

Kris Kenny

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Connections

Words: Vicky Rozenberg
Image: Adam Diaz

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Meeting Kris Kenny, the owner of Kris Kenny Connections, is like sitting down for a cup of coffee (or, in her case, tea) with an old friend. She looks like she just stepped out of a fashion catalog—casual yet chic—but acts like the easy-to-talk-to girl next door.

Her friendly demeanor and easygoing personality add to the success of the dating service business that she originally started with her now ex-business partner.

When I ask her to dish the dirt, Kenny laughs, having only good things to say about her past. The two ran in the same circles and started the business together to cater to mutual friends. Eventually, Kenny's business partner moved on to other avenues, and she continued to run the service herself, hiring a few more people as the business grew.

I keep digging, asking whether any clients have ever attempted to get a date with her. "I have not been hit on by clients. At least not that I know of," she laughs again, genuinely surprised by the question. It's like the thought never even crossed her mind, though there's no doubt plenty of clients wouldn't mind a chance to take her out. But, before any male readers pick up the phone in hopes to score a date with this gorgeous matchmaker, Kenny is happily married to a man she, not surprisingly, met on a blind date. And her personal love story is not the only one that ends at happily ever after—Kris Kenny Connections is responsible for seventeen marriages to date and an engagement that will soon bump that success rate up to eighteen.

So, how did this Chicago native end up finding love for the people of the Mile High city? A huge fan of skiing, Kenny figured she'd kill two birds with one stone by choosing a school in this ski-central location. She earned a degree in psychology from Colorado State University and went on to work for RE/MAX. Her next move was to San Francisco in 1997, where she continued her financial career quest by working for Barclays Global Investors. I shake my head, confused at Kenny's career path. Apparently, she didn't always see herself as a matchmaker. But, as much as Kenny enjoyed waking up at 3:30 every morning—typical in the financial trading world—it was time to find a job with more appealing hours. Not one to forget the Rocky Mountains, Kenny moved back to Colorado in 2000 and hasn't wanted to leave since.

Her first experience in the matchmaking world took place with a now-defunct Denver company called Table for Two. In the five months she worked there, Kenny decided it was time to put her skills and her degree to good use. And so, Kris Kenny Connections was born.

What sets her company apart from other matchmaking services is that she's found her niche. Kenny sets up an initial interview with each client to decide if the client fits the mold—in other words, whether she feels she can find a match for them. "If I can think of fifty people off the top of my head that I can see setting them up with, they're on," she says. And, considering her records contain over two thousand people, fifty is reasonable. If not, Kenny's honest in letting them know that she'll keep them in mind. "It's a big investment. I'd rather wait and make sure I can set them up with someone."

The company does not rely on computers or pictures to match people up. Instead, Kenny and the others sift through files themselves, making notes and pairing people up not only based on their answers but also personalities. None of the couples get to see each other before agreeing to the date. I can't imagine going on a date without a clue as to the appearance of my potential mate, but Kenny has a way of convincing even the most skeptical audience. She even offers to arrange everything.

With all the love she creates, her ideal date is actually quite simple: dinner at a place with good energy—she lists Vesta Dipping Grill and Capital Grille as her downtown choices. A romantic at heart (and who wouldn't be in this line of work?), she advises those who have yet to turn to her for romantic guidance: "Be open-minded; you never know who you'll hit it off with." During the initial interview, she's sometimes asked to set a client up with "someone who's 5'6" and brunette," and when the client's selection is too defined, it becomes difficult to work with.

I want to know about embarrassing moments that occur on dates, and Kenny recalls numerous times when a client calls, complaining of a no-show. Moments later, Kenny gets the same call from the other person and quickly fixes the mishap. No, no one was stood up—just one of the clients ended up at the wrong restaurant.

Kenny's next project, set to take off in February, is a new division of Kris Kenny Connections for men, where Kenny sets out to do personalized and individualized searches. Playing the role of Hitch in real life makes this woman a gem for modern day Romeos, and, with a little nudge from the matchmaker, the only thing they need to worry about is living up to the profile they've created for themselves... and showing up at the right location.

Kris Kenny Connections
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