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Feb 9, 2022 **Do my parents wish I wasn't single?**

Do my parents wish I wasn't single?

By [twenty-something](#) · Issue #37 · [View online](#)

The short answer is yes.

by *Natalie Zisa*

Valentine's Day may be coming up, but I can assure you that's not what inspired me to write this newsletter. This thought first crossed my mind in early December. Between the Christmas movies that focus on introducing the boyfriend for the first time or the social media posts that say #thankful, the focus on couples during the holidays is everywhere. And let's not forget the Christmas cards. Now, photo Christmas cards are actually my favorite. There's nothing I take more pride in than hanging them up on my wall for all to see. But it's also a great time for people to announce the newest addition to their families. We're talking distant cousins, family friends, anybody and everybody sending family photos with significant others, newborn babies, and even their dogs.

And it just got me thinking: when people ask my parents how their kids are doing, I can't help but wonder if they're filled with more pride when they talk about my brother. He's engaged and living in Boston with his fiancé and their dog. I, on the other hand, live in New York City, with my roommate, and prioritize my workout routine over going on dates. Would they feel better if I was living with a significant other? With someone I was building a life with? Would the amount I pay in rent be justified?

Little do they know that my roommate provides the same type of security that a boyfriend would. There are days that I come home from work and dinner is waiting for me on the table. Or days that we don't feel well so we make each other tea. Some mornings we do our grocery shopping together. And when we make solo trips, we remember to pick up each other's favorite foods. Ultimately, we take care of each other and make this adulting thing easier to bear.

Of course, there are certain things that a friendship can't give you, even one as close as a roommate. But when I think about the reasons I initially wanted a boyfriend, especially when I moved out on my own, it was for companionship. I craved the feeling of family, even if it wasn't in the traditional sense. Now that I have it, it deserves to be celebrated too.

Maybe I'm underestimating my parents. Maybe they do know that my roommate and I do all those things for each other. But I think the problem is that society just doesn't seem to care. Every celebration that I've been to or am going to in the next six months is tied to a relationship. And I *am* here for it. (My friend's bachelorette is the reason I'm getting out of a New York City winter for four days, so sign me up.) But society still views a relationship and all of its celebrations as the ultimate prize. So, it's no surprise that if you don't have it, you feel less than.

I think all my parents want for me is to feel "settled"; safe, loved, and comfortable in my own home. And they know I have that with Danielle. But they also know that part of me wants it with someone else too. You can be in other types of relationships and still want a romantic one. You can be happy for your friends getting married and also wish people understood what it feels like to feel left out. So, maybe the real reason I get the sense they're not secure with my being single is because I'm not. Because society painted a picture of what settled and successful looks like. And with all the love I do have in my life, it's still not quite valued enough. And that's what I wish I could change.

Natalie is a freelance writer based in New York City. She loves SoulCycle, croissants with her coffee, and taking too many pictures of sunsets in Central Park. You can find more of her writing at www.natalie-zisa.com and you can find her on Instagram and Twitter @natalie_zisa

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By twenty-something.

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We have a lot of questions. We will rarely answer them in their entirety. We will have fun trying.

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