

A woman with dark hair, wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and a white, long-sleeved, knee-length dress with a scalloped neckline and hem, is walking on a sandy beach. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. In the background, there is a blue sky and a dark blue ocean. A woven beach bag is on the sand in the foreground.

12 GUTSY THINGS EVERY WOMAN *(YOU!)* SHOULD DO

Put A Little Wow In Your Life By Taking Off Others' Limits And Exploring That Inner Strong, Adventurous Child That Lives In Your Soul. Let The New You Emerge!

BY Erin Brereton

Ship sisters, get ready to shake things up! Your actions may typically be more wallflower-ish than wild, but if you don't speak your mind, you're signing up for missed opportunities and regret. The good news: Being brave is easier than you might think. You may not be sold on being bold, but trust us: *You've got it in you!*

1 APPROACH A GUY AND ASK HIS NAME

WHY IT'S GREAT: It's a way to get the conversation—and your self-esteem—revved up. "You exude confidence, which in turn helps you approach anyone, anytime, anywhere," says Dr. Larina Kase, PsyD, MBA, author of *The Confident Leader* (McGraw-Hill, \$18.95).

DOWNSIDE: You may get his name—but if he's already dating someone, not much else.

UPSIDE: Being proactive can pay off. "You may initiate a wonderful relationship that would have passed you by if you hadn't made this move," Kase says.

2 TRAVEL SOMEWHERE FABULOUS BY YOURSELF

WHY IT'S GREAT: You make all the plans and call all the shots. "Nothing builds independence and a sense of adventure as well as traveling by yourself," Kase says.

DOWNSIDE: You'll have to make an effort to meet new people or be OK with some alone time.

UPSIDE: "The independence, curiosity, adventure and hands-on spirit you develop will help you go after other gutsy goals," Kase says.

3 TELL YOUR FRIEND WHAT YOU DON'T LIKE ABOUT HER

WHY IT'S GREAT: Wouldn't you want to know if chatting on your phone during parties made your friends feel ignored? Clueing a gal pal in about an annoying habit can help her to improve her relationships, says Kase.

DOWNSIDE: The potential for hurt feelings is high. "You might also tell her what you like [about her], to be balanced," says Tina B. Tessina, PhD, author of *The 10 Smartest Decisions a Woman Can Make Before 40* (Health Communications, \$12.95).

UPSIDE: "She may return the favor, helping you to improve yourself," Kase says.

4 TELL A GUY WHAT'S WORKING FOR YOU IN THE BEDROOM—AND WHAT ISN'T

WHY IT'S GREAT: "His response will give you important information about his ability to take feedback—and if he values your pleasure rather than just his own," Kase says.

DOWNSIDE: Conveying your needs can feel a little uncomfortable at first, however, "most guys will appreciate it because they will feel more confident that they're doing what works to please you," Kase says.

UPSIDE: "It will result in better sex, better communication and a better relationship," Tessina says.

5 WEAR WHAT YOU WANT TO A PARTY

WHY IT'S GREAT: You're kicking insecurity to the curb—and breaking out that killer dress!

DOWNSIDE: Be prepared: You may tense up for a moment if everybody else is in jeans.

UPSIDE: "You get to set style, not follow it," Tessina says.

6 ASK YOUR CURRENT CRUSH ON A DATE

WHY IT'S GREAT: Well, because *not* asking him out won't achieve much.

DOWNSIDE: He may say no for a number of reasons, such as a recent break-up or busy schedule.

UPSIDE: "You'll learn the best thing that can happen is he says yes, and the worst thing is that he says no," Kase says. "But either way, you'll be proud of yourself."

7 TELL YOUR FRIEND YOU CAN'T STAND HER BOYFRIEND

WHY IT'S GREAT: You can't go wrong with the truth. "You promote openness and honesty in your relationship," Kase says.

DOWNSIDE: Don't expect your opinion to spark a break-up. Make sure your friend knows you'll support her choice.

UPSIDE: "If you have legitimate concerns about your friend's boyfriend, you may not be able to live with yourself if you don't say something," Kase says.

8 ASK A GUY SENDING CONFUSING SIGNALS TO EITHER MAKE A MOVE OR GET LOST

WHY IT'S GREAT: "This lays the foundation for an equal relationship in which you are not a pushover," Kase says.

DOWNSIDE: He may choose to get lost. But that's not necessarily a bad thing. "Either you'll break the ice, or rid yourself of a pest," Tessina says.

UPSIDE: You save yourself the agony of wondering what he wants. You know what you want—and you're going to get it, either from him or from someone else.

9 CALL AND ASK FOR A SECOND DATE, INSTEAD OF WAITING FOR HIM

WHY IT'S GREAT: "It stops you from being on hold," Tessina says. "He'll either say yes or no, and then you know where you stand."

DOWNSIDE: Unless you had the best first date in history (unlikely), you may not be sure how the date will go.

UPSIDE: Chances are, he'll be impressed. "You'll show yourself and him that you're a take-charge person and that you go for what you want," Kase says.

10 SET A LIFE-CHANGING GOAL—LIKE SAVING FOR A CONDO OR PLANNING A TRIP TO EUROPE—AND ACHIEVE IT

WHY IT'S GREAT: "You'll reap the rewards of achieving the goal, but more importantly, no goal will be off limits for you in the future," Kase says.

DOWNSIDE: You'll probably need to make some sacrifices. Prepare to be patient!

UPSIDE: "The most powerful way to build confidence is by going after a goal that stretches your limits," Kase says.

11 ASK FOR A RAISE AT WORK

WHY IT'S GREAT: "Asking for a raise shows that you value yourself," Kase says. But know going in how business is doing and be realistic.

DOWNSIDE: Your boss could say no.

UPSIDE: You always have options. "If you don't get the raise, update your résumé and send it out," Tessina says. Or, sit tight and show your boss you deserve more money.

12 GO TO A PARTY ALONE—AND MEET THREE NEW PEOPLE

WHY IT'S GREAT: "You'll be forced to initiate conversations," Kase says.

DOWNSIDE: Walking into a social scene by yourself can be scary. Expect to battle a few irrational fears about who you'll talk to.

UPSIDE: "Learning how to meet new people is a great skill," Tessina says. "You may make a lifelong friend—or even find Prince Charming." **C/W**