

## Kerry Howard Why Men Are Like Shoes Interview



### A Light-Hearted Look at Dating and Romance

Ms Pink Herself (aka Kerry Howard) is a best-selling author, psychologist and executive coach and realist. She is a straight talker who is dedicated to helping you create the Life You Love! Her second book, *Why Men Are Like Shoes* is a light-hearted look at dating and romance, using an analogy that most women understand - a love of shoes.

Ms Pink Herself is passionate about helping people to experience their best life, even when they are not sure it is possible, that includes having fun with dating and relationships.

Her mission is to help you see yourself as you truly are - unique, valued and gorgeous - a Diva! She's the creator of DivaTV and founder of multiple Diva programs. Her work is devoted to sharing ideas, tools and resources that will help you create the Life You Love... Body You Want... and Relationships You Desire...

Define Your Inner Diva: Turn your mid-life crisis into a mid-life revolution launched last year and became an Amazon No. 1 best-seller within four days! This a serious how to book written by a woman who has literally been there and done that.

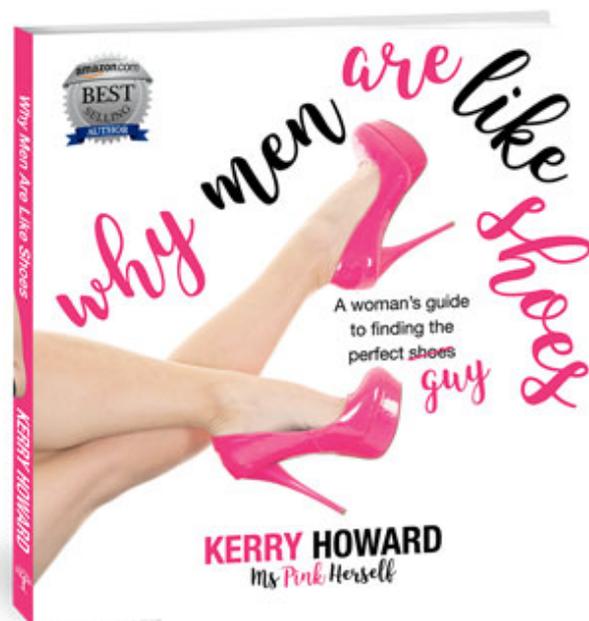
She has not only made this personal transformation herself, but also worked with 500+ clients, assisting them to transform their lives.

"I would love it if we lived in a world where we could just accept people for who they were, how they wanted to live and we are not trying to change them, but just embrace their difference," she says.

## Interview with Kerry Howard (aka Ms Pink Herself)

**Question:** Firstly why are men like shoes?

**Ms Pink Herself:** I find that women have a good understanding of shoes and their purpose, comfort level and cost. It was an easy analogy to help explain the process of dating by linking shoes as a concept to allow a clear categorisation system to be applied to a common item that women know and love, shoes, with something that they love but often struggle to understand – Men.



**Question:** What inspired you to write Why Men Are Like Shoes?

**Ms Pink Herself:** My youngest daughter Elysha. When I divorced, my girls were 6 and 8 years old. About 12 months after my divorce, I started dating again and I had been quite open with my daughters about this fact. My youngest daughter wanted to meet every person I dated and I said -No!. She insisted that they should have a say about whether or not they liked someone before I was allowed to date them. I said I needed to date them for a while to determine whether or not I wanted them to stay around, before I would consider introducing them to my daughters. But that wasn't good enough for Elysha, she wanted full veto rights and she was insistent that they should be granted these rights immediately.

I struggled to gain any level of compliance or understanding from Elysha about my position and intent around the process. Exasperated, in the end I said "No Elysha, you don't get to meet them because I'm just shoe shopping!" To which she responded "What?" And this is where the analogy began:

"So, you know how sometimes we are just window shopping, looking around in the mall, and I might

see a very pretty pair of shoes in the window of the shoe shop and I think 'I MUST have those!' But when I go into the shop and try them on, they pinch my toes, they're not very comfortable and they would give me blisters... AND they are VERY expensive. So, I don't actually want to buy those."

"Instead I might decide that if I want comfort, I might need to buy myself a pair of Colorado Loafers (it was the 90's!) - but they only look good with my jeans. I have to know what clothes I have in my wardrobe, what I wear most of the time, and if I want to buy an expensive pair of shoes I need to be able to wear them with almost everything. Or I just need to accept that I might just be one of those girls who needs to have many pairs of shoes!"

"All I'm doing is shoe shopping - trying them on for size. When I find some that I think I like, that seem to go with most of my clothes, then I might put those on lay-buy and really think about whether or not I want to buy them. When I find that pair - then I'll think about introducing you to him."

It was a concept that she really grasped, so much so that when she knew I had been on a date she used to ask me "So Mum, what kind of shoes was he?" Thus, Why Men Are Like Shoes was born.

**Question:** How much of your inspiration comes from real life and real people?

**Ms Pink Herself:** All of it! I say that I dated every pair of shoes in this book. I spend a lot of time working with people and so I have a great perspective on how this translates into real life. In fact, when I first started talking about this concept, I used to share these anecdotes at my hairdresser's and everyone in the salon would be commenting about how they knew a pair like that! It was just a lot of fun.

**Question:** Who did you write Why Men Are Like Shoes for?

**Ms Pink Herself:** I essentially wrote the book for all women really, young or old, but if they are on the dating scene then the concepts are more relevant. In essence, as a woman I write for women like myself. Certainly that was the case with my first book Define Your Inner Diva: Turn your mid-life crisis into a mid-life Revolution. Interestingly, I have found a very welcome audience amongst the same sex community, which makes sense given the object of their affection, is the same.

**Question:** What will readers take from Why Men Are Like Shoes?

**Ms Pink Herself:** Hopefully - an opportunity to understand that dating should be seen for what it is. An opportunity to 'try someone on'! Just like our experiences with too much shopping, we can get a little 'burnt out' if we are doing too much of it. We can get frustrated at not being able to locate that 'perfect' pair - to the point that some of us just give up! I try and take a light-hearted approach to a subject that can actually cause many of us a lot of pain, in the hope of de-stigmatising women who 'date' a lot, or have multiple relationships. They are not 'too fussy' or unable to be satisfied, or worse,

not worthless or without value - they are merely engaging in a social process and they should have some fun whilst doing it!

You have to be really clear about what you want in your life, and see your true value, before you can find a great partner. This is the equivalent of trying to locate the perfect pair of shoes for an outfit that you already bought... You really have to be clear about what it is that you are actually looking for, or you find yourself 'settling' for a cheap pair because you decide that 'They'll Do!' as you are running out of time or patience. However, you rarely find your 'perfect' pair of shoes in the bargain bin!

**Question:** What advice do you have for singles in the lead up to Valentine's Day?

**Ms Pink Herself:** My advice is to see Valentine's Day for what it really is - an opportunity to celebrate 'love' in all its forms. Also, it is important to remember that it is a day of culturally imposed 'commercial' obligation, that Florists love and many single people have come to view with disdain.

If you feel like it, get together with a bunch of friends and have a nice dinner together and 'celebrate' each other by sharing the 'one' thing about the other people that makes you feel proud to be in their circle of 'loved ones'. Share the love and appreciation of each other, rather than staying at home, drinking wine, scoffing chocolate and watching Bridget Jones Diary again! Or worse, crying your way through some other romantic comedy because you appear to be unable to find your soulmate. Take time to recognise the great relationships that you actually have in your life - family and friends, rather than feeling bad because another year has gone past without you finding love.

**Question:** How will you be spending Valentine's Day?

**Ms Pink Herself:** That's a great question... Do you know what? I don't know! I have a new partner, this is our first Valentine's Day together. I'm not sure if there will be a surprise, a dinner or a picnic... Or if we will just curl up on the couch and watch a movie. I might take my own advice and throw a party with my nearest and dearest so that I can share the love!

**Question:** What inspired your passion for dating and romance advice?

**Ms Pink Herself:** I've lived the experience and wanted to normalise it for the many awesome, strong and independent women out there who seem to experience challenges in their love life.

We absorb so much of our perspectives on relationships from our family of origin, and we often don't understand our attachment issues and where they came from - so we blame ourselves for being seemingly unable to form and sustain long-lasting relationships.

Also, we are only ONE part of the two parts that make a relationship work - and we do not have any control of the other party and their decisions or behaviour. Most of us have baggage and we bring that



into our relationships - the key is to only have a cabin bag and not a shipping container! Then you need to find someone else that has a similar amount of baggage, that they packed themselves and they are fully aware of the contents. Then they need to speak the same language about the contents of their baggage and be prepared to lay it all out for examination by their partner. It's potentially embarrassing... We also have dirty underwear in our luggage!

I love to inspire people to recognise that we are all human beings, we have flaws and we

make mistakes. As human beings, we have a very basic need that must be met for our continued survival - connection.

The inability to achieve connection is based in our two basic negative emotions - shame and fear. Shame is focussed in the past - abandonment. Fear is focussed on the future - rejection. These two negative emotions feed into how we seek to form attachments and both emotions can fuel how we engage in relationships with others. If we sense a rejection we can react in two ways - we push people away, or we cling on tight - sometimes we vacillate between these two behaviours. If we become more self-aware and can understand our behaviour, we can acknowledge it and communicate with our partner our feelings and fears and resolve the pain before we lose the connection. But we must first be very self-aware and prepared to be vulnerable and , for most of us, our fear of being rejected prevents us from showing our vulnerability. Yet, most of the time we react as if we have been 'rejected' in any case and then we respond to that by distancing ourselves or pleading with the other person not to abandon us.

If I can help people to understand these fundamentals to interpersonal connection, then we will all experience enhanced relationships and awesome connections. I love to shine the spotlight on the fundamentals of human interaction to help people to view themselves and their place in the world in a very different way... It's why I call myself a Luminary - I shine the light on people and show them fabulous things about themselves that they have never seen before... That keeps me waking up each morning - it's my why.

**Question:** How can we make a great impression this Valentine's Day whether it's a first of fiftieth date?

**Ms Pink Herself:** By being FULLY present. We have all seen how our reliance on devices has reduced our interpersonal connections. We are so busy connecting online with many, that we often disconnect from the people right in front of us.

How many of the readers, who are in committed relationships, wake up in the morning and roll over to check their phones... Rather than cuddling up to their partner and wishing them a Good Morning and asking how they slept?

Our society is changing so quickly and our ability to connect with many has reduced our interest in connecting with the one that is physically present. Our brain is wired for novelty and our long-term partners have lost their novelty impact on our brains after a year or so... However, it is possible to recapture this feeling by spending some time actually fully present, trying a new experience together or planning something together - like a holiday or a small project.

So, if it's your first date, or your fiftieth, leave your phone in your bag, the car or at home. Give of your time to interact with your date and really hear them. Look into each other's eyes and share a meaningful conversation... They'll respond in kind - they can't help but respond to your undivided attention. You'll be amazed at how good it actually feels to connect!

Interview by Brooke Hunter