



Love, Again: The Wisdom of Unexpected Romance

Eve Pell

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In *Love, Again*, Eve Pell beautifully and thoughtfully concludes that life experience adds dimensions to the art of connection—and that we all stand to learn something from unexpected romance.

How do old people meet new loves?

Eve Pell was 68 when she convinced a friend to set her up with Sam Hirabayashi. Ten years her senior, Sam, a fellow runner, was handsome and sweet. Soon Eve and Sam were plunged into a giddy romance that began with a movie date. “It was crazy,” Pell writes. “It was wonderful.”

Pell wrote about their romance in a *New York Times* Modern Love column and received a wave of responses from people who recognized their own stories in hers. This thing, this late-in-life love: It’s growing, it’s everywhere, and it’s transformative.

In staggering numbers, old people are meeting and falling in love—in senior living facilities, in retirement homes, in bars, in grocery stores, on cruise ships, on the Internet—brazenly, quietly, unexpectedly. People once written off as too old for intimacy are having romances, beginning intense affairs once thought to be for the young.

Part memoir, part journey to a new frontier, *Love, Again* is illuminating and heartwarming. Speaking with poets and artists, a retired nurse and a retired coach, environmentalists, philanthropists, and teachers—couples whose partners’ ages range from 61 to 96—Pell reports on their relationships, from saying hello to knowing they’d found the one, from blending routines and traditions to overcoming judgments and challenges. These widows, widowers, divorcés, and never-marrieds open up about old love versus young, the thrill of sex, and the looming shadow of mortality.

At the core of this book is wisdom: what we all can learn from the experience, regardless of age.

- Fall in love with who someone is now—not who they someday might be.
- Always be honest, but don’t feel pressure to share everything.
- And most of all: The heart can continue to expand.

Advance praise for *Love, Again*

“A heartwarming, eye-opening, life-affirming journey to the final frontier of romance, this is a beautiful book about the possibility of late-in-life love and the life-changing lessons we all can learn from those who have been lucky enough to find it.”—**Katie Couric**

“Eve Pell’s career as an investigative reporter served her in discovering such couples and learning their stories, which, along with her own love story, she imparts with fluency and zest. *Love, Again* is a joy to read, full of humor and heart and sweet collective wisdom, a book for all ages.”—**Susan Trott, author of the Holy Man Trilogy**

“I remarried at 75 and have followed one hundred marriages from age 50 on. Eve Pell knows what she is

talking about. Her book is touching, eye-opening, inspiring, and wise. In addition, it is beautifully written.”—**George E. Vaillant, M.D., author of *Triumphs of Experience: The Men of the Harvard Grant Study***

“In this inspiring exploration of fifteen late-in-life romances, Eve Pell illustrates the human appetite and capacity for romantic love at any age. As these men and women—widowed and divorced, gay and straight—share their stories of forging deep connections in their 60s, 70s, 80s, and, yes, 90s, they deliver a heartwarming message: We are never too old for new love.”—**Jill Smolowe, author of *Four Funerals and a Wedding: Resilience in a Time of Grief***

Love, Again: The Wisdom of Unexpected Romance Details

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Melinda says

80 is the new 60

I recommend this book for anyone who has lost their spouse, who thinks that life is pretty much over, but is open to other possibilities. Finding love again myself at 80 after my dear husband died, just blew my mind. I happened to be in my gym locker room extolling my happiness when a lady spoke up and said she'd written a book about love after 60. It was the author of this book. I found it very interesting and filled with helpful ideas on how love in latter years differed from young or younger love. It's very upbeat and an easy read.

Kayo says

Sweet book!

Wanda says

Multi-dimensional stories about older generations of people who found love again later in life and how they cope with each other in the process. It isn't so much about the sexual part of love, but the deeper intimacy of love between later in life loves.

Louise Marie says

Emotional good True story book! Reading about Their struggles and victories made me smile!

Kelley says

I found this topic interesting and the stories about each of the couples were enjoyable to read, but there were two things that made this book difficult for me to enjoy.

First, the different couples stories were split into different chapters. This made it difficult to remember their stories from chapter to chapter, and it also made the flow of the book choppy and disjointed. I think it would have been better if the author found a simple descriptor of each couple to list along with their names to help you remember who they were and tie their story together.

Second, for a non-fiction book, there did not seem to be a lot of facts, statistics, or research in this book about relationships after the age of sixty. I would have enjoyed reading the stories more if they were anecdotes to illuminate larger trends in the dating habits or outcomes of this age group. As it is, each story was interesting but hard to know if that couples experiences were common or not.

Overall, I had a hard time finishing this book even though initially I found the topic very interesting. I kept

starting and stopping the book because of the format.

SmartBitches says

Full review at Smart Bitches, Trashy Books

Love, Again is a non-fiction book by Eve Pell that discusses what happens when people find love late in life. Pell herself fell in love at the age of 68 with a 78-year-old man. After writing about the romance for *The New York Times*, she got so many letters that she decided to interview other couples and make it a full-length book. Couples talk about the rewards and challenges of old-age romance with tenderness (“My heart is safe”) and enthusiasm (“Only age-related physical restrictions restrict our sexual imagination”).

These couples give a lot of advice about love, some contradictory, but one thing comes up over and over again. When young couples get together, they have tons of energy, but they lack patience and acceptance. When you meet a person who is eighty, and you are seventy-nine, you know who you are, and you know that your partner is who he or she is. What you see is what you get. You will, of course, compromise in your relationship, but no one is going to change anyone else. For the relationship to work at all, there has to be unconditional acceptance. That’s true in every relationship, but older people (at least, the ones in this book) seem to grasp the concept and the practice much more easily than younger couples.

I loved this book. I thought it was interesting, inspiring, and moving, and often very funny. It challenges stereotypes about old age and it expresses the importance of resilience and optimism. Above all, I thought it had a lot of lessons that younger couples could use: accept your partner for who they are (and don’t settle for a relationship you don’t want), consciously work on your relationship every day, never take your relationship for granted, and enjoy affectionate touch with cuddles and kisses as well as with sex.

- Carrie S.

Becky says

Old people fall in love. There are reasons they fall in love, difficulties they must sometimes overcome, joys that may not have been present in their previous relationships, and yes they often have sex.

That's basically this book.

Betty says

This is a wonderful, well written look at late-in-life love. The author looks at couples who have loved and lost and yet are willing to go for it again. Each couple is different, with different needs, wants, and styles of living. However, each brings us the awareness that age and experience can help us to improve on our ability to love and be loved. I found the book quite inspiring.

*A Library Thing Win

Chelsea says

* I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.*

Love, Again is not a book I would have picked out in a store or gave a second glance. This book was a blessing in disguise for me. Part memoir mixed with stories of other couples above the age of 60 it contained many inspirational insights.(The setup of the stories is why I docked a star, it wasn't bad just a little bothersome). It showed that even when we become "old" love is always possible. After heartbreak and loss, happiness can be found with another. Eyeopening facts, statistics, and peeks into how relationships, fights, dates, and even sex play a role and take their place in elderly couples daily life. Reading the authors personal story and those of others gave me hope that one day I might live happily ever after as well.

Jane Stewart says

Worthwhile. I liked it.

Nonfiction about couples who became couples after age 60. How they met, how they get along, what the romance is like, what the sex is like, obstacles (like relatives who disapproved), and thoughts about death being near. It's encouraging for people to get out there and try romance again.

Some excerpts from the book:

Several times a year Sam went on golfing trips with friends. He had a great time. Eve was happy for him and she felt fortunate to be excluded - since she didn't like to golf. Sam would go to an event with Eve if she said it was important. The point was they wanted each other to be happy. They would not insist the other accompany them if the other didn't want to. The author talked about all the couples when she said "I'm struck by how each partner truly values the happiness of the other." (p 107)

Another couple: She was driving to work and had a flat tire. She called him asking who to call to repair it. He said I'll be there in a couple minutes with my car. You take my car to work and I'll handle the flat.

Another couple uses a therapist. "We wait to bring up really difficult things that could be explosive until we are with the therapist. This is a great strategy. The therapist told us it is much easier for her to work with couples who are building a strong relationship than those whose relationship is already in shambles." (p 97)

One couple talked about online dating. "They found that widows and widowers were better prospects than divorced people... If their marriages had been happy they had more intention of looking for long-term relationships... In the divorced men, I saw guys who were shell-shocked, guys who were out for revenge." Don said "Eighty-five percent (of single women) were divorced or separated. Most of them, if they were standing on a subway platform and a train was coming, they'd have pushed their husband off. It was hard for them to trust again. Their whole thing seemed to me to be about sex. But you have to know people and share values." (p 148) (Note: The author Eve would be an exception to this. She was twice divorced and found a fulfilling love with Sam.)

A ninety-something man said "The biggest surprise of his long life was his discovery of the unceasing need for deep attachment and intimate love." (p 172)

Minor problem:

Once in a while I was confused as to who was talking. I had to pay careful attention. For example a couple is quoted using several "I" sentences. Then the author Eve says "I" talking about herself. Then she switches back to the couple with their "I" sentences. (p 92)

Another example: Howard said, he noticed how non-touchy his relatives were. That was confusing. I had to reread it a couple times. Howard is talking about George, so "he" means George. But the author is talking about what Howard said so the "his" was the author's word for Howard. It would have been better to put it in quotes like this. Howard said "he noticed how non-touchy my relatives were." (p 143)

DATA:

Narrative mode: mixed 1st and 3rd person. Story length: 189 pages. Swearing language: moderate but rarely used. Sexual language: none. Sexual content: descriptions that sex occurs but no details. Setting: current day interviews with couples in the U.S. Copyright: 2014. Genre: nonfiction, relationships.

Candice says

"Part memoir, part journey to a new frontier, *Love Again* is illuminating and heartwarming." This was part of the description of the book and it couldn't be more right. This book is adorable reading about Eve Pell was fascinating and changing. I cannot rate this book high enough. If your young and feeling unloved or if your just young at heart this book will bring happy tears to your eyes. I have never had such a strong emotional reaction to a Autobiography/Fiction book. I strongly recommend picking up this book. Also the book is gorgeous and looks fantastic on my shelf!

Andrew says

Upon receiving *Love, Again: The Wisdom of Unexpected Romance*, by Eve Pell, I assumed it would be more of a research-based analysis of old couples and/or general advice for old people in new relationships. In reality, however, it is a series of profiles of old couples, including the author's third marriage.

Because the couples' stories are told through themes such as the initial spark, relationship problems, etc., they include a lot of extraneous details, which make the book boring at times. I would have preferred discussing one couple at a time to prevent Pell from having to reintroduce each couple for each theme.

I appreciate that the author included same-sex couples and couples of diverse races. However, they are all wealthy and aristocratic. Including at least a few lower-class (or even middle-class) couples--some that aren't philanthropists or lawyers who hung out with Jackie Kennedy and own multiple homes--would have made the work more universally approachable.

Ultimately, *Love, Again* includes a lot of common-sense ideas that are more applicable to all relationships, especially second or third marriages, of any age. This is not necessarily a bad thing; it's just not what I expected.

I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads Giveaways.

Fernanda says

It is ok, a good incentive and motivation to stay fit in order to enjoy a healthy sexuality throughout life. A passage where she included a picture of them at a race, running side to side, years before they would meet, gives the book a feeling of synchronicity.

Maria says

I found this book to be interesting, however, a bit slow at times. Each chapter had a specific theme, which was discussed by various couples. I did find it confusing that each chapter had a different couple, with some of them focusing on certain themes, while others were only introduced once or twice. It would have been easier to follow the storylines of each couple for each theme rather than jumping from theme to couple at various times. I liked how Eve spoke of her love with Sam however, I would have loved to see more photos as photos were only available at the beginning of the book, and practically obsolete throughout the middle and end of the book. This book reminds me of the Chicken Soup books however, I was disappointed to note that there was no 'update' for any of the couples that were mentioned. It would have been nice to see what each of the couples were up to currently.

Judith says

This is not a novel but a book about real life people who connected with each other late in life. How late? Well, Dorothy was 88 when she met her current husband Bob, who was 92 at the time. They met, married and continue to live in an assisted living facility in Georgia. There are many other stories of couples who have either married or connected with a loving partner late in life. They come in all shapes and sizes, gay and straight, black and white, from all over the country and the one thing they share is the unexpected joy of finding someone later in life.

I enjoyed reading these true stories about the various aspects of love and coupling that occurs to people when they least expect it. The author herself found love at 67 with a man 10 years older than she, and describes that relationship throughout the book as she tells the other stories (photos included). The book explores the various problems that face these couples: where to live, where to be buried, how to deal with family opposition, sex, how to deal with finances, and a variety of decisions that have to be made. It also focuses on the difference between young romantic love and old romantic love. This is not a "how to" or feel-good book by a psychologist, rather a report by a journalist on life in the 21st century.
