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Does Love Make You Stronger?

Find out how love impacts neurotic behavior

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Love is magical, and love seems, at first, to make us omnipotent. But then, after we've gotten used to the feeling, does that mean our neuroses return as everyday life sets in?

Not always, according to a [new study](#) in the *Journal of Personality*, which claims that young love, which is defined as going steady with someone while between the ages of 18 and 30, is linked to a less neurotic personality.

Love creates confidence

Love has a tendency to make us secure at first and as time goes on and the honeymoon period is over, we can get nervous that the person we are with is not as into us as we are to them. When we feel that this person could be "the one" we can feel incredibly secure, be on a "high" from love and feel incredibly confident, said Stef Safran, founder of Chicago-based dating service Stef and the City.

Overall, when people are confident in their relationship, they tend to be better versions of themselves as they strive to make their significant other happy, Safran said.

"What you have to remember is that this 'love high' only tends to last the first 18 months, not indefinitely. Once our partner becomes more 'real' we settle back in our patterns in our life with our friends, work and hobbies, but a good relationship will have us better versions of ourselves," Safran said.

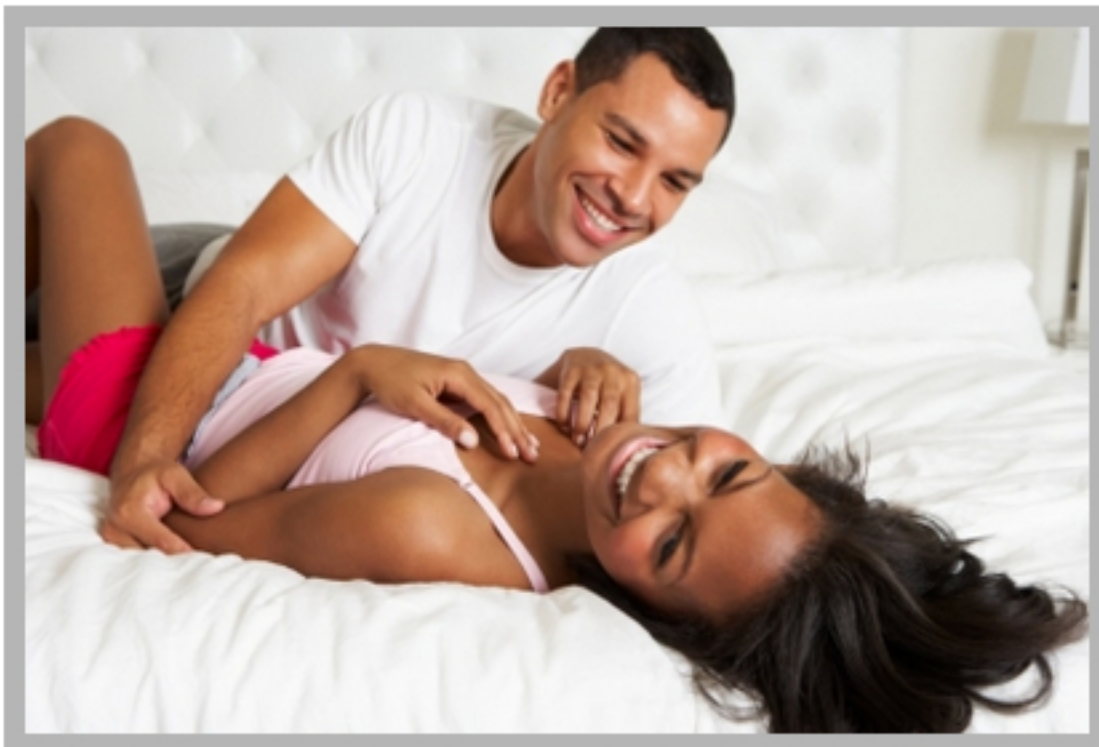
And the flip side is that it can backfire. "If the situation changes and we question if this person is still in love with us, our confidence can change and we can become quite neurotic," Safran said.

Relationships that are better for neurotic women to be in:

1. Relationships that go slower. Sex should happen after a few months, not a few dates. Long term attraction should be about knowing you can trust a person, not just that you feel chemistry towards them.
2. Constant conversation that talks about long term goals and values are better in general, not just for people who have a tendency to be neurotic.
3. Men that have good track records and have positive comments about relationships that have broken up.
4. Men that follow through on their promises beyond the first few months.

Relationships to steer clear of:

1. Men that want to consummate the relationship quickly. They don't want to wait to get to know you.
2. Men who promise to introduce you to everyone right away. They want to make lots of promises and make you feel special- but you have that nagging doubt that that it's 'too good to be true' or 'things are moving too fast'
3. Men whose reputations aren't that great. They could still be married and going through a divorce, they have a long list of former exes or jobs.



Learn to self-soothe

Lisa Bahar, a marriage and family therapist in Dana Point, Calif., said that love's healing effect on neurotic behavior depends on how a woman has learned to self-soothe and comfort herself when she's feeling stressed.

"They should be looking within themselves and listening to their Wise Mind, by noticing their own tendencies to be neurotic whatever that looks like to them and their own experience. If an individual they are in love with is bringing out that aspect of their nature, then they need to address and be able to self-soothe (calm), communicate and deal with emotional and feelings in a healthy and effective way. It's all based on intention."

"We become better versions of ourselves if we are willing to be in or out of a relationship and are not looking to the relationship to create the better version. If you have to be it before you can share it," Bahar said.