it's going to fail.

**Meagen Gibson**

Illness, injury, medical needs, lots of things take people out of being financially supportive or involved people in their relationships. And if that's the only thing you've got to hang on to it will take the whole ground of your relationship out.

**Lamont White**

Right. I want a partner when I get old and I need depends, he's going to be there to support me. If I have to go to a nursing home, he's going to be there next to me and not I'm taxing on him or I'm a burden. I want that type of love. And I think most people want that type of love.

**Meagen Gibson**

Absolutely. Well, what is the benefit of working with a dating coach? I think you've made it super clear. But give me your pitch. Why should a gay man hire you as a dating coach?

**Lamont White**

So, I tell people I am the gay dating coach because I have done the research about what works well for gay men. I've been a therapist for gay men since 2004. So I've seen the good, the bad and the ugly.

Most folks don't know how to date. We bump our heads, straight or gay, we bump our heads, and we make a lot of mistakes. And sometimes we get input from our friends, our family members. And really sometimes it's not accurate or they're trying to spare our feelings.

**Meagen Gibson - [00:44:19]**

Well intended, but not accurate.

**Lamont White**

Not accurate. Not accurate. I sit down with my clients and we get into the weeds about what's working well, what's not. And we talk about what they want to achieve. And I give them tangible action steps to do.

Usually they are uncomfortable. I've had some tears. They're uncomfortable. But at the end of the day, they're like, I've achieved my goals because I give you what has been proven to work to find love. And what is most importantly, is to stay in that relationship.

Because you can find a great guy, but you're still bringing those old habits to the table. It's going to fail. So dating coaches do a great job of helping you achieve those goals.

**Meagen Gibson**

And obviously, first as an individual. They're going to help you, the person looking for a partner, not necessarily, yeah.

**Lamont White**

Yeah. Because you show up at the table every time in every relationship. So you have to be your best self so that you can make that relationship work.

**Meagen Gibson**

And that ripples out to all your relationships, right? Your friends, your co-workers, your family. Once you start working on yourself in that way of trying to have a romantic partner, it benefits everyone.

**Lamont White**

They're like, oh, my goodness, he's smiling more. He's more engaging because you have done that work on yourself.

**Meagen Gibson**

Yeah, absolutely. Well, Lamont, new name White. Thank you so much. How can people find out more about you and your work?

**Lamont White**

Sure. So they can visit my site. It's [betterwaytomeet.com](https://betterwaytomeet.com)

I work with gay men all over the United States. I even have some international clients that I do dating and coaching with as well. So I look forward to working with anybody and helping them to achieve their goals.

**Meagen Gibson**

Fantastic. Thanks for being here.

**Lamont White**

Thank you so much, Meagen.