

**MATCHES THAT MATTER TAKES A LOOK AT
PSYCHOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES IN DATING PRIORITIES
FOR ADULTS OVER 40**

Oakland, CA – (August 2012) --All Psychology 101 students can discuss Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs – the description of man's innate desire for self-actualization. Maslow says that after basic physiological, safety, and social needs are met earlier in life, people look for esteem and self-actualization.

Best-selling author Gail Sheehy (*Passages, New Passages, Sex and the Seasoned Woman, Understanding Men's Passage*) concurs. She says that instead of declining in the mature years, men and women who embrace a Second Adulthood beyond menopause and male menopause, are progressing through entirely new passages into lives of deeper meaning, renewed playfulness, and creativity.

By applying the Hierarchy of Needs and Sheehy's findings to 21st century relationships, it is easy to understand how the dating ritual is completely different for younger people than those over 40. Younger folks tend to gravitate towards the lower half of the pyramid ensuring their Physiological needs are met after college then moving to the Safety and Love/Belonging levels as they look to find a partner and develop families.

Mature singles on the other hand have spent decades getting their social and financial needs met thus they are much more focused on the top of the pyramid: Esteem and Self-actualization. They are now freer to look for nurturing relationships and activities that provide purpose and greater self-actualization rather than friends and partners to have children with.

The US census statistics highlight the dramatic changes in single/married demographics. According to the 2010 Census, 40% or nearly 99.6 million men and women in the United States are unmarried, signaling the greatest number of single or one-person households in history. Of the 99 million, 50 million are over-40. The current projections for the divorce rate are to remain in the 50% range. The median length of a (first or second) marriage that ends in divorce is 8 years with the median age for the first divorce at 32 for men, and 30.2 for women. The typical hiatus between marriages is slightly less than 4 years between marriages. The demand in the over-40 age group for match-making services is rapidly becoming the fastest growth segment in the online dating industry.

Singles who are 40 or older have needs, habits, experiences and references distinct from singles in their 20's and 30's that are not being addressed by current online dating offerings. Taking the current online dating model, rebranding it and just limiting it to over 40 singles, does not truly address the differences.

Matches That Matter, a new social introduction service, was created to address the needs of mature people who are looking for quality relationships while fulfilling a higher purpose.

Matches that Matter puts singles into small compatible groups of 6 men and 6 women who work together on projects at local nonprofit organizations thus allowing them to fulfill their Esteem and Self-actualization needs. The projects are fun and run the gamut of non-profit interests, from the environment to animals and children.

"It has been our goal to provide the opportunities for singles to satisfy their need for helping the greater good while meeting a potential date," according to Matches Founder Odette Pollar. "If the conversation begins by focusing on a shared common task it avoids the standard

interview questions that are most common on first-dates. Getting to know one another and developing a relationship begins at a relaxed, comfortable, more natural pace.”

Just as demographic shifts in marriage, dating, and aging constantly change, attitudes about being single is also changing. Not long ago many viewed divorce and a life as a single person a “problem”, no longer. In being single many see their choices expanding and are eagerly embracing a new beginning and a chance to have different outlook and attitude. Maslow would call it self-actualization. Pollar calls it fun.