

Ten Things I Learned Along The Way

- 1. First, I learned to live alone.** Living alone, my preferences and priorities became clear and it was easier to choose a companion.
- 2. Time mattered.** Serial dating was time consuming; so until I made a commitment, I dated more than one person. (When dating only one person, I also found myself more easily limited by his habits and expectations.)
- 3. I identified my deal breakers.** A deal breaker was an intolerable conflict of affiliation, belief, or behavior.
- 4. “Never change a winning game; always change a losing one.”** Bill Tilden, a famous tennis player, wrote that about tennis, but it applies to dating as well.
- 5. I monitored my dating investment.** It was easy to overspend.
- 6. I paid more attention to history.** I reviewed my family’s history and the demons in my past relationships. I listened carefully when my partner told me about his family experience, mental and physical health, and relationships with others.
- 7. I became more adventurous.** The most I lost was a couple of hours on a lousy date.
- 8. I learned to meditate.** Every relationship but one ended, which was disappointing. Meditation helped deal with this. I joined *yogaglo.com* where, for \$18 a month, I could meditate or do yoga as often as I wanted with experienced teachers.
- 9. I took better care of myself.** 1) met new people in safe places; 2) established guidelines for safe sex; 3) took breaks when my schedule/brain/heart was overloaded; and 4) kept doing the things I enjoyed.
- 10. Without fail, things ended the way they began.** The problems I had at the start of relationships never went away, and early compatibility continued. I learned to triage early.

—by Ann Anderson Evans, author of *Daring to Date Again*