

Inviting in New Love: Release and Ritual

by Debbie Lacy

It was January of that year when my ex-boyfriend moved out. Even as I grieved the loss of this love, I knew it was a blessing. I was being offered the chance to experience new love again. Valentine's Day was rapidly approaching and I realized that I wasn't wishing I had a man to share it with. What I really wanted was to be more connected to *me*. I wanted to say goodbye to the person I was in the relationship with my former love. I wanted to celebrate new beginnings. Most of all, I wanted support from others to mark this transition. Thus, the *Be Your Own Valentine* party was born and it was the first ritual I created to shift my experience from that of someone recently dumped to someone with a new lease on life and love. I invited ten women friends to my home and requested that they each bring an object to symbolize blessings for me. I gathered them around and thanked them for coming to support me in this special way. They each shared the objects they brought and the meanings behind them. In typical girlfriend fashion we laughed, cried, and ate cake.

It was incredibly moving, and in the midst of opening my heart to take in all their love and well-wishes, I received an unexpected outcome. It was a true heart-opening experience during a time when I could have made the choice to shut down or mistrust men and relationships.

I soon found myself asking, "Now what?" Sooner than I expected, I was ready to date and enter that new adventure. Around Valentine's Day, tickets went on sale for a Norah Jones concert that was scheduled for August. Romantic and beautiful, her music fit perfectly for the love I wanted in my life. My second ritual was born, and unlike the party with my friends, this one was simple and private. I decided to buy two tickets and I set the intention that someone special would be accompanying me to that concert. I pictured being there, and I trusted without a doubt that my intention would be fulfilled.

I had a possible prospect by April. Unfortunately, he wasn't good with emotions (his words). That brief fling dissolved quickly. I had been in a "just-have-fun-no-need-for-commitment" mode and had promptly manifested a man who would be good for fun and little else. Yikes. Time to regroup. I decided to create a third ritual. I sought out my buddy coach, Belinda Ryan. Belinda walked me through defining what I really wanted. Turns out I wasn't the type of person who was interested in casual relationships. The type of man I wanted to date was the type I could fall in love with. My criteria list was fairly short and focused on character traits. Good with emotions was high on the list. I wanted to be specific about a few "deal breaker" qualities, but leave it open enough to be pleasantly surprised. Creating this list and getting clear about the kind of man I wanted to invite into my life was the necessary third ritual I needed. The vision I had in mind was now much more aligned with who I was.

In mid-July, Charlie came into my life. Grounded, sincere, passionate, and yes, good with emotions, he was my date for the Norah Jones concert. It rained that night and lightning danced above the stage. Norah played on, and Charlie and I huddled under a blanket for shelter.

Our wedding was in August 2007... the ultimate ritual. It was all that I designed it to be and more.