

'Love Actually' is now 20-years-old, and dating coach Connell Barrett is here to review the classic rom-com in terms of dating strategy. Listen in as he shares some lessons that YOU can use to improve your love life.

So... let's go get the sh*it kicked out of us by love!

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Quotes

"Avoid dating someone you supervise or who supervises you. Workplace romances can be problematic, especially when a power dynamic is involved." Connell Barrett

Featured in the episode

Connell Barrett

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Transcript

Connell Barrett:

Oh, boy. I guess Colin Firth's girlfriend really wanted to hit that.

Connell Barrett:

Welcome to the dating transformation podcast. Here's your host, dating coach, Connell Barrett.

Connell Barrett:

Welcome back to the dating transformation podcast. I'm your host, dating coach Connell Barrett. I'm here to help you learn to flirt, gain confidence, and attract an amazing partner and do it all with authenticity. And today, I have a special, a very special episode. This is unlike other pod episodes I've done. Today, I am doing the 1st in what will become a recurring series on the pod where I break down and review romcoms, romantic comedy movies. And what I'm gonna do is break them down and rate them in terms of dating, not not so much as a movie, But in terms of dating strategy and this episode, we're starting with a movie that turns 20 years old this year, Love Actually. Love Actually if you might know it.

Connell Barrett:

It's basically the pulp fiction of chick flicks. It involves 9 or 10 different intertwining romantic stories. And it's a really funny, Good and very flawed movie, and I talk about it coming up in this episode. It stars Hugh Grant, Colin Firth, Emma Thompson, Liam Neeson, among many others.

And if you haven't watched this movie, I definitely recommend you check it out. And what I'm gonna share with you so, basically, what I'm gonna do is switch over to a, An audio slash video I made where I'm breaking the movie down scene by scene, and so you're about to listen to that. But here are a couple main points to take away from Love Actually because I'm a huge rom com movie fan. I love rom coms.

Connell Barrett:

Thing about romcoms is the grand gestures that you do in a romcom are gonna get you arrested in real life. And probably my biggest love-hate relationship with romcoms as a dating coach is that I love the comedy in a good one, and I love the heart, but I hate so many of the strategies that The characters use. And so here's here's your so here's your one big do and your one big don't from Love Actually. The big thing is you do want to take romantic risks. You can't have a really great single life as a single man without taking some romantic risks, going for that first kiss, sending flirtatious texts, Asking your crush out. So that's something you can learn from Love Actually is to take risks. Another thing you can learn from Love Actually is What not to do. Don't make grand romantic gestures.

Connell Barrett:

Don't tell someone you barely know that you love them. Tell them you like them, but not that you love them. Don't fat shame. There's so much fat shaming in love, actually. It's terrible. Don't don't, sprint through airport security to go tell your crush that she's the one. You're not gonna get the shit kicked out of you by love. You're gonna get the shit kicked out of you by airport security.

Connell Barrett:

So Check this out. I'm really proud of this episode, of a dating coach rating the rom coms. So here it is, The very first of, dating coach Connell Barrett rating and reviewing rom coms. Love Actually. Enjoy, and we'll see you next time. More like lust, actually. Am I right? I'm dating coach Connell Barrett, the real life hitch. And today, we're gonna review Love Actually, a classic rom com That celebrates its 20th anniversary this year.

Connell Barrett:

So stick around to the very end of the video. We're gonna grade Love Actually on a scale of one into 5 hearts in terms of dating strategy. Plus, I'm gonna give you my top 3 tips from the movie that you can use to help your dating life. So let's do it. Let's get the kicked out of us by love.

Connell Barrett:

If you look for it, I've got a sneaky feeling you'll find that love actually is all around.

Connell Barrett:

I love when a movie gets the name of its title in the movie said by a character. I think all movies should do this. You know? Like, Woah, Luke. Those are some cool Star Wars.

Connell Barrett:

And by the way, he introduced me as John, but actually everyone called me Jack.

Connell Barrett:

Oh, fine. Nice to meet you, cat. You got me right, though. I'm just Judy.

Connell Barrett:

I'm great. Just Judy.

Connell Barrett:

Okay. Did you see the look on her eyes when She was smiling and giggling? That, for a single guy, is what you wanna look for. You wanna look for a woman's focus, kiss. And what is she saying with her eyes and her smile? She's not Judy's not saying anything flirtatious, Yes. But using her sub communications, she's showing Jack that she's interested.

Connell Barrett:

I just thought I'd pop back here for the reception, see if she's better. This is good. Listen, I've been thinking. I think perhaps we ought to take mom out for her birthday on Friday. What do you think? I just feel we've been bad sons this year. Okay. Sounds fine. A bit, you

Connell Barrett:

It's boring, but fine.

Connell Barrett:

Hurry up, big boy. I'm naked, and I want you at least twice before Jamie gets home. I warned you at least twice before Jamie got home.

Connell Barrett:

Oh, boy. I guess Colin Firth's Firth's girlfriend really wanted to hit that. Just like you wanna hit that like and subscribe button. Right?

Connell Barrett:

It's nice and warm here. Yeah.

Connell Barrett:

It's not always the case, is it? I was standing in for Brad Pitt once. I mean, you

Connell Barrett:

I have been in Tibet for 7 years.

Connell Barrett:

Yes. Yeah.

Connell Barrett:

Bloody freezing.

Connell Barrett:

Okay. So Martin Freeman's character is doing something interesting here. You don't wanna brag around a woman you're interested in. But at the same time, you also wanna let her know if you have cool things in your life. So what Martin Freeman's character did really well was It's

Humblebragged. He didn't brag about having once been Brad Pitt's body double. He complained about it. Oh, gosh.

Connell Barrett:

It was so cold when I was Brad Pitt's body double. So if you ever want to let your crush or your first date know something cool about you, but you don't, you don't wanna sound like you're bragging. You can subtly complain about it. And that way, it's not bragging. It's closer to humble bragging.

Connell Barrett:

Honey, exactly how long it is that you've been working

Connell Barrett:

2 years, 7 months, 3 days, and I suppose it's what? 2 hours?

Connell Barrett:

And how long have you been in love with Carl, our enigmatic chief designer?

Connell Barrett:

2 years, 7 months, 3 days, and I suppose an hour and 30 minutes.

Connell Barrett:

Hold as much.

Connell Barrett:

Do you think everybody knows?

Connell Barrett:

Yes.

Connell Barrett:

Do you

Connell Barrett:

I think Carl knows?

Connell Barrett:

Yes.

Connell Barrett:

Oh, that is that is

Connell Barrett:

Bad news. Mars is so good.

Connell Barrett:

Maybe the time had come to do something about it.

Connell Barrett:

Okay. I love this movie. You might say, I actually love this movie. However, there's so many problems that take place in the workforce in terms of inappropriate behavior, starting with Alan Rickman as Laura Linney's boss for what almost starts off like a performance review talking about how she's in love with Carl. So inappropriate. This isn't even a dating tip. I guess this is a management tip. If you manage somebody, keep it to your work, and don't talk about your Employees love lives.

Connell Barrett:

But it's a movie. So I love the movie, but, man, there's a lot of inappropriate workplace behavior that we're gonna get into.

Connell Barrett:

Christmas is a time for people with someone they love in their lives. And that's not you? That's not me, Michael. When I was young and successful, I was greedy and foolish, and now I'm left with no one wrinkled and alone. Wow. Thanks for that, Bill. For what? Well, for actually giving a real answer to a question. Doesn't often happen here at Radio Watford, I can tell you. I'll submit anything in life.

Connell Barrett:

I'll tell you the truth.

Connell Barrett:

Bill Nighy steals this movie. I love his character. And this is a great scene. I know this is not a romantic scene between Bill's character and this radio host. But notice how vulnerable and authentic Bill Nighy's character is. He's just being really real, Telling the truth, telling it like it is. And when you're dating, you wanna be really authentic and genuine with the other person. So it's okay to be vulnerable.

Connell Barrett:

It's okay to say things like, oh, you know what? Sometimes I get lonely or the holidays have been tough for me. So bring that kind Authenticity and vulnerability to your dates because you're gonna make yourself stand out compared to all the other people who are just saying what you think they wanna hear. So be authentic.

Connell Barrett:

Oh god. She's in. Right. And now she'll think I'm a total spaz if I don't go in too. It's freezing. It's not worth it. You know, it's not bloody Shakespeare.

Connell Barrett:

Alright. So I love this couple together. They're really good. They have a genuine chemistry, a genuine connection. Now it's not great that he is her boss. There's a lot of power dynamic issues in this movie, which is not how you want to date. I'm generally not a fan of dating people you work with, but 6 of the 9 couples in this movie are work related Couples. And 3, 3 of them have power dynamics where the man has the power.

Connell Barrett:

Don't do that. Do not date somebody at work if there is a power dynamic. If you manage them, it's just you don't wanna get into it. Okay. Off my soapbox there. In terms of dating strategy or or in terms of believability, I do love their genuine interest in each other. They seem to really like each other. I wish that in 2020 Three, they probably would not have him just, ogling her in her, basically, underwear.

Connell Barrett:

This It's clearly the male gaze, and so the signals here are basically saying, oh, if a woman is beautiful and takes her clothes off, you can fall in love. That has not aged well. I think what's really beautiful about what Aurelia does is that she doesn't take off her clothes even though she's very attractive. It's the fact that she dives in the water to help save his book. That's a beautiful gesture. I'm so glad that was part of the package, But, yeah, a little too much ogling for my taste. But that said, these 2 are a really adorable couple.

Connell Barrett:

Well, good night.

Connell Barrett:

Night. All I want for Christmas Is you.

Connell Barrett:

What? Great scene. I love these 2 characters. Yes. They work together shooting their erotic movie, but at least their coworkers as opposed to there being a power imbalance like with a couple other story lines. And here's your quick dating tip, especially for you gentlemen out there. Women generally want you to move in for that first kiss. Here, Martin Freeman's character, he's trying to go for that kiss. He gets nervous, and then he pulls back.

Connell Barrett:

And then Joanna Page's character, She steps up and she locks lips with him, and then it's beautiful. The thing is, this is a movie. And in real life, If you don't go for that 1st kiss as the man, as the gentleman, there's a good chance that she won't and that you could get in the quote, unquote friend zone. A lot of women really like it when the man makes that first move. So Go for that 1st kiss, guys. Not every woman is quite as helpful as Joanna Page, although she went for it, and that's totally fine too. Generally, you're not gonna lose any points by going for a kiss even if she turns the cheek. However, if you wanna go for the kiss but you don't, you're too fearful, you might end up messing up your chances with her.

Connell Barrett:

Keep that in mind, gents.

Connell Barrett:

Oh.

Connell Barrett:

Oh, hi. Who is it?

Connell Barrett:

It's Carol Singers. He doesn't look like Carol Singers. That's weird. He looks more like Rick from Walking Dead. Did Rudy Giuliani give permission to use his likeness? I don't know. Okay. Main tip here is when you barely know someone, like Rick from Walking Dead barely knows Keira Knightley's character. You do not wanna make giant grand gestures.

Connell Barrett:

Take it from a dating coach. Back in the day, before I became a dating coach, I was struggling with women and I got way too into women. And I actually flew cross country from New York City to San Francisco, and I surprised her. Having never met her, we'd only been messaging online, I surprised her, showed up at her doorstep, not with cue cards, but with a box of, lingerie from Victoria's Secret and also a dozen roses, and she ghosted me. She disappeared. It was way too desperate, way too much too soon, so Don't do what Rick did here. Don't make some crazy grand gesture before you even know someone, one. And definitely don't do it when she's married to your best friend. That's my tip.

Connell Barrett:

Enough.

Connell Barrett:

Enough now. It's a terrible, terrible mistake, Chubbs. But you turned out to be the fucking love of my life. And to be honest, despite all my complaining, we have had a wonderful Hey. Come on. It's been an honor.

Connell Barrett:

I love this clip. I love, again, Bill Nye's character. He's so vulnerable and genuine. He cracks a lot of jokes. He's very funny, but also what makes him so memorable is he's not afraid to let, in this case, a bromance blossom by putting it out there that he loves his friend and manager. I'm not crazy about all the fat shaming in this movie. A lot of characters are mocked for being heavy, mostly women. In this case, it's his male manager, so that has not aged that well, but I do love the bromance here.

Connell Barrett:

This is probably the best overall connection in the whole film, and it's a bromance. It's not even romantic, but it's still beautiful.

Connell Barrett:

Plan didn't work, though.

Connell Barrett:

Tell her then.

Connell Barrett:

Tell her what?

Connell Barrett:

Tell her that you love her.

Connell Barrett:

No way. Anyway, they fly tonight.

Connell Barrett:

Even better. But Sam, you've got nothing to lose, and you'll always regret it if you don't. I never told your mom enough. You should have told her every day because she was perfect every day. You've seen the films, kiddo. It ain't over. Tell me it's over.

Connell Barrett:

Okay, dad. Let's do it. Let's get the kicked out of us by love. Yes.

Connell Barrett:

Alright. I love that quote. That's probably the best quote from the whole movie. And I love the lesson here of there are times when we have to take romantic risks And our love life, if you wanna find love and make a connection happen with that someone special, there are moments when you're gonna have to say the risky thing, do the risky thing, put your heart out there, and

risk getting the kicked out of you by love. However, I would never advise anyone, especially a child, to make your opening, pitch to somebody, a woman, I love you. He doesn't even know this young woman, this young girl in the movie. So instead of starting with I love you, you might start with, hey. I like you, or I'd like to get to know you, or you're a great singer.

Connell Barrett:

I would like to take you out for a date. So Don't do the big grand gesture where you start off with I love you. That's way too much too soon. But that's a rom com trope, and I I forgive Alright. Colin is in love with young Aurelia, and I like their story line a lot. They seem to have a genuine chemistry, a genuine interest in each other. They have a genuine chemistry, and they also did a really nice job indicating their interest without words, because you can flirt with somebody with your smile, the way you look at them, the energy you give off. So that's all good stuff.

Connell Barrett:

Now, again, we've got romcom syndrome here of the big grand gesture. He's asking her to marry him even though they've never even had a date or kissed. So that's jumping into the water way too soon.

Connell Barrett:

So

Connell Barrett:

you might say that Hugh granted her her Christmas wish? Okay. I'll just let myself out. Final thoughts on Love Actually. I actually love this movie as a rom com. It's funny. Bill Nighy, Laura Linney, National Treasures. It's got a huge heart. This movie makes me smile.

Connell Barrett:

It always makes me laugh. However, as a dating coach, the dating strategy is very problematic. We've got things that have aged very poorly. This movie has aged about as well as a bottle full of warm yoo hoo. We've got fat shaming, mainly of men shaming women. We've got all of these workplace romances where there's a power dynamic. At one point, Hugh Grant's prime minister character reassigns his attractive assistant because she's just too pretty for him to focus and concentrate. So we've got some real issues that have not aged that well.

Connell Barrett:

So I'm gonna give Love Actually 2 out of 5 hearts, in terms of dating strategy. However, there are 3 final tips and takeaways I want you to take away from Love Actually. Tip number 1 is I want you to take romantic risks. Just like people in rom coms take chances, in your dating life, there are gonna be moments when you need to approach that attractive stranger or ask out your crush or send that flirtatious, scary text. When in doubt, take a romantic risk as long as you do it with empathy. Tip number 2 is do not date somebody who you manage or who they manage you. Stay away from Workplace romances in general, but you absolutely do not want to date someone when there's a power dynamic. It opens up all kinds of issues.

Connell Barrett:

It's a hornet's nest. Don't do it. And tip number 3 is to avoid grand, big, romantic gestures too soon. What I mean is don't send love poetry to somebody after one date. Don't tell someone you've barely ever met or had a date with that you love them. You might tell them that you like them. You might show interest, but you don't wanna make some grand giant gesture. This makes the other person feel pressured.

Connell Barrett:

It can put too much pressure on them and can make you come across as looking a little bit desperate or overeager. So avoid big grand romantic gestures. Because if you ignore this advice, then there's a good chance that you're gonna be single for at least the next

Connell Barrett:

2 years, 7 months, 3 days, and I suppose an hour and 30 minutes.

Connell Barrett:

What do you love or hate about Love Actually? Leave your comment, Or you can ask me a dating question, and I'll reply as soon as I can. This has been dating coach, Connell Barrett, the real life hitch, rating the

Connell Barrett:

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