A disclaimer: Though I was asked to contribute to this blog, I’m no relationship expert. But I can offer some insights, derived from my own experiences and those of others that I have observed over the years, and perhaps those who read this will find them helpful.

Whether blind or sighted, we all crave companionship and love that we hope will make our lives more meaningful and exciting. Every so often, I see posts from my blind friends on social media expressing how lonely they feel and how much they wish for a romantic partner and true love. Is it harder for a blind person to find a soulmate than it is for someone who is sighted? I’d say yes! Especially if one decides to expand his/her horizons and look for a partner outside of his/her community.

Many people do not see individuals with disabilities as prospective romantic partners with whom they can create a family and raise children. A lot of social stigma is attached to blindness and the white cane. When it comes to romantic relationships, people by in large seem unable or unwilling to look passed the outer trappings. I’ve experienced it one too many times. A blind woman meets someone whom she finds to be charismatic and attractive, but after a while, she realizes that he does not view her in a romantic way, merely because of her disability. She can be admired for her looks, intelligence, and praised for her independent capabilities, but the guy bails out at the last minute because he is afraid of making a serious, long-term commitment to be with a blind person. Experiences like this can shake one’s confidence and make them question their self-worth.

I’ve witnessed a number of situations when, after experiencing rejection based on their blindness, people either lose their hope and get depressed, or narrow their search for a life companion exclusively to their circle of communication where they feel more accepted. I do not recommend this approach because it means you impose limits upon yourself and the dating pool becomes much more restricted.

My advice to everyone is not to let your negative experiences ruin your self-perception and stop you from looking for a desirable partner. Rather, it may be worthwhile to rediscover new and fulfilling ways to better yourself, reenergize, and embark on a new romantic quest. There are many happy stories in which blind people find a life companion who accepts them for who they are, and there is no reason you couldn’t meet one yourself. I’m a firm believer that if something has been done by someone, it can be done again. Confidence is the key! If you accept and like who you are, people feel genuinely attracted to you. If you do not like who you are, change it. In other words, if you feel like a queen, act like a queen, you’ll become a queen and a prince on a white horse will appear in your life soon and throw his kingdom at your feet. The great thing about it is that you have the power to be whoever you choose to be.