One of you wrote under one of my most recent videos, “Who’s here watching Matthew’s dating tips and not dating at all?” That was from cookwithyuyu2024. That was the most liked comment on the video with 546 likes at the time of making this video and 63 replies, many of them concurring with cookwithyuyu’s comment about watching the videos and dare I say loving them—she didn’t add that detail, but I’m going to assume that that’s what she meant—but not out there dating.

I wanted to talk about this. I have heard it said many times by people. They feel like actually going out there and dating is going to mess up their peace in some way, that they have found this nice, cozy, comfortable way of living. They have found their equilibrium between their work, their hobbies, their friends, the things they’re doing. And the idea of inviting in the Wild West of dating where anything can happen, any flake, player, user, manipulator can come through the door and ruin that piece is anathema.

And it might not just be someone who’s got bad intentions. Sometimes it could be someone who’s got good intentions, who we like, but then they decide they don’t like us back or they just don’t text us back for a day. And our life as we knew it, all of the peaceful, serene, calm that we had found, gives way to this agonizing, obsessing, churning, gut-wrenching anxiety of “Why aren’t they texting me back.”

Who wants to sign up for that? I get it. I get it. Far easier to stay under the blankets in our bed and just live life and go, “Screw all of you people that I could be attracted to. I don’t need you in my life. I’m fine.”

But here’s the problem—the very watching of these videos, assuming you don’t just like the sound of my voice or the way that I say things, for many of you the deeper desire in watching these videos is because you would like to find love, you would like that companionship in your life. In fact, you would like it very, very, very much. And it’s a desire that’s not about to go away. So, you can lock that desire up in the cupboard and decide to try to go to sleep, but eventually, it’s going to start banging on the door; and over time the banging gets louder, and our peaceful life that we’re protecting doesn’t feel nearly as peaceful as we’ve tried to convince ourselves it is because the banging is now actually starting to keep us up at night.

Hiding away isn’t always the best solution to something that we feel could threaten our peace. What I prefer is the idea of knowing how to defend your peace so that you can go out there and look for what you want, but you become masterful in your ability to guard that peace. So, let’s talk about how to do that. I have five ways, my friends, my fellow love monks.

For those of you that are new to the channel, I’m Matthew Hussey, author of the new New York Times best-selling book *Love Life: How to Raise Your Standards, Find Your Person and Live Happily (No Matter What)*. And for the last 17 years of my life, I have been known for helping people on their journey to find love. For those of you that have been enjoying the book, by the way, every single Friday, I have a new written piece that goes out to my private mailing list that I’m really proud of. It’s free. It’s super practical. I have strategies for finding love in there, strategies for communicating standards, ways of becoming more confident, and just generally, advice every week written in the same style as the book that can help you that I don’t publish anywhere else. So, go join that list if you haven’t already. I’ll leave a link below The3Relationships.com and I look forward to sending your first email to you this Friday.

Number one—let’s talk about comfort and risk.

The way I see life is that it’s always a negotiation between comfort and risk. Imagine a coin, and comfort and risk are two different sides of the same coin. The comforts that we have in our life, which there’s nothing wrong with, right? We can have some really lovely comforts in our life. There’s nothing inherently wrong with comfort. The comforts we already have in our life most of them have likely come from us having taken a risk at some point, right?

If you ever had a relationship or have one right now, you probably had to take a risk to get that relationship. You had to go on an app and risk rejection, you had to approach someone and risk rejection, you had a first kiss that could have gone badly, you had all these little moments along the way that represented risk. Someone could have rejected you, but you ended up with a relationship, a form of comfort because you took a risk. If you have a job right now that you’re proud of, you probably took a risk to get that job. You went into an environment where you could have been rejected at the job interview stage, or you could have been fired in the trial period. Anything could have happened.

So, when you went for your job, you took a risk. If you’re now secure in that job, comfort arose out of that risk. The same is true of things we get good at in life. Anything you’re competent at as a skill right now you’re competent at because you risked sucking at it. You probably did suck at it in the beginning and you got better. And eventually, it became something you were very comfortable with because you’re competent in it, but that came from going through a period of risk.

The things that create comfort in life often start with a degree of risk.

Now, my question to you is, are you wanting a relationship because there is some high-level comfort that could come from that? In other words, there might be the comfort of intimate connection, the comfort of sharing your life with someone, the comfort of having genuine love in your life, of being accepted. These are beautiful forms of comfort. And they’re the kind of comfort that can be found in a great relationship.

Now, if we want a higher level of comfort in some area, then we usually have to take some risk to get to that higher level of comfort. What we have to be honest with ourselves about is whether the level of comfort I am at now is genuinely everything I want or whether there is a higher value version of comfort that I’d like to have in my life. It doesn’t mean I need to have it, but that I’d like to have in my life that will necessitate me taking some risks. Risk and comfort—two sides of the same coin. To get to higher levels of comfort, we have to be willing to take a risk again.

Now, here’s the really encouraging thing about this. If you take a risk, if you’re going out there and taking swings in your love life to make things happen, and it doesn’t happen, I truly believe that there is a greater degree of peace in that, i.e. in knowing that you’re doing what you can towards that goal, than there is in trying to pretend that the goal is not important to you and doing nothing to contribute to it. Because I believe if we get to the end of our lives and look back and say, you know what, I gave love a shot, I opened myself up to it, I put myself in situations where it could happen, I took a few risks, I was brave, I was courageous, and it didn’t happen for me, I believe that we’ll still be able to sleep at night. We’ll still have a level of peace that says I tried.

But if we shut love and relationships and people out because we’re too afraid of some of the disturbances to our peace that could occur if we actually started to go out there and meet them, then I think we’ll have a deeper form of unrest, which is there’s something that was important to me and I didn’t do what I could to make that happen.

When I talk about comfort and risk, I’m not suggesting that if you never get to that level of comfort, you will never be happy. What I am saying is that in order to get to that comfort, you have to take risk; and by taking the risk, you’ll feel a greater level of peace, even if you never achieve it because you’ll know you’re doing what you can.

Bruce Springsteen had a song lyric that I can’t get off my mind when I’m making this point. It’s from Dancing in the Dark. He says, “You can’t start a fire worrying about your little world falling apart.” Well, we build our little comfortable worlds, don’t we, our cozy little worlds; and we do want to protect them. It’s natural to want to do that. There are times in our lives where we also want to start a fire, and love is one of those areas. We want to start a fire. We want to go and find someone amazing. We want to go and have this incredible relationship, but we can’t go and get that if we’re spending our lives worried about these worlds we’ve constructed falling apart.

The second—and dare I say counterintuitive—way that we defend our peace is by building it. And when I say building our peace, I mean that, when we go out into the world to date, to risk heartbreak, to put ourselves out there, to take a run at things, like to give something a go, take a swing, we are building robustness. And robustness is a very important word. It’s all about our ability to go and meet the world and survive the encounter to be able to come home again.

Real confidence isn’t the ability to stay inside the four walls of our house metaphorically or literally. Real confidence is knowing that even if some of the time you stay in your house for the quiet, for the comfort, for the ease that it brings, which, don’t get me wrong, is delightful, you know that you can go out and confront the world and its forces and come back home in one piece, or in several pieces sometimes. And yet here you are, still okay—a fractured broken vessel that somehow still works.

I want to read you a few lines from a book that I love. This is a book by David White, a British poet, called “Consolations,” and he takes words and breaks them down in these little mini-essays that are designed to restore life to everyday words that have lost their meaning through overuse. And he talks about the word robustness. He writes an entire little essay on robustness, said some things that I couldn’t put better myself. So, his robustness in David White’s words. And as I read this, I want you to see your own dating life or your own desire for love and your resistance to go out there and take the knocks that might be necessary in order to find it.

“Robustness is a word denoting health—psychological or physical; the ability to meet the world with vigor and impact. To be robust is to be physically or imaginatively present in the very firm presence of something or someone else. Being robust means we acknowledge the living current in something other than ourselves.”

Okay, so that idea that being robust is a sign of health, whether it’s physical or psychological; the ability to go out there and be in the world in the presence of something or someone else.

He goes on to say, “Robustness and vulnerability belong together. To be robust is to show a willingness to take collateral damage.”

Are you willing to take collateral damage in this part of your life? Or are you afraid that you cannot handle it? Might you be wrong about the fact that you can’t handle it?

“To be robust is to show a willingness to take collateral damage, to put up with temporary pain.”

They won’t text me back, noise, chaos. I don’t understand this person. They are confusing me. Or our systems being temporarily undone. My life doesn’t make sense today. I was happy yesterday. Today, I’m in a bad place. I don’t feel like I’m anchored to the things that make me feel good anymore. I feel like this person has disrupted my peace, my equilibrium.

“A robust response always entertains the possibility of humiliation. It is also a kind of faith, a sense that we will somehow survive the impact of a vigorous meeting.”

Could we have the faith that we will survive this encounter, that we can go out there and meet someone and it not go well and them not respond to us or them not like us as much as we like them or them not turn out to be the person we thought they were and survive the encounter, survive the impact of a vigorous meeting?

“A lack of robustness denotes ill health, psychological or physical. It can feed on itself.”

Listen to this—this is really important: “The less contact we have with anything other than our own body, our own rhythm, or the way we have arranged our life, the more afraid we can become of the frontier where actual noise, meetings, and changes occur. To come out and meet the world again is to heal from isolation, from grief, from illness, from the powers and traumas that first robbed us of that meeting.”

In other words, the things we have been through in our life that have made us afraid in the first place, that have made us afraid that we can’t go out there and survive another encounter with life, with love, with heartbreak, with any of these things that have hurt us in the past.

Finally, White says, “Robustness is not an option in most human lives. To choose its opposite is to become invisible.”

So, for point number two, I just want to summarize that peace—a much more powerful form of peace is knowing that you can get out there in the world, that you can have your scrapes, you can have things go wrong, you can have things not go your way, and you can live to tell the tale. When you know that, the peace you feel is the peace of being bulletproof, not the peace of hiding in your shelter.

So, now, let’s imagine that you’ve realized, “Okay, I want to get out there because (a) I want to create this new form of comfort in my life where I have somebody, and I want the peace that comes from knowing that I’m doing all I can, and I also acknowledge that just the act of me going out there and meeting the world head-on is going to build my robustness, which is also a form of peace because I’m showing myself that I am strong enough to survive these encounters.”

So, you want to go out there and date as a result. You’re like, “Okay, I’m gonna go and do this.” Well, now, the third way of defending your peace is really important. You have to go at a pace when you’re dating that you can sustain. This is deeply important. And the reason is this: you don’t know if you’re going to meet the love of your life tomorrow, next month, or three years from now, even if you’re doing the right things. There’s only so much you can control, and you can’t guarantee when the right person is going to come into your life. Knowing that, it’s no good if we date in a way that is unsustainable, where we go into a flurry of activity in our love lives to try to find love; and after three months, we burn out and throw in the towel and say never again.

And I am seeing this a lot right now with people who are using dating apps, who are burning out. They are sick and tired of it. Or in some people who are over-dating. They’re dating so many people. They are going numb to the process, and they’re like this is just taking up too much of my time, too much of my life. I can’t do this. I can’t make my whole life about this and it not go anywhere.

So, none of these are a way of approaching finding love that is sustainable. It being sustainable is key to success, because you don’t know exactly when it’s going to happen. If you quit before you get to that point, then it won’t happen.

There is a concept of finite and infinite games. Finite games are games you play to win. There are winners and losers. The game has an endpoint. If you play a game of tennis with someone, there is an endpoint, right? There’s a winner and a loser. But infinite games are games that you want to continue. They’re games that can go on forever, right? For me, coaching, sharing ideas is an infinite game. It’s not a game I want to win, because it’s something that I actually want to do my whole life. My friend Ali Abdaal talks about this in his videos—the idea that YouTube is what he loves and therefore it’s something that he doesn’t want to stop doing. I feel like that about sharing ideas in general.

So, if it’s a game I want to keep doing for a long time, then I have to go about it in a way that I actually enjoy. If I’m always making videos, I hate or doing it in a way that is killing me because it’s too much work and it’s burning me out, then this isn’t going to be an infinite game for me. I’ll make YouTube videos for another six months to a year or two years, and then I’ll burn out. But if I want to be helping people, and coaching people and sharing ideas for a very long time, I need to do it in a way that allows me to enjoy it for a very long time.

Well, I would put to you that your love life is no different. I’m not saying that you want to date for the rest of your life. But if you knew that love could happen at any point, but you don’t know if it’s going to happen this year or next year or the year after, but that it definitely won’t happen if you’re not in the game, then how would you answer this question: how do I need to do this if I wanted to make sure I could do it for a long time? And you might say, “Well, okay, as far as dating apps are concerned, I’ll limit myself to an hour a day, or even half an hour a day. I am not going to allow myself any more time than that because then I just start facing burnout again, so I’m going to give myself a cut-off point.” Maybe you say “I’m going to — I’m not going to try to go on a date every night of the week. Instead, I’m just going to go on a handful of dates per month.” It might be that I say “A big part of me meeting someone is going to be joining new communities, but those communities are going to be things that are going to benefit my life regardless.” You know, if they’re health communities, there’s going to get me fit and healthy by being in that community; or by being in this community, I’m going to make new friends and I’m going to expand my circle or I’m going to expand my mind because this community is teaching me something. I’m learning something new. These activities that I want to do are things I’d like to do anyway or they’re things that will just be additive to my life. If the worst that comes of it is that I get good at new things, I meet new people, I develop new friendships, and I expand my mind and I have a sense of community, that’s awesome. The bonus is that it could also bring me love.

So, you might say that’s part of playing the infinite game of keeping myself open to the possibility of finding love. You will have your own personal answer to this. But it’s an important question to answer. If I wanted to do the things that made it more likely I would find love for a long time, how would I do them? Go at a pace you can sustain. And if you do that, you will defend your peace because you won’t be burning out and doing things that you really don’t want to do. Instead, everything you do to find love will benefit you in one way or another outside of the world of finding love.

And, by the way, this is just as important when it comes to actually finding love. One of the reasons a lot of people struggle in dating someone is they meet someone they really like and everything they were doing to find love comes to a crashing halt. They no longer care about those hobbies they were doing or the ways that they were showing up in the world, their activities, the things they were doing to expand their network. All of a sudden, everything becomes about this one person. And now they put so much pressure on it, they sabotage it. So, if you’ve ever heard of that idea of running through the target, sprinting through the finish line, you can actually see that as part of the infinite game. A lot of what I do to find love shouldn’t be things that I just abruptly stop when I found love. And if they are things I don’t want to stop just because I found love, then I’ll know I was playing the infinite game during the dating process.

And, by the way, for anyone who is watching this thinking “I’d really like someone to help me design my life in such a way that I can find love sustainably, along with everything else going on in my life,” that is exactly what we do for people in the *Love Life Club*. This is a private exclusive community of people that I work with year-round to help them find the love they’re looking for. And it’s an amazing community with so many resources that can help you. So, I’ll leave a link below if you want to find out more about that and come join us and make me your coach for the year.

The fourth way to defend your peace when you want to find love without sacrificing finding love is to know how to hit the reset button. What I mean by this is, it’s very easy for us to go on a date and for it to be a disappointing date, a demoralizing date, maybe you are dating someone who just came across as very, very strange and you were like, “Really, this? This is what’s available to me, this is what’s out there?” Or maybe you get rocked because someone you had a great date with didn’t text you after the date and never asked you out again or someone you slept with suddenly goes cold. These are all things that have the potential to take away our peace.

And so, we have to have a way of hitting the reset button. And one of the things that I do to hit the reset button after anything that can rock my peace, whether it’s, you know, in the past my love life or in the present it could be a business opportunity or an appearance where I didn’t come off well or I don’t like myself in that appearance on TV or whatever it was, I have to have a way of coming out of that and reconnecting to all of the things in my life that are important to me and that this thing does not affect.

I want you to consider for a moment what those parts of your life are. And in some ways what’s ironic is those things that are separate from and bigger than whatever your latest disappointment is in your love life, those were the very things that you were trying to protect in the first place when you were doing this with your life and going, “I don’t know if I want to invite in the unknown, unpredictable forces of love. I have my friends, I have my hobbies, I have my job, I have my family, I have my dog or my cat, or whatever it is that makes me feel stable and comfortable and safe. I have all of these things already.”

Remember that those are all the things that you’re taking with you into whatever risk you’re taking, whatever swings you’re taking in your love life. They don’t go away. What happens is when we get into a relationship that destabilizes us, we disconnect from these things. So, the problem isn’t that the things that make you feel safe today are going anywhere. The danger is that we stop connecting to them.

So, what I want to encourage you to do is to have a process, a ritual, a practice that reconnects you to these things and that tells you “These things are bigger, they’re bigger than anything happening over here. They’re separate, they’re their own entities, their own parts of my life that are sacred and contained and can’t be touched.” You reconnect with that truth. And it might be as simple and practical as you get off of a date, you go home, and you have on your computer or your phone you have a list of all of these parts of your life that you’re incredibly grateful for, that make your life rich in meaning and love and opportunity or just depth in other ways, and you really—you read each one and you connect to it.

You say “I have my mom. She’s amazing, she takes care of me, she loves me, she sees me, she knows who I am, and she accepts me; and that relationship is one that I’m so lucky to have. My best friends, you know, those people in my life and I have such a laugh with them and going through life with them is just the best. I love it. You know, my hobbies, whatever I do, my painting. I love it. It’s a world I lose myself in and it means so much to me and it’s always had so much richness. It’s a whole universe just on its own, it’s my painting.”

You know, you connect to those—deeply connect—and the more you connect to those universes that are your family, your friends, your hobbies, your work, the thing, nature, whatever gives you a sense of purpose or transcendence, the more you connect to those things, the more you realize that these things are sacred and they can’t be touched. Know that you can hit the reset button every single day and if necessary many times a day. And that will shrink the effects of any disappointments over here in your love life to their appropriate size.

And, by the way, when you do this list, recognize that there are probably things in your life that are incredible that you haven’t even chosen to spotlight in this way, to recognize in this way, and shine a light on those. Tell yourself, “Oh my goodness, there’s this other thing in my life that’s amazing that I haven’t even been grateful for.” You know, for me, it’s like, oh, living in America, I’m living out my dream of living in America. When was the last time I actually stopped to appreciate that, to appreciate the fact that this country that when I was a teenager I was so excited at the idea, it was a dream, beyond a dream, that I would ever live here. And I’m living here. When was the last time I stopped to actually appreciate that, right?

So, what’s that thing for you? Not just the obvious things but the less obvious things that maybe you’ve taken for granted and if you shine a light on them can make you realize that your world is so big and that you can minimize the importance of your love life at any time you need just by consciously reconnecting or connecting for the first time to other amazing worlds in your life.

Number five, our final one, the fifth way to defend your peace when you’re out there trying to find love is to recognize that you can already be happy enough exactly where you are, even if nothing in your love life changes. Some people will say “That’s exactly where I started, is saying that I am happy enough with my life the way it is. I don’t even want to find love.” But I think that that is a little bit of a cop-out, maybe not for everyone but for a lot of people, because in my experience happy enough doesn’t make us say, “You know what, that thing that’s really important to me, I’m going to leave it.” It makes us say, “You know what, I can take some big swings because I know that I can always come back to my life just as it is and be okay. So, I don’t actually need to worry about the rejection. The rejection isn’t catastrophic for me because my life as it is is already enough.”

And I want to read you a very small part of my book *Love Life* and I called the last chapter *Happy Enough*. I write, “But when something as important to our happiness as romantic love is missing, how do we get by? By learning to be happy enough. I like happy enough. I’ve liked it for years now. Some will see that emotional state as settling by another name, a way of copping out on what we really wanted. For me, happy enough has not only served as an essential way of surviving life’s inevitable disappointments and losses, it has also formed the basis for a deep sense of peace. The kind of peace that has served as the foundation for taking more risks, getting more involved with greater results. Happy enough begins with us first radically accepting where we are now and then concluding that if nothing changed we’d actually be okay. That doesn’t mean there aren’t things we want to strive for, it just means we aren’t starting from a place of scarcity but a place of peace. This right now is enough. It’s amazing how much this allows you to attempt more because, all of a sudden, you have nothing to lose. If the thing we’re trying to get doesn’t happen, we haven’t risked or lost our happiness by not getting it. When we think of someone with nothing to lose, we often think of it in a negative sense, as in someone who has nothing. But when we are happy enough, we have nothing to lose because we can look at our life today and recognize that it is already enough.”

That is the truest kind of peace—this feeling of being connected to our lives and the way our lives are today and saying “This right here is enough for me. Does it mean I won’t strive for more? Does it mean I won’t stay curious about the possibilities? Does it mean I won’t take some swings? Be brave? Put myself out there? Of course not. It’s the reason I can do that, because I know if none of those swings come off, I can still come back to my life, which is more than enough for me.”

So, my friends, do not allow your desire to maintain the peace you have right now to rob you of the ability to go out there and take big swings, knowing that just taking them is going to make you feel like you’re doing what you can, that there is a robustness that we develop when we go out there and take big swings, whether they go well or not. And the truth that your life being awesome as it is right now is not a reason not to be open to other possibilities. It’s actually every reason you should feel safe and secure in knowing that you can try and fail, knowing that you have a safe home to come back to in the life you already have.

For everyone who has watched this video, who is now going to go and venture out into the world of love, there is something you will absolutely need—and that is bold standards, because there is a lot of nonsense out there right now that you need to make sure you don’t entertain or engage with. I have created a free guide showing you exactly how you can have bold standards and what they look like in practice by giving you very specific things that you can say to uphold your standards. You can download this free guide at BoldStandards.com. This is from a series of practical written guides that I created for my *Love Life* members that I am releasing this one to all of you for free. So, I urge you not to go out there and date without this guide. You can get it for free right now at BoldStandards.com.

Thank you so much for watching this video. Leave me a comment, let me know what you thought. And if you enjoyed this video, I think you’ll also enjoy this one. We have picked it especially to be a good pairing, good wine pairing. It’s not quite a taster menu, but it is like a one good pairing that you can get between this video and this one. Check it out.