

Partnership with one's soul-mate essay sample

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The idea of a soul-mate has ever been adhered to and contemplated by many young people of today both in getting into relationships and in deciding to marry somebody. Thus, people come in and out of relationships in search for their soul-mates – becoming involved with a partner that one hopes to turn out to be his soul-mate and then wanting to be out of the relationship when it is clear that it does not work, which can also only mean that the other person is not his soul-mate. Marriage eventually will be considered only when one thinks he has found his soul-mate.

Authors Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and David Popenoe conducted focus group discussions among 60 unmarried men coming from four metropolitan areas with ages ranging from 20 to 29, and representing a variety of religious, ethnic and family backgrounds. They found that most young adult men want to be married at some future time in their lives to the soul mates that they seek. The general definitions of soul mate are as follows: “ a woman with whom you are completely compatible right now”, “ someone you’re not put putting on a show for”, and “ the one person you connect with” (Free Republic webpage). It was also notably emphasized in the discussions that their soul mates would willingly take them as they are and would not try to change them. Thus, finding their soul mates becomes their only condition for getting married. They would wait, however long it would take, rather than “ settle for second best” in their choice of a wife. Their current girlfriends and their live-in partners are, for the most part, regarded as plain second best partners while they get on with their search for their soul mates. (Free Republic webpage)

Similar results were reported in another recent national survey of single young adults. Ninety-four (94) percent agreed that when they do marry, they want their spouse to be their soul mate and eighty-eight (88) percent believed that “there is a special person, a soul mate, waiting for [him or her] somewhere out there.” (Carroll, Brigham Young University website)

One term for marriage that has been gaining popularity is “soul mate relationship,” which is then described as “a private couple relationship whose main purpose is to promote the psychological well-being and emotional satisfaction of each adult.” (Whitehead & Popenoe, NACFLM website) Being married to her soul mate, for a woman, means having a husband with whom she can have great and meaningful talks, who will spend quality time with her, and will give her love and affection.

“Young adults today are searching for a deep emotional and spiritual connection with one person for life.” (Whitehead & Popenoe 6) It is a search that everybody seems to believe as a worthwhile pursuit of someone who really exists – one for each and every person in the world. It is a fanatic ideal to stick to that will only work against the believer. Soul-mates are not prizes to be won at the end of a long search. For want of a happy relationship or marriage, partners should instead see each other as soul-mates, and then work on making it a reality, based on their vivid definitions of such word.

In his book entitled, “Conditions of Love: The Philosophy,” author John Armstrong demonstrates that love is largely hooked up with a person's perception and the imagination. A person loves his partner for what he

perceives and imagines her to be. He loves her for the things he sees in her and for the things he assumes and believes her to be. Therefore, having a strong and healthy relationship requires seeing one's partner as one's soul-mate whose traits and qualities are to be appreciated and whose weaknesses – when eventually discovered – are to be considered insignificant compared to the good things in her.

In the same book, Armstrong further argues that loving somebody and being loved in return is not something we find, but rather something we create. The ideal situation of truly loving somebody who loves us in return is not a finished product that can be purchased at one time. Such ideal situation, instead, can only result from due process – getting to know each other, committing to make the relationship work, and letting love be tested and strengthened by trials and time.

This ideal scenario depicting mutual love is, therefore, not a prize that goes with finally finding one's soul-mate – it is instead a scenario that one can establish or work for with the partner of his choice. And it will have to involve both persons making up the relationship, and not just one of them.

There is, therefore, no such thing as a soul-mate for each of us – a soul-mate that has to be searched for and found to attain perfect union. The same perfect union is rather possible by any two persons sincerely committing to make their relationship work.

With marriage as a sacred institution being taken less seriously by the young people of today, “ the popular soul-mate ideal may be a substitute for more

traditional religious understandings of marriage. In a secular society where sex has lost its connection to marriage and also its sense of mystery, young people may be attracted to the soul-mate ideal because it endows intimate relationships with a higher spiritual, though not explicitly religious, significance.” (Whitehead & Popenoe 6) But then again, soul-mates should not be construed as real and existing – not if soul-mates are to mean the perfect partners who are waiting for us to find them and who will conjure our perfect relationships with them without us having to do anything at all.

Spencer W. Kimball, the Brigham Young University president, has warned young people against being drawn into the soul-mate culture that has been gaining grounds during our current times. He hoped to make them see light as he talked of the subject of soul-mates:

Soulmates are fiction and an illusion; and while every young man and young woman will seek with all diligence and prayerfulness to find a mate with whom life can be most compatible and beautiful, yet it is certain that almost any good man and any good woman can have happiness and a successful marriage if both are willing to pay the price.” (Carroll, Brigham Young University website)

Believing in the idea of soul-mates is not a harmless trend; it actually has dire consequences. It leads partners to easily give up on each other, each one wanting to be out of the relationship at the first sign of imperfection demonstrated by the other. And there will always be mistakes, flaws and failures to go in the way of perfect harmony. Clinging to the idea of soul-mates will make partners drift apart any day soon. “ Unrealistic expectations

can lead disillusioned partners to believe that their problems result from a ' faulty match' and, therefore, that the solution is to ' unmatched' and ' rematch' with their ' real' soul mate. (Carroll, Brigham Young University website)

Young people of today do not know that this desire for a partner has been placed in our hearts by God, and is most likely to be realized through a marriage that is based on both a deep commitment to the happiness and welfare of our partners, and a high respect for marriage as an institution. (Wilcox 1) With all these ingredients, relationships will be for keeps – the issue of whether partners are soul-mates or not will never have to come up.

Author Carroll also wrote, " The gospel of Jesus Christ teaches that sustained love in marriage is not primarily about matching or finding; rather, it is about becoming and choosing. This perspective fosters the realistic expectation that marital companionship must be nurtured, repaired, and chosen daily as spouses bind themselves together with their love, forgiveness, and sacrifice." Marriages and relationships, then, are to be worked on by the partners – this is the only way to make them last.

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