

The Singles Manifesto

By Marie Edwards

PREAMBLE: Whereas the written and spoken word about singles has been and continues to be one of gloom and doom, untruths and misinformation, we the singles of the United States – divorced, separated, widowed and never-married – in order to bury the myths, establish the truths, uplift our spirits, promote our freedom, become cognizant of our great fortune as singles, do ordain and establish this manifesto for the singles of the United States of America.

ARTICLE I

Attitude toward self:

1. As a single, I shall appreciate myself as a unique person with a special combination of traits and talents no one else has.
2. I will develop and maintain a healthy self-respect and a high sense of self-worth, knowing that I cannot respect and like others until I first appreciate myself.
3. I will at all times take responsibility for my own actions, knowing that responsibility begins within my own self.
4. I will strive to put all my talents to work so that I can eliminate any residual, socially induced feelings of inferiority, knowing that when I give of myself to others, my self-esteem will rise accordingly.
5. I will have goals, knowing I will feel a sense of elation and heightened self-esteem once the goal is accomplished.
6. I will give myself rewards when I have accomplished a goal or difficult task, knowing the more I practice the spirit of giving of myself, the more I will be able to give to others – and rewards, like charity, begin at home.
7. I will take an entirely new look at loneliness, knowing there is a vast difference between loneliness and being alone, realizing further that loneliness is a part of the human condition and that facing it when it happens will allow me to appreciate the positive side of being alone.
8. I will, in my deepest feelings, know that it's okay to be single and, becoming braver, know that it's even more than okay – it can be a great and untapped opportunity for continuous personal growth.

ARTICLE II

Attitude toward others:

1. I will stop searching for the "one-and-only," knowing that as I become more free to be myself, I will be freer to care about others, so that relationships will come to me as a natural consequence and I will feel free to accept or reject them.
2. Instead of searching for the "one-and-only," I will realize the tremendous importance of friendships and will develop understanding, worthwhile friends of both the same and opposite sex. I will realize that platonic friendships are not only possible, but a necessary part of a successfully single life.
3. I will take inventory of my present "friends," bypassing those who are negative and harmful and cultivating those who are helpful and nourishing.
4. I will, when I attend singles' affairs, consider the singles I meet there as potential friends, not as "losers," knowing my attitude will color my perception even before I step in the door.

ARTICLE III

Attitude toward society:

1. I will appreciate that all four categories of singlehood – divorced, separated, widowed, and never-married – suffer similar discriminations and that we are much more alike than different, no matter what our age or sex.
2. I will appreciate that the so-called battle of the sexes is a social myth, that men and women are much more alike than different in their reaction to fear, rejection, loneliness, sorrow, joy, caring, sharing, and loving, and that, as singles, we have a unique opportunity to foster understanding and empathy between male and female.
3. I will no longer suffer in silence the injustices to me as a single, but will do everything I can to help eradicate them.
4. I will, by choosing to live a free single life, be helping to raise the status of singlehood. In doing this, I will be strengthening rather than weakening marriage, for when we truly have the option not to marry, marriage will be seen as a free choice rather than one demanded by a pairing society.
5. Finally, I will do my part in every way to promote good will between marrieds and singles, because misunderstandings will be diminished only when each of us, as a unique human being, realizes that being self-aware, autonomous, free, self-fulfilled, and whole has nothing whatsoever to do with being either married or single, but, in the final analysis, comes from being ourselves.

(Source: Edwards, Marie and Hoover, Eleanor. (1974) *The Challenge of Being Single: For Divorced, Widowed, Separated and Never Married Men and Women*. New York: Signet. 215-217)

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