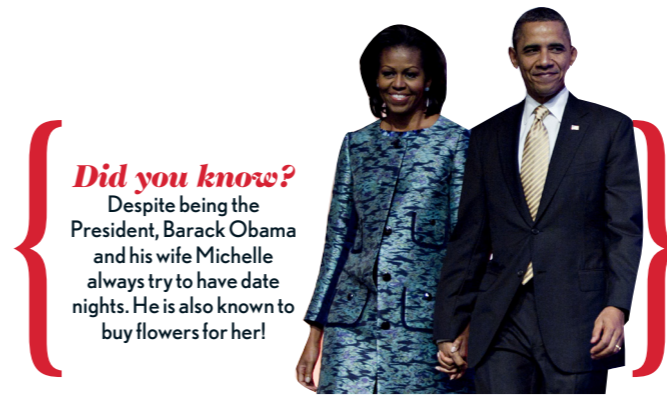


Becoming Brangelina

Who's your idea of a perfect couple? Rachel Law investigates why you should have a relationship role model.

Relationship role models are hard to come by. While Hollywood itself is more notorious than exemplary, the reality is break-ups and divorces have found themselves a comfortable seat in social normalcy. Despite this, many of us, single or not, have got a relentless will to remodel the ideal pair of lovebirds and chase the happily-ever-after. We often wonder in secret about a friend and her boyfriend, who always appear 'lovey-dovey', without any hint of internal conflict. Or the power couple, who works hard and parties even harder, occasionally taking lengthy, luxurious vacations together while raising the sweetest kids and maintaining physiques good enough for magazine covers. But come on, even the seemingly perfect Brangelina was once taunted by a love triangle, right?

To learn from others how they do what they do so well for yourself is only part of achieving your goals, and especially important in relationships, says life coach Sharmini Hensen. "We must understand all our relationship patterns. We learnt to behave in our love relationships from our parents, what we were taught and what we experienced throughout our lives." Sharmini points out that modern-day role models like celebrities and parents are essentially human beings. "We can learn the good from them and not be disillusioned when we hear of their breakdowns and fallible 'human being-ness'. Leave the negative and bad behind," she adds.



Did you know?

Despite being the President, Barack Obama and his wife Michelle always try to have date nights. He is also known to buy flowers for her!

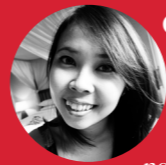
TO REMODEL OR NOT?



Petrina Fernandez, 24

What are your thoughts on having relationship role models? "It's good to have a 'mentor' in your major pursuits, be it at work or relationships. There is so much you can learn from others so why not? They don't even have to know they're your role model!"

How does it benefit your own relationships? "I pick the traits I like in people and relationships and try to emulate them. However, it's important to decide for yourself what you'd like to emulate and what you'd like to avoid."



Claire Bong, 30

Who are your relationship role models? "Sharon Osborne's patience is something that I think is commendable. I mean, with all the weird antics and nonsense Ozzy comes up with! Then the Olivers, oh well, they're just an adorable couple with even more adorable kids. I love how Jamie keeps talking about Jools like it's only been the first week. That sort of enthusiasm is infectious."

Have any of them disappointed you? "The only one that was disappointing was the Johnny Depp/Vanessa Paradis break. He once said he doesn't need a person or a piece of paper to prove that you're married because marriage is from heart to heart, and soul to soul. I guess I had too much hope on their non-marriage relationship."

Hollywood Couples

HANGING ON AND HAPPY

• **Will x Jada Pinkett Smith (15 years)** "Being there for each other and being present with our kids is the most important thing. What's helped us is being supportive, no matter what the situation." – Will

• **Ozzy x Sharon Osbourne (30 years)** The Black Sabbath vocalist almost killed his wife in 1989 under the influence of drugs and alcohol, but look how far they've come!

• **Kevin Bacon x Kyra Sedgwick (23 years)** "Both of us knew this was forever and we were going to work it out no matter what happens, so when we fight, it's not scary." – Kyra

GUILTY OF GIVING LOVE A BAD NAME

• **Kim Kardashian x Kris Humphries (72 days)** Earning US\$1.5mil (about RM4.7 mil) from selling their wedding photos alone then breaking up less than three months later; are weddings the new money-making scheme?

• **Britney Spears x Kevin Federline (4 years)** We don't know which is more messed up; their wedding while Kevin's ex girlfriend was pregnant with his child or Britney's wedding to childhood friend Jason Alexander which lasted 55 hours.

• **Charlie Sheen x Denise Richards (4 years)** Charlie's drug abuse, death threats, terrible temper and his demeaning the nanny and his sick mother-in-law said it all.



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COUPLE CHECKLIST:

Top 9

Characteristics of a successful relationship!

- Friendship
- Humour
- Communication
- Equal chore-sharing
- Sexual intimacy
- Affection
- Mutual and separate social lives
- Reliability; doing what you say and saying what you do
- Relationship vision

(Source: LisaKiftTherapy.com, 2009)

The term 'Horsemen of the Apocalypse' refers to four characteristics detrimental to a relationship: criticism, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling. It was coined by popular couples researcher John Gottman.