

# Natalia's Dream Boy

[as of September 9th 2023 :)]

This is not your typical morning news.

My name is Natalia and let me tell you a little story.

It was Monday, February 11th 2013 — a dim winter day in the Netherlands. To my horror, my beloved fiancée moved out, at the point when we were just about to send out invitations to our wedding. And he never spoke to me again.

I went through all phases of grief, from denial to final acceptance. Instead of going to Tanzania for a honeymoon as planned, I hiked Kilimanjaro on my own. Then, I made a list of things I could have done better in this relationship. It was 8 pages of bullet points.

And then, I got down to improving things, day by day — all from working on my mindset, through learning new, useful skills, to improving my general life situation. Overall, it took me ten years of hard work to get to the point where I am now. At some point, I felt ready to go again.

Since I have become an entrepreneur in the meantime, I took an entrepreneurial approach. I asked myself: “Where and how am I the most likely to find what I want?” The truth is: if you want to achieve better results than most people (and most people fall into dysfunctional relationships...), you need to think and act differently.

Hence, the text below :) Have a good read and thank you in advance for your help!

## **My (Ideal) Picture of a Soulmate**

### **1. Personality.**

- Good at heart. He is fair with people. He enjoys building his own life but not at the cost of others.
- Hard-working. He doesn't need to look for reasons or motivational strategies to start working in the morning as he just enjoys what he does for a living. He

can work hard for a long time and wait for the delayed gratification. He works harder than the typical 9-5.

I work hard (and play hard!), hard work makes me feel high more than anything, and I just can't imagine having out someone who drinks in bar every evening. I mean, I can imagine it very well because I used to be with someone like this, and it wasn't any good for me. Not mentioning that such people tend to eventually leave the hard working person anyways.

By the way, from my experience, in the European culture, hard-working people are highly stigmatized and discriminated by the opposite gender. For this reason, they are often afraid to admit how hardworking they are—they pitch themselves as “spontaneous” and “enjoying life” instead, and pretend that they go out and take vacations and weekends free just like everyone else.

I would actually be happy to hear from the guy I meet that they are hard working and proud of it. I would also be happier knowing that someone whom I am with, is proud of me instead of treating my affinity to hard work as a bad value and mercifully tolerating it—just as some guys I have met before did.

➤ Trustworthy and decent. He might be adventurous in professional life, but in private life, he doesn't play games and doesn't search for adrenaline. He is also not manipulative and he speaks his mind if he likes you instead of making you wonder and suffer. He has some personal standards and rules. He is focused on building things long-term, and starts every relationship with that mindset.

➤ Open-minded.

After 25 years spent in Poland, 12 years in the Netherlands, and often visits to the US over the past 15 years (with combined time of more than 1.5 years spent in America), I personally feel I'm multicultural at this stage. With my political views, I was left-winged in Poland and right-winged in the Netherlands (just because the political scene differs so much between these two countries). In my teenage years and in my twenties, I went through multiple phases concerning my religious beliefs.

Therefore, I can find a common tongue with a variety of people and try to understand the ways they think and the reasons for our differences. I'd like to find someone who is also open and accepting to people representing various cultures, religions, and ways of life.

➤ Wholesome and develops himself in a harmonious way.

You know, it's not all that difficult to become good at one thing at the cost of everything else in your life. I know people who became successful founders and exited for millions, but ruined their bodies in the process and are now wrecks who cannot even enjoy their fortunes. I know genius scientists who spent their whole youth behind closed doors working on projects, and in a result, they became eggheads with no friends, and are completely detached from reality. I also know people who became world-class experts in one discipline... but

they never traveled, and don't know anything about the basics of politics, economy, modern medicine, or even pop culture.

When I look at all those people rushing to get to the top “to reach their dream” and ditching everything else in their lives, I always wonder: where are these people rushing toward? To the grave?

I personally prefer slow but harmonious growth: taking care of multiple areas of self-development at a time, from professional development, through health, to networking and friendships. So far so good. Yes, I'm probably not going to be world-famous, but at least, I'm a winner in my own eyes and I have no regrets.

➤Objective. He sees and says things as they are. He has his own judgement of the world and other people. He is not brainwashed by media and public opinion. He is not into empty activism.

➤Warm. Not competitive when it comes to close relations. Able to openly express joy from being with someone else. Appreciative of the woman he is with. This doesn't need to mean “very romantic.” Although it does not hurt if it does!

➤Supportive. I work on myself every day, but I still have weaknesses that I need to overcome. For instance, while I am good at keeping a healthy diet, I need some motivation to exercise and avoid self-destruction such as addictive substances. It would be great to have a partner who is helpful and encourages me to work on myself, instead of reinforcing my weaknesses and pulling me down.

Having that said, I am a type of a natural supporter too. I work as a Career and Business Advisor, and I always take the supportive attitude among family and friends as well.

➤Positive. Smiling often. Not complaining and not dwelling on little inconveniences. Not comparing himself to others. Not jealous of other people's success. This might sound obvious but I recently realized that many people slowly become bitter and jealous of others with age—even if they are, objective, privileged and successful.

➤Peaceful. Let's be real: today, peace of mind is THE currency. We all have plenty of resources and ton of free time compared to our parents. And yet, we struggle with constant FOMO that makes us restless and anxious.

So, he doesn't need bungee jumping, a trip to Bali, a dinner in a fancy restaurant, or other Instagrammable things to feel happy. He likes a simple life: a movie, a stroll in the park, an excursion to a club or spa, or an evening with friends. He values good conversation higher than fireworks.

I always juggle a few projects in professional life and I tend to risk a lot. So, when at home, I search for relax, mental support, trust, and understanding. Home is supposed to be a safe haven and a temple for deliberation, resting, and dreaming — not another challenge. And I would like to spend time with someone who has similar attitude.

- Has some wisdom and peace of mind. He can learn from mistakes, and he has a lot of street knowledge. You can learn some things from him that you cannot learn from any book; things about the world and other people that he learned all by himself and from his own mistakes.
- Self-sufficient. Someone who would rather be alone than hanging around with a person who is below his standards. He has some vision of himself and what he wants to do with his life. He would get there even alone—but obviously, it is more pleasant and fulfilling to do it with someone else!

Ironically, people who function well as singletons, typically make best partners. They don't fall into relationships trying to combat the sense of internal void but just because life becomes even better when you grow in a team.

- Someone who learns from mistakes and doesn't heal pain from a breakup by jumping into a new relationship right away. Someone who didn't have too many relationships before.

I find it funny that, according to the official statistics, women usually prefer guys who had many partners before as they perceive them as more attractive. I think the opposite; if someone had many partners before, it means to me that he failed multiple times and probably doesn't learn at all. It is understandable if the first relationship doesn't work out, or second, or even third, but if someone had 15 girlfriends to date, I'm just not interested in taking the risk of becoming the next failed project.

I worked hard on myself for over 10 years to improve on all the aspects I failed or wasn't good enough in my first relationship and I would like to meet someone who is similarly thoughtful and willing to take efforts to actually build something. Also, it is important to me that my boy doesn't say anything negative about his ex-es and doesn't blame them for his failed relationships.

- Good with emotions: comprehending them and expressing them if necessary. Has some empathy for other people. If something goes wrong, he can explain that without being pressed. He is mindful of his own emotions and can recognize where they come from. It does not mean that every conversation needs to be about emotions; I mean that when it comes to such conversations, he does not run from them. He must understand his own needs and emotions really well—many people don't and this is usually catastrophic for the relationship.
- Caring. I don't think definitions are necessary here :)
- Sense of humor. Any sense of humor is good although I would appreciate if it is not too nerdy :) Generally, a positive attitude to life. An optimist. We experience lots of stress in professional lives, and there is always yet another reason to worry about, so it's good to have someone around who has distance to himself and to life, and who doesn't take himself too seriously. And actually, when I think about it, all the guys I was hanging out to date were helpless nerdy goofs (or rather, goofy nerds! — depends how you look at it), so I think it's quite an important thing to me after all.

- Good with people. This doesn't mean having 10,000 friends but at least, not being afraid of meeting new people and being interested in who they are, and what is important to them. Just curious about people in general.
- Extravert-introvert person. He feels good both among other people and on his own. He doesn't require constant attention.
- Someone who can say "no" when necessary. I would rather hear "sorry, I won't do it" once in a while than just see someone agree for anything and suddenly disappear once day — as it happened to me in the past.
- Easy going. Not paying attention to unimportant details. Some people need everything done their own way and pay attention to way too many things related to how you look, speak, sit, behave, or how your place looks, etc. I need someone who accepts me as I am and lets me live my way without assessing me at every moment, and commenting on thousands of unimportant things.
- No ego games. Someone who does not have the desire to overpower or outsmart other people. He doesn't compare himself with others, just works on his own progress.
- Builder not consumer. Not materialistic and not chasing after the newest gadgets to forever increase his level of comfort. Money is means to achieve safety and freedom for him, rather than a good necessary to live a lavish lifestyle. He focuses on building and creating stuff rather than eating and trying stuff.
- Again, builder not consumer. With a growth mindset when it comes to relationships. Looking to tinker around relationships and fix them rather than exchange them for new ones.
- Enjoys the accompany of so-called strong women. Gives them space to develop. Supportive rather than competitive attitude towards those individuals. My experience is that many guys seem appreciative of strong women at first, but they soon start competing and digging holes under their feet. So, I need someone who is a real feminist at heart instead of just pretending to be so. And, support is more than just sheer tolerance. I enjoy people who admire ambition, not just tolerate it. I'm the same by the way.
- He has good, friendly, deep relations with his own family, or at least with some of his family members.
- Not afraid to take calculated risks—for instance, to ask a woman out if there is a spark. It's incredible how men are intimidated these days... Hundred years ago, men used to enlist in the army to raise funds for their weddings, while today, they are often too cowardly to ask a woman out to a coffee. It is just a shame, and I don't find such a shyness attractive.
- Someone who is monogamous—as opposed to some people out there who are polyamorous, or to whom a monogamic relation is a compromise.

This is an important point. Many people decide to be monogamous, but this decision is *instrumental*: they treat monogamy as the *price to pay* in order to reach their

goals, e.g. build a family, become a respected citizen, follow family traditions etc.

Other people, including myself, challenge themselves at the young age and conclude that monogamy *does* lead to the best possible life. In my early twenties, I lived in Warsaw, Poland where hookup culture was a thing. After a few years I got so sick of this empty lifestyle that I get a cold sweat at a bare thought I would ever get back to shallow relations with people. Never again.

So, I'd like to meet someone who also chose monogamy all by himself—not because parents, media, or peer pressure made him to.

➤ Tuned to partnership. Someone who is looking for a partnership in a relationship; he neither wants to wear trousers or expects the woman to do it. Someone who treats others equally and who naturally shares responsibilities.

I come from a family where women actively develop themselves and go after their dreams. They get educated, develop careers, and often become bread winners too. I cannot imagine myself being just a supporter to someone else and an extra in his career story, without my own career goals and aspirations. I was raised in a family full of strong and independent women, I am hard wired this way, and I will not change this mindset.

➤ He doesn't expect others to be copies of himself. I live in the Netherlands where people often don't objectively assess someone else's value but rather, focus on how much the other person is *similar to them*, including hobbies, ways of spending free time, taste for music or films, and all the other unimportant things.

I have some habits that might seem weird (like the affinity to watching horror movies of class Z, going to EDM concerts and dancing like a mad person, or coming up with new business ideas in a 90°C Finnish sauna) and I don't expect anyone to share them with me. If someone does, great, if not, also fine! I would also appreciate if the other party doesn't press on me to adopt all their habits or perceives it as a bad quality if I don't share them.

➤ Trusting. I decide to officially be with someone only when he is a special person to me. And it is always an exclusive deal. Nothing sucks my life energy more than obsessively checking up on me, secretly breaking into my email or phone, and other notorious signs of distrust. For me, a partnership / marriage is supposed to be a union with your best friend and ally in which both sides of the union still have their own lives. I work with many people, travel often, and dedicate lots of quality time to friends, so being around a control freak who cannot trust me would be a nightmare.

Needless to say, I trust my partners too. No invigilation and no breaking privacy. I never even touched my partner's phone or laptop. I never looked into their bank account or medical records. The only thing I have to check before dating someone is googling their name — as a CEO of my own company, I need to make sure I'm not getting into something with a person who enjoys making controversial statements in public. That's all.

- Respect for privacy. Despite working online and using social media to get leads, I am not obsessed with the Internet and I put boundaries on what I want to reveal about myself and my private life. I wouldn't like to wake up one day and see photos of myself sleeping drunk at a party on Facebook or so. I need to feel safe around the other person and know that they won't harm me this way.
- He would like to have kids one day but knows how much of a lottery that is, thus he is not obsessed about it. I wouldn't leave a man if we found out that he is dry, so it would be nice to know that he has the same mindset. But in general, my default plan is that I DO want to make a serious attempt to start a full family — so, if the other party excludes such a possibility, we wouldn't fit from the get-go.
- Vision. Someone who has a vision of his own life. I am not trying to find someone whose vision is identical as mine, as that would be almost impossible. But I would enjoy to meet someone who has SOME vision that he is building towards, so that we can discuss how we can blend or synchronise our visions. Coming from Europe, I must say that most single men of my age not only are financially and emotionally unstable, but don't even know what they want their lives to be like in 10-20 years. They have no vision of how their ideal professional and private life might look and no dreams. That puts me off in a man the most.
- Conviction. Today's plague is guys who cannot make any decisions. I don't even mean the big decisions such as the decision to spend your whole life with someone, but rather, small decisions — such as the decision to temporarily focus your energy on creating a relation with one woman instead of trying with every woman that is available. If I don't have any clear signs that I am someone's top choice at the moment, or that he notices and appreciates my value, I simply pull back.

Once in the past, I was with someone who had a strong conviction from day 1 and I still vividly remember how amazing that felt. He didn't play any games with me; he just told me that feels great talking to me and took initiative to make it a daily routine and never let me go. I felt safe around him — and I felt like home right from the get-go. So, I don't want to lower my standards now and go with someone who manipulates me, makes me worry and wonder what his intentions are, et cetera.

- Just feels like home to be around him. I don't know how to explain this but some people have this property that you naturally feel good and comfortable around them.

## **2. Mind.**

- Intelligent. More than one type of intelligence, or rather, something known as a G-factor: an ability to find himself in various situations, and solve different types of problems. To make it clear: intelligence has nothing to do with education

level. I met PhDs who are morons and people who never went to study at a university who are extremely intelligent. So, I don't judge people's intellect by their academic titles.

➤ Lifelong learner. I have a restless mind and I always aim to learn something new in any situation. I will always chase after new business ideas, and keep on developing my interest in people, culture, society, innovation. My parents are approaching 70 and still carry on with their interests, so I can confidently say that I won't stop any time soon.

I'd love to meet someone who is exactly the same and whose mind is set to lifelong learning too. In the past I was avoided, neglected, or even left because of my curious nature and the affinity to learn day in day out. I would like to be appreciated and valued for who I am instead of getting punished or mercifully tolerated. And of course, I would like to learn from my partner and become a better person too.

➤ Good to talk to. For some reason, some people are just good to talk to — every conversation with them is like having a delicious meal. They are good analysts of reality, have something interesting say about any topic, and always come up with unorthodox ways of looking at things. It has nothing to do with academic education but rather, with general interest in the world. At some point, I developed a “Lex Fridman” test — if a conversation with someone is less interesting to follow than watching an average Lex Fridman podcast episode, I move on.

➤ He has his own plans. He has his own vision of what he wants do next—either a company or some other type of project. I have my own company, in which I work on career advisory and create new tools to help people steer themselves in the job market, but I also have a broad general education and very broad interests, including business development in general. So, I would be happy to hear about almost any project. I would actually enjoy if it's something different from what I do!

When I was finishing my PhD in 2017, I discovered that something called blockchains exists. And I had no idea about it because I lived in a bubble in which people were more interested in politicians arguing no the media than in technological progress and real economy.

Then, I met a lot of people in the blockchain community and learned that many of them live in their own bubble, and are often detached from reality. So, in general, I believe that living in one bubble is just unhealthy in the long run. To sum up this point, I believe that it is important to match on lifestyle and values, and not necessarily on the exact topic of what you do.

➤ Entrepreneurial. Not necessarily an entrepreneur by profession (although that would be ideal!) but someone curious and restless who knows what hustle is, and is not afraid to hustle, make decisions, and put himself out of his comfort zone.

➤ Preferably, educated at least at Master's level (or in the process). I tried myself with lower educated people before; unfortunately, there were always hidden



complexes on the guy's side that eventually came to the surface and ruined the relationship. I don't want to risk that again.

- Mature. Has a realistic view of the world. He knows that there is no free lunch, and that one needs to put a lot of effort to achieve a good lifestyle (including a good quality relationship).
- Young mind. Affinity to learn something new all the time. Creative mind. He cannot even imagine an office job that is all about doing the same thing over and over again. Likes to think out of the box. Believes that one should learn for a lifetime. He is not convenient. He can step out of his way sometimes, and take compromises to sync his schedule with someone else's. He can adjust a little to someone else's needs instead of adding them to his assets like items; like parking a car in a garage where its place is.
- Thinking ahead. Enjoying the day but also sometimes thinking about what the plan for the next 5, 10, 15 years is. Has some vision of how his life would look like then. Of course the vision can change in the process, but at least he is trying to keep some long-term goals.
- Deep into his work. He is an expert in something, or at least, he aims to become one. He is not one of these talking heads who look for other people to put their projects to life, but really tries to understand some topic in depth.
- He likes to have a sparing partner in a relationship. Professional and private life are not two separate or competitive things for him—they should rather support each other. He really lives with what he is doing so he enjoys accompany of people whom he can talk about his stuff with.
- He puts a strong focus on the quality of the conversation in the relationship. Some couples spend years in each other by watching movies together, going out, shopping together, ... and they never *really* talk.

I couldn't live like this. At the end of the day, nothing can really beat a good conversation for me. And with a good conversation is like with taste of umami — you feel it on your stomach but how can you actually give a recipe for it? It's just hard to describe what the components should be so I can't really explain. Some people *just are* naturally interesting to talk to while others are not, even though technically they are intelligent. So, I would enjoy accompany of someone who values good conversation the same as I do.

- Not brainwashed by social media and media in general. He knows the difference between internet and real life, and prefers building connections in real life. Preferably, someone who does not use dating apps at all.
- Not an activist. Not a fanatic follower of any particular political idea, religious movement, or philosophy. I highly enjoy people who attempt to solve some serious societal problems—but there is a difference between building things and ranting online that things are going bad.
- Doesn't make life more complicated than it should be. Have no idea why people hamster thousands of personal items, come up with complicated diets and training plans, are overly pedantic, or plan every single minute of their day

for many weeks ahead. My life is very simple; I have a simple diet, I keep only my two laptops and a bunch of clothes (made of fabric that doesn't require ironing), I don't spend more than a minute in front of the mirror per day, and I have a flexible daily routine which gives me room for improvisation and creativity.

- Can chill for real. I have a busy professional life and I don't look for fireworks in private life. I don't need to go out all that often, and I don't want any drama, competition, rushing, showing off, and any other form of tension at home. For me, home is to chill and feel good, not to be perfect or be cool. A weekend spent on a couch in pajamas and flip flops watching something awkward on TV together and laughing at everything (like Depp vs Heard defamation trial or some interesting documentary series) sounds like a perfect weekend plan for me.
- Can use his analytic mind to analyse himself and his own mistakes. Funny enough, the most effective shit test that eliminates at least 95% of men is a simple question: "What went wrong in your past relationships?" Vast majority start raving about their exes thinking that they will impress a woman by talking about their high standards. While I would be most happy to hear "Well, I screwed up. I could have done so many things better..." Nothing is hotter than self-reflection and the desire to improve oneself. After my broken engagement in 2013, I wrote down a list of bullet points for me to improve. It was 8 pages long, and it took me another 10 years to complete. I would be the happiest to meet someone who is similarly restless in self-development.
- Referring to the previous point, someone who is aware of their weak points. The point is not to be free from flaws and weaknesses. Everyone has those. But we all have a homework in our twenties: we need to challenge ourselves and find our limitations, and then learn how to live with them, mitigate or compensate for them, or just ignore them.

### **3. Looks and Other Parameters.**

- Someone without complexes — someone who truly likes himself. My observation is that complexed guys make the worst partners and most inclined to flirt around or cheat — just because they need to feed their ego all the time. I don't need the most attractive guy in the world but it would be good to be around someone who perceives himself as attractive. I like my own butt, and it would be good to be around someone who likes his too. :)
- Someone who is physically and mentally free at the moment. Many people live in the past, and constantly compare with the previous partners. Well, not that.
- Age: I was modifying this category a few times, and in the end, I resigned to put any brackets here. People just age so differently... I would like to know that someone I'm with is not a child anymore—and metrical age has little to do with it.

I feel that there are two groups of men; some guys mature very early and when they hit 20, they already know who they are and what they want from life. And some other guys never mature—if a guy is a child at 30, they will probably always stay this way. Some women believe that, “they will change the guy and help him grow.” I don’t believe so and I think it’s a mental trap; people fundamentally don’t change. The level of maturity often depends on profession as well; e.g., if you have a company you need to grow up much faster than if you, e.g., have a safe job in the public sector.

Secondly, I would like to know that someone who I’m with is *still alive*. As a matter of fact, most people die at 30. They stop dreaming, thinking big, putting themselves out of their comfort zone, and solving problems. And all they think about is how to settle down, work out a comfortable lifestyle for themselves, and wait for retirement in these comfortable conditions. I’m not like that, and observing my own parents who are close to 70 and both going strong, I know that I will never be.

So, I need someone who is the same as me—still alive and not planning to age any time soon. Some people are dead at 20 and some others are very much alive at 40, so there is no rule for this. To sum up, I don’t care about age all that much because what really matters is the mental age and not the metrical age. And I think that among all the possible things you can discriminate someone for, age is the dumbest one.

Having that said, historically, my partners were younger than me, probably because I value passion, inspiration, and life energy much higher than the sense of safety and security. Plus, I perceive young people as more genuine and authentic in their feelings, and less calculating and transactional than people of my age. Which doesn’t mean that it’s a rule and it will never change.

- Height: preferably taller than me but negotiable. I’m 1,75m long by the way.
- Hair color: does not really matter. Just some hair, please!
- Some teeth would be nice too...
- And actually, it would be great if all the body parts are in place, if that’s not too much to ask.
- Posture: preferably, not too skinny. It’s not as important though.
- As for the rest of the looks, one cannot really give any recipes. There are many ways of being attractive, not just one. Some people are hot because they are bold, while others are hot because they are humble. Partners need to be attracted to each other physically and there is no question about it. I guess this can only be tested in practice! I have a soft spot for guys who look like teddy bears but this is not a rule.
- Cuddliness. Quite cuddly! I am cuddly myself, almost an oxytocin junk, so it would be a pity if the other party is not fond of cuddling at all...

- Religion: doesn't really matter but hopefully not too religious. I'm not planning to introduce any religious practices to my life so if this is the expectation, I'm out.
- Political option: does not really matter but hopefully not too extremist. I have a bit non-typical political views; I don't believe political program matters as much as the execution, so I always vote for/support the person I perceive as the most accomplished and hard-working candidate regardless of their political option. So, sometimes I'm on the democratic side, and sometimes on the republican side, depending on the candidates. So, it would be nice if the other party is not a fanatic supporter of any political option because sooner or later, our political views will clash.
- Diet: does not really matter but hopefully not too much of a fussy eater.
- Attitude to cleaning: preferably somewhere in the middle of the Gaussian, not too pedantic and not too dirty.
- Preferably, someone without debts (other than a mortgage or a student loan).
- Someone who can stand a snoring person!
- It would be appreciated if he was not sentenced for killing or beating his previous partner. I enjoy true crime, but I prefer to remain a spectator.
- I know that today, once you have cash, you can outsource virtually anything. Still, it's nice if he likes to do "manly stuff" sometimes: fix something at home, tinker, build something. There is the whole young regeneration of guys who have two left hands and couldn't even exchange a bulb. I can handle myself but it feels really good to be around a guy who wouldn't die the first night he was left alone in the woods :)
- An ability to cook is a big plus :)

## Who I Am

Lastly, I can say a few words about myself — and why I wrote this text in first place.

My name is Natalia and I currently reside in the Netherlands. I founded a little career incubator and accelerator Ontology of Value<sup>®</sup> — an R&D, EdTech, and consulting company that conducts independent research on the fast changing job market. In the company, I build tools and practices to help professionals self-navigate in the job market and craft their dream careers, as well as help businesses create synergistic, healthy, and happy teams in times of AI. I'm a bootstrapping solopreneur which means ton of work, but I found passion in this job and I'm excited for the vision of doing this for another 30-40 years.

I spent my whole youth studying, reading books, and racing against other people. My three Master programs and a PhD in Computational Neuroscience took me the total of almost 15 years of a never-ending grind. I don't want to live like that anymore. That's why I chose a job in which I work with people a lot, shake many hands, and travel. I also always dreamt of being an author and an early-stage investor, so I decided to give myself a treat and just finally do it.

My daily life is a bit irregular because I wrap my deep work around meetings. In other words, I work whenever there is no one around to chat or party with :) It is a simple life though. I have lots of intellectual needs, and psychological needs — such as a need for safety, freedom, and trusted, deep relations — but my material needs are almost none. I don't own almost any items, I don't spend any time in front of the mirror, I am not obsessed with diets, exercise, or any other practices.

Lastly, I'd like to mention that I'm building my company in a way that in the long run, I can work from everywhere so I don't necessarily need to stay in the Netherlands. Bay Area, Nepal, Bali, and a few other spots in the world stuffed with smart and inspiring people also sound great. As long as great people are all around, I can pack and go. And well, some things are more important than a flag on the passport :)

My three rules in life are:

Life is not a race.

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I just don't enjoy rushing anywhere. So I don't.

Among the religions and life philosophies in the world, I am the closest to Taoism. I believe in balance, in the art of "effortless life," in promoting rationality and longevity, and I arranged my life according to Taoist principles without even knowing about them. I learned that I am on a Taoist diet (it's ovo-lacto-vegetarian keto with intermittent fasting, more or less) and that my home is already arranged according to feng shui principles by just googling about Taoism. I also started practicing tai chi recently and moved my sleep schedule to earlier in the night and that helped my health immensely.

By this occasion, I'd like to mention that I believe in God too; I just like to think that God and the Tao are two manifestations of the same life force, just as a particle and a wave are two manifestations of light.

I would also like to mention what lifestyle I would like to develop in the long run.

So, I would like to switch between two modes. Namely, I'd like spend half of my time (e.g., first two weeks in a month) intensively working with people—giving talks, advising/building projects, visiting meetups and conferences, coaching, etc. — and second half of my time (e.g., last two weeks in a month) at home in some house in the woods or at distant suburbs, perhaps in the [career centre that I'm dreaming to create in the future](#).

In this "silent mode," I'd like to keep on working on this project at home, but also go out to the park/woods, recharge at spa, create new content, write books and blogs in silence (well, in reality it usually ends up with writing marathons accompanied by Tiësto on full volume), program if necessary, revise how the

business is going and come up with new business ideas, occasionally meeting with close friends.

I don't mind if someone I live with has a different working schedule, e.g., works for home or goes to the office every single day. I only care that he accepts my lifestyle and doesn't rant about the periods when I need to be alone, or I need to travel.



Lastly, let me share a vision of my future family. As mentioned before, I'm trying not to fixate on this one goal, as life without kids can also be happy and colourful, BUT I would like to make an attempt.

And I knew that from early on. I started using Internet in high school and one of the first things I googled was healthy dieting that works on behalf of fertility (including healthy fats and fiber coming from avocado, salmon, tomatoes, or sunflower seeds). I keep that diet until today.

When I started making money, I first got a mortgage and bought a house and I froze my egg cells right after that.

I was also thinking a lot how to marry my busy working life with my family life and I see one logic way, namely including talent incubator for kids in my future operations, and using my delegation skills to delegate some of the house chores. Plus, I cannot imagine my parents (a chess teacher and a retired aircraft engineer) not being involved in my family in some way as they want to be grandparents and I believe they will be good at it.

Lastly, it is important to me that my kids are like a gang, or like Ninja Turtles: tight-knit, solidary, and always standing behind each other. My own sister estranged me and it was a very painful experience so I have the ambition of teaching my kids that they need to be friends in life.

### **Why I Wrote This Text**

Let me end with why — saying a few words about *why* I wrote this text in the first place.

First to say, even for the sake of your own self-development, it is good to have a clear vision of what you want. I would recommend such an exercise to anyone (even

if you are in a relationship!) as putting my thoughts on paper gave me much more clarity and peace of mind.

So, I am a highly functioning single person. I am not desperate. I don't cry at night, I don't spend my weekends sipping wine with my girlfriends and debating how to get yourself a guy, and I don't spend my precious time browsing through dating websites. Actually, after watching recent defamation trial between Amber Heard and Johnny Depp, I doubted if I even need a relationship in the first place. While watching this shit show, I felt like I'm good.

So, I am writing primarily because I don't want to have any regrets. And I feel that overall, despite feeling good, I miss some important aspects of life that I might regret on the deathbed. Every day is yet another journey and I feel sad sometimes when after a long day full of new thoughts and experiences, I have no one to tell about all that in the evening. It would be cool to walk in home and have someone to say, "Hey, you won't guess what happened today!" It always moves me when I see an elderly couple walking through the city and holding each other's hands — as I can imagine how many things these people must have gone through together.

Lastly, my Dad recently spurred my ambition. Ten years ago, he used to joke that his future son in law would need to donate a Porsche Carrera to the family to buy me out. I recently asked him, "So, which model did you have in mind, precisely?" And he answered. "Och, never mind. If someone marries you, I will buy him a car myself." There's no better thing than your parents' mental support ...

### **Why Do I Even Have an Issue With Finding a Partner In the First Place**

And it's not the case that there are no great guys who are interested in getting to know me. The problem is as follows. Guys usually think that what women are searching for is:

- (1) Handsome,
- (2) Wealthy,
- (3) Geeks.

Well, guys like that are standing on every corner — they are not even close as special as they think they are.

While in fact, I, the same as most women, need:

- (1) Warm,
- (2) Witty,
- (3) Doers.

...and they are almost nowhere to be found.

Women are self-sufficient today. We don't need men to support us financially. We also don't need guys who constantly try to outsmart us and flex with their IQ and those who spend half a day in the gym or in front of the mirror. To be honest, I have torsions whenever I encounter someone like that.

What I need instead, is someone who is warm and easy-going, and who invites me to his world just like that, without any tensions, hurdles, posing, or games. Someone who likes people and has some empathy and understanding for others in general, not just for me.

Someone who is genuinely funny. I already have what I need to survive. What I need is a good laughter. Life is always a little bit less insane if you have someone around you who can laugh through tears and find something positive in every situation.

Lastly, around some people, everything is easy. They are good decision-makers. They never complain about stupidities. They can take little inconveniences. They don't let you wonder what they think — they just say it. When they work out some plan, they don't overthink it — they just go for it. Life is so easy in company of such people!

Furthermore, finding a partner is a hard optimization problem, for a few reasons:

### **(1) Age gap.**

I live a bit non-standard life (that I wish was the standard!). Unfortunately, people of my age are usually at the point where they are “part of the system:” humbly paying back their mortgages, watching evening news, developing their families while sticking to their corporate careers, and trying to forget about their dreams. While I jumped out of the system and never came back.

This is the probable reason why the vast majority of people who approach me with romantic interests are either extremely young (like, way under 30) or much older than me (like, way over 45).

Young people usually get on well with me because they are still dreamers with no boundaries and using unorthodox methods for solving problems just like me. Unfortunately, they also typically don't know what they are going for, and commit to more responsibility than they can handle. I was left many years ago by someone who promised me too much at a too young age, and then got overwhelmed and run. So, I don't want that to happen to me ever again.

Older people usually get on well with me because after 20+ years of grinding in unwanted jobs and building dysfunctional families, they finally say, “Enough!” and seek for a new life with a free spirit who lives an interesting life. But the problem is that, these people are not motivated enough. For them, it is a second life, while for me, it is first and only life I am planning to have. The two partners need to have the same level of motivation or otherwise, it won't work.

Overall, for the aforementioned reasons, I usually connect the easiest with people significantly younger or older than me. Of course, one should judge by age. There are always outliers and people who subvert expectations in every way. The problem is: people differing in age from me often don't represent the right type or level of motivation to build a firm partnership with me, so I would need to really spend a lot of time with someone like that to get some test in their mindset and maturity.



## **(2) Serious — not serious.**

I am a type of person who tries not to be too serious about life, and laugh at every occasion. At the end of the day, we are all born with a death sentence, and life is fundamentally sad.

However, it doesn't mean that the best we can do with our lives is to sit at home and smoke weed day in day out. Or, waste time. I love to laugh but I also know what is important to me in life and I can fight for it, and work hard to get it.

The issue is:

I often have to do with people who might be funny, bright personalities, and nice to be around — but at the same time, are not serious about life at all; they are poor decision-makers, they are too laid back and chilled, and everything is just “maybe” for them. I just cannot function around such people. Let's put it straight: if there is nothing in this world you would kill or die for, we wouldn't be good partners.

I also encounter a lot of people who are too serious and how no idea what joy of life even can be. They would never do anything funny or spontaneous just for the sake of it, always keep their composure and have quite limited sense of humor. I sometimes feel like I was attending more like a job interview than a date. Guys doesn't even smile once for 2-3 hours, but instead, they tell me all about their wealth- and family-building plans in fine detail, with all the milestones and SWOT analysis, quite as if they were pitching to investors.

## **(3) Close to people but independent on my mind.**

I am just not your typical entrepreneur. I was born and raised in Katowice, Silesia region, the most left-winged and laid back region of Poland. I lived therefor 15 years. Then, after studies in Warsaw, I moved to Nijmegen, the Netherlands, the most left-winged and laid back city of the Netherlands, where I spent 11 years.

Overall, I spent most of my life among people who don't chase after money in life, don't fight for attention, and appreciate community life. Therefore I will never be one of these huge entrepreneurs who buy themselves expensive mansions and close themselves behind high hedges. It's just not me. With family or alone, I will always live a simple life closer to other people.

But at the same time, I am entrepreneurial and independent on the inside. I *think* on my own. I might live and in and with others, but the universe inside my own head is my own planet, and no one will tell me how I am supposed to think and what I am supposed to do. I always push for my own creative projects and I couldn't trade any part of my identity just to fit to the group.

I think as an entrepreneur grown up among NGO workers, activists, and researchers, I represent a rare combination of values that rarely come together and it's hard for me to find someone with a similar mindset.

### (3) Between an idol and a fan.

One more optimization project that I would like touch, is the “idol” versus “fan” attitude. Namely, none of these two attitudes works, while I constantly encounter either one or the other.

Many men apparently like to worship women whom they keep an eye for. I remember someone booking a plane from Canada to Europe to meet me after just one conversation online (!) or a guy who left his company of over 100 employees for the whole day to read through my entire blog to be better prepared for the date.

Or, people coming to a dinner with me with such an encyclopaedic knowledge of my biography that they probably remembered my story better than me. Women look for *partners* not for *fans*... I would rather hang out with someone who is genuinely interested but on equal terms.

And similarly, I often encounter guys who are apparently looking for a fan not a partner. They don't ask me any questions; they just keep on bragging about their own success. Or even worse, bragging and making patronizing comments on a side. Maybe they just want to have a good first impression but overall, monologues and bragging always leave me with a bad aftertaste.

If you are an entrepreneur, you live and breathe what you do, you are proud of what you do, and your thoughts circle around your project 24/7. So, if a person you go on a date with, doesn't even *bother* to ask for the whole evening what your company does, it almost feels offensive :) It feels like they completely don't care who you are. And perhaps they don't.

\* \* \*

I need to explain something, as I sometimes act weird and people misunderstand me a lot as they don't know why I behave this way.

So, although I have no problem with approaching people and making new friends, I have some personal experiences that make me very cautious when it comes to contacts with men. In early 2013, I was left before the wedding and it left huge impact on me — perhaps for the rest of my life. My hair turned grey, I didn't eat for a month, I had a near-death experience, and I didn't date anyone for another six years after that. Up to this day, I am extremely self-protective when it comes to dating.

So, I only started again in 2019 and I'm still not much of a risk taker when it comes to dating. If I don't see a potential from the very start, and if I don't feel that the other party is determined to get to know me, I don't even bother to go on a date. Or, when I have even a shadow of the doubt of what the other party's real intentions are, I just walk away. I know many awesome men whom I eventually decided not to date just because intuition told me so, or whom I literally run from because of a rapid panic attack.

I also need to say that after splitting with my ex-fiancee, I took massive amount of time to analyze all the reasons why the relationship didn't work in the first place. Just as usual in such cases, the mistakes happened on both sides — also

on my side. I am aware that I wasn't expressing enough interest in what my ex was passionate about, or I was floating away with my thoughts in the conversation way too often (also because I am a day dreamer, but that's another story).

But the worst of all, I think I was a horrible gaslighter — without even knowing the term at that point. I was just so insecure that I could go to any length to make the other person (emotionally) dependent on me. Knowing the fact, I have been working on my level of self-confidence in the past ten years and I believe I am solid now... But I still need to hear it loud if I do something wrong as a partner, as I don't read in minds.

So, whoever considers contacting me, needs to understand that although I have lots of friends and I like people around, and despite the fact that I take lots of risks with my company and personal finances, given this story from the past I'm very cautious and selective with men.

I rarely try anything with anyone, and I need some time to build mutual trust. I just believe that being alone is *not* the worst that can happen to me — it would be much worse to be with yet another person who is not trustworthy or cuts my wings. Today, people dump each other like used shoes and I don't want to be treated like this ever again. I would rather choose nothing.

Och, plus I often arrive to dates dressed weird, for instance too formal — as I am just in between a public talk and a business meeting.

To make dating me even harder, I have a tendency to shit test people by asking them absurd questions; I just can't help it =) So, overall, I don't think I'm an easy material for dating. Guys who are looking for easy, effortless solutions, should just find someone else.

## **A Word on the American Culture of Success**

These days, I tend to spend increasing amounts of time in the San Francisco / Bay Area. And for many reasons, it might be IT for me — the place I call home in the future. But there is just one thing that bothers me here: the culture of success that prevents people from building life-long, deep relationships.

You see, there are tons of smart and attractive people packed on a small area here, so there is always this feeling, "You are great, but perhaps there is an even greater person around the corner." This pushes all these naturally curious people to embark onto a path of a never-ending exploration while in fact, it is a path to a never-ending dissatisfaction — that will harm many people on the way.

While attending parties all around San Francisco, I heard multiple gruesome stories of people leaving their partners only because they got a new, better job or because their startup suddenly got successful — and they decided to join new, more prestigious circles on their own, looking for a new partner to match their new status. Or, because their partner lost a job or got ill, and so they decided to unload the burden from their shoulders.

I keep on exploring in my professional life every day but private life is just different. It's just one vacancy that you need to fill in and keep on building based on that. I never left a partner in my life and I wouldn't bail out just because of a sudden turn of events.

The irony is: the only people who are a material for a faithful, loyal, dedicated, life-long partner with 100% certainty are those who already are faithful, loyal, dedicated, life-long partners for someone else. So, how can I make sure that I meet someone with a mindset just like mine and happens to be single?

I feel like in Europe, we are more tuned to the concept of making firm choices, sticking to them, and building together with focus on the relationship rather than our individual goals — rather than exchanging partners depending on our current life situation to better our own position like Americans do. And I just need to find a person who thinks like me.

To sum up, I need to find someone who thinks like an American but feels like a European.

### **Silence Before The Storm**

I believe that the best relationships don't start when you actively search for them, but rather, they happen when the process of self-development and defining your needs led you to the feeling of wholesomeness and internal peacefulness.

In that phase, you feel so complete that you just stop searching and go on with your life in a blissful silence. And then, all of a sudden: boom! You meet The Person and the whole rollercoaster starts.

That's exactly where I am now. I enjoy my self-development path and I'm in a state of balance and harmony. And if it stays like this, I would have no regrets. I wish that state of mind to everyone, to be honest.

### **Last Words**

After distributing this text among my friends, I got many negative or even borderline offensive comments. Some people were asking me to visit a therapist, and others complained that the text is too long and no one will read it, or that my expectations are too high.

Fortunately, I don't need to worry about any of these comments. It so happens that I used to be in a relationship with someone who fulfilled all the aforementioned criteria, and I could write the whole book about his good qualities.

So yes, I know for a fact that such people exist. Moreover, once they meet me, they recognize value in me too, so the vision I have for my life is not just my wishful thinking. It is also sad to know that now in 2023, women who know what they want are still ostracized.

I also believe that this text might make some people bitter as it makes them realize that women don't want their houses, cars, and all the other stuff they got con-

ned into buying by the consumeristic society. They get irritated after learning that they spent their youth chasing after wrong goals.

Lastly, please don't tell me that this is too much text. I write books for a living, so if someone is not able to go through one chapter, they certainly won't find a spot in any of my private circles, neither close friends nor family. Literacy is a good filter for people, actually.

### **My Words of Advice and Support For Guys**

And if you happen to be a single guy reading this, I have a few things to tell you.

(1) Women enjoy men with standards.

Guys often think that less requirements equals more chance to find a woman. While it is mathematically true, to most women, the news that you are "just looking for a kind woman" would be plain off-putting — it sounds like you are a desperate guy looking for a warm body. While every lady out there wants to feel valued for the qualities they have. They want to feel like they were one in a million. So, it wouldn't hurt if you create a similar document for yourself and focus on the values you are looking for.

And, it might actually be the most entrepreneurial thing you've ever done in your life! Just think about it: you need to date someone for at least a few months to see if they have all the qualities you're looking for. How many people can you effectively test this way in your lifetime? Ten? Twenty?

Now imagine how many people all your friends know closely. If you know 500 people, and each one of them has this knowledge about 10 people close to them, sharing your standards and asking around is like living 500 lives at once.

(2) You should not be ashamed of living on your own.

Do you know who should be ashamed? All those people who don't have any standards and stick to toxic relationships because they have no balls to leave and get by on their own. It's fascinating to listen to people's relationship horror stories after they have a few beers and their tongues get loose. Every time I drink with friends, I walk away feeling proud.

So believe it or not, if you are a well functioning single person, that already puts you in the top 20% of the society in terms of overall happiness. Not bad.

(3) If you are a guy, don't be afraid of "no."

Men are often afraid of rejections, as they think they will lose respect in other people's eyes. But in fact, the only thing you should be afraid of is losing your precious time. Plus, women will still respect you for asking even if for some reasons they will have to say "no."

Best of luck!

## Contact Information

If you know such a person, or if you bump into someone who might be close to this description, please drop me a message at [natalia.bielczyk@gmail.com](mailto:natalia.bielczyk@gmail.com) and let me know where to find him. If that person would also want to know something about me, they can find some information at [www.nataliabelczyk.com](http://www.nataliabelczyk.com)

Furthermore, I decided to gamify my boyfriend-search process so if you are the referring person and there are some children out of it, one of them will be named after you\*. Thank you so much in advance!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I can also exchange the child's name with 1 ETH if that works better :)