

SCHOOL OF AUTHENTIC BADASSERY – Badass At Love Module

1) My Story & Intro

Whether you are in a relationship right now, looking to get into one, have almost given up on them entirely, want out of one or have never got as far as considering one – thank you for being here!

Whether you've been in more than one serious relationship, married, engaged, had a long-term partner or not, multiple times *or* not, – thank you for being here.

By way of introduction my name is Jessie Shedden, creator of The School of Authentic Badassery and this module Badass At Love.

I'd like to take you back for a moment – if you are familiar with my backstory, you'll know that 4 years ago I escaped a strict emotionally abusive religious cult. Now one of the reasons I escaped the cult was because I didn't like the type of relationships, I saw all around me. The old school type that filled me with horror as I heard a friend describe her wedding night of climbing into bed with a perfect stranger. I'd known at the age of 16 that I'd never end up with any of the guys on offer in the cult - we weren't allowed to marry outside of it - so when I escaped at the age of 30, I thought that my newfound freedom would automatically ensure that from here on out it would be easy. I'd simply fall in love and live happily ever after. The dream!

So why was it so hard?

In late 2018 some months after I'd escaped the cult and a few weeks after my mother had passed of Stage 4 Colon Cancer, I found myself literally in indescribable pain thanks to my relationship.

At the time I was 3 years into an affair with a guy I'd originally fallen for some 12 years before and despite all the insane bravery I'd done to date this was beyond any pain I'd ever felt.

But I was utterly captivated by the situation. It took up every waking hour of my day, it was my first painful sickening black thought each morning that hung over my bed like an enormous storm cloud and seemed to pin me back beneath the covers and my last dwindling thought as I attempted to drift off to a fitful and harried sleep at night.

I couldn't understand how no matter what I tried my situation never seemed to improve. On countless occasions I'd done my best to walk away, only to find myself seduced back in. I'd tried 'standing up for myself' by stomping my little foot and issuing ultimatums demanding what I wanted, I'd tried to give him more time, be more understanding, I'd tried to move on and still this sticky thick molasses of a situation hung over my life like an all-encompassing cloud that sucked every last bit of energy out of it. Nothing I'd experienced in my life felt as excruciatingly painful as this. I would tell myself that we were actually making tangible progress and that if I just hung on long enough things would get better. Yet when I got real with myself and looked ahead, I knew that the Jessie I knew wasn't supposed to be in this same situation 1 year, 5 years, 10 years down the line.

And that's when I figured that some people *have* to be getting this right and I started my search to start to fill in the because, let's be honest – I hadn't even had biology or sex education growing up – never mind relationship training!

If at this point you are tempted to think the affair was the issue, let me tell you, it wasn't. Nope ma'am! I'd love to say that I gathered up my boots and walked right out of that situation into a paradise of blue in the arms of my tall, dark and handsome but no.

As 2018 progressed into 2019 I spent the year dipping in and out of relationships as I watched my repeating patterns and belief systems show up. Copy paste, copy paste, copy paste.

And what I saw was this: I'd leave a relationship exhausted and depleted, I'd regain my confident self, attract attention easily, because hey confidence is sexy, but then as soon as we entered the relationship boom! Just like that I'd hand over all my confidence to them. I became someone I didn't recognise and frankly completely disliked – and if I disliked me then ya know, I couldn't really expect my partner to feel any differently.

Often times they didn't even want it – not surprisingly – and have no idea what to do with it which lead to them taking advantage of me and before we knew it, I was back in the same place all over again.

There were times when the pain was so intense that I found myself seconds away from taking my life, and it got to the point where I started to think I never wanted to ever be in a relationship again because this hurt too much to put myself through it again.

The one good thing that came out of my quick succession of relationships was I saw one common denominator – me. And actually, that made me beyond happy because I was the one thing I could actually change! I don't know if you've ever tried changing someone else but take it from me, it's bloody hard, causes untold resentment and is understandably rather violating.

Finally at the end of 2019 I experienced a relationship like I'd never experienced before. I had thought I knew what it was to give and receive love, but this was at another whole level. It was at a level that I could never have imagined because I didn't know it even existed. And it came out of the frameworks and understandings I'm about to share with you in this program.

Where am I now? As of 2022 I'm very happy to report that I am still in not only the same relationship that started late 2019 but also that I am very happily engaged and as profoundly loved and in love as I was at the beginning.

I'm telling you this because it's a very clear example of what's possible when you take the time to consider what your beliefs are and how you see the world. And choose to conduct your relationships in a way that is actually consistent for success.

So, the question today is ***What does it mean to become Badass At Love?***

As we answer that question together, watch out for the profound impact it will have on the quality of your relationships for the rest of your life and indeed on the very quality of your experience of life itself.

This Badass At Love module is comprised of four sections:

First, we are going to look at **Why is it that Love even Matters** – in order to fully understand what’s actually happening in our relationships, it’s important to see the bigger picture as to why we choose to get into them and why they are so fundamental to our very existence and enjoyment of the whole experience of life itself.

Secondly, we are asking **Why do so many of us find Love So Bloody Difficult?** Why do people say they love each other and yet treat each other horribly? After I’d gone round in my relationship circles for the 3rd time – each time more painful than the one before - and come within minutes of taking my life, I realised there has to be a different way to do this. What I’m doing here absolutely has to change. And I could see it wasn’t just me that was struggling with this – the same experiences were going on everywhere. There’s a number of reasons why and we are going to go over some of those.

Third is, **What is truly possible at the highest echelons of love?** We know what we don’t want, but what does the other side of the coin really look like? What’s truly possible? There’s actually a scale on which all human relationships sit, and we’ll be looking at that, because when you can see that entire scale it’s immensely powerful tool for understanding the dynamics that play out in relationships that often go unnoticed.

And finally, **What does it mean to become Badass At Love?** What does it look like and how does it dramatically affect the experience of our relationships and ultimately the quality of our life itself?

My intention is to give you understanding around such a fundamental human experience that pretty much all of us long to have at levels we’ve not experienced before.

And to inspire you as to what is truly possible in the realms of loving and being loved with more grace, profundity, kindness, respect and awareness than before you invested in this program.

When you first move into your own apartment and have to deal with things like your heating breaking down – you reach out to your parents or a friend and ask what to do right? But when you start having relationships and they start coming apart at the seams, most adult you ask have no answers for you, they don’t know where to send you – there’s no guy driving around in a little van you can call on.

The discussion on this topic is not happening freely, it’s full of shame, fear, stigma, misunderstanding, judgment – when we were not given any training around this in the first place. We just carry them out according to how society expects us to.

It’s time to reach for your workbook and journal a few notes on the following questions:

Remember – this isn’t a time for judgement – just get curious and if the emotions want to flow let them but remind yourself you came here to heal and grow and move forward.

QUESTIONS:

What’s your current relationship status? Are you in one, are you looking, are you considering leaving one, have you almost given up?

How do you feel around the word relationships? What feelings come up for you? Fear, anxiety, appreciation, dread,

What's happened in the past? Have you been in multiple relationships? Long term, short term, been afraid to commit, always been dumped, always run away when it got serious? Be free to journal on it but if not, just allow the thoughts to come to the surface of your mind, like you are pulling dusty files out and flipping through them.

What stories come to mind? What have you been telling yourself about relationships? Do you notice repeating patterns in your relationships? (I kid you not, I found myself in a copy, paste loop – even down to having the same Christian name – much like a friend of mine who only ever seemed to date Steve's – all of which ended in exactly the same way!)

Let's look at your parents and grandparents – who separated, divorced, stayed together at all costs even when they would be better apart? Went separate ways and everyone is so much happier about it?

What were the long-term effects of that? Did someone lose a parent or grandparent at some stage because of a parting of ways? in what way does this play into their behaviours and beliefs today?

The variables are endless and it's not always important that we can answer why things happened or the outcomes but just to be aware of them and how they add to the overall dynamic.