

# Christine Hassler

## 20-Something, 20-Everything

**RIP!** Your boyfriend ends the relationship. *SLAP!* You earn your first paycheck. *BOOONG!* Voices ring in your head: "What are you going to do with your life?" *POW!* You hit a wall.

Holy-convoluted cow, 20-something! Fly out of your bat cave and let's reevaluate. Life isn't a reenactment of an old '60s *Batman and Robin* television show (which you remember watching in the '80s).

Says 28-year-old Christine Hassler, author of *20-Something, 20-Everything*: "We're misguided into believing we're supposed to have it all figured out!"

*You mean we don't have to?*

"If there's anything I would call our generation, it's the 'instant gratification generation' ... 'I had my heart broken so I'm going to date someone else. I'm not going to feel the hurt' ... If you're uncomfortable, be uncomfortable for a while," Christine says.

Plano raised a smart gal. And charming at that. This isn't Christine's first book. "I wrote a book called *Space Rodeo* when I was 6," she laughs.

Christine lived in Plano from 3 years old until she was a Northwestern Wildcat in Chicago. She graduated in '94 from Plano West and said that in high school she dated her textbooks. "Writing came easy to me, but I always thought I'd be in the entertainment industry because I wanted to be popular," Christine said.

At 25, Christine became one of the youngest executives in Hollywood's television industry. But as a rising star, she felt she was falling into a hole, like the Bermuda Triangle. Now, she champions The Twenties Triangle: *Who am I? What do I want?* and *How do I get what I want?* "The twenties are a black hole where people get lost, navigate through it, or disappear," Christine said. She explains that a triangle's shape represents many 20-somethings' description of life. Their paths are "jagged or go off in many directions, and they feel confined."

Perhaps you're thinking three lines don't cut it ... how about some swirls or even your niece's scribbled-up drawing on the refrigerator?

So where do you find the *who*, *what* and *how* answers? "Inside yourself," says Christine. "We women think that we can't be passionate about ourselves. We are a society that celebrates, unfortunately, not the individual but conformity."

Many 20-somethings celebrate checklists (in addition to Diet Coke, chocolate and shopping). "Checklists give us a sense of control," says Christine. "But what wasn't on my checklist was 'stop feeling depressed; stop focusing on my body; and get my relationship with my mother figured out.'"

Christine said checklists make us feel productive, too. "We're addicted to planning," she said. From sweet 16 to turning 21, from college graduation to that first job, from marriage to children ... we create a timeline for ourselves. "At this stage in my life I should have had a baby and I can't even keep a plant alive!" she jokes. "But who cares? I'll have a baby when I have a baby."

Our timelines, which feel like deadlines, make us overextended. "We justify the stress that overdoing causes by rationalizing that we are setting up our futures," quotes Christine in her book. "It seems that doing, doing, doing makes our 20-something crisis keep going, going, going."

Sounds like the Energizer battery. Feels like a race in a hamster's wheel.

*How many times do I have to be a bridesmaid? Will I always work 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.? Is there a missing number on my paycheck?*

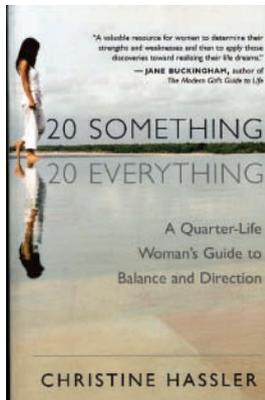
Christine's "ABCs of independence" and feedback on countless testimonies alleviate some of the pressure. She also suggests exercises to "securing your independence."

Yes, grab your journal for some self-investigation in 69 exercises – both empowering and liberating – in *20-Something, 20-Everything*.

"I think women are so hard on themselves in their 20s and I want to



**"Quarter-lifers feel the pressure to make their twenty-something years the time when everything needs to be decided from where to live, to what to do for a living, to who to live with."**



be the voice that says it's okay, you'll figure it out. Stop being so concerned with what everyone else thinks," Christine said.

Her message has touched audiences of CNN's "Prime News Tonight," WFAA's "Good Morning Texas," and other top media outlets.

In Christine's book she states that there is no such thing as one predestined soul mate for everyone. "I think the word soul mate means someone that comes to teach your soul something. Each relationship that you have is a soul mate because each person you're with teaches you something. My ex was a soul mate for a time but not for a lifetime," she said.

*What is the biggest mistake women make in relationships?* "Losing themselves in it," said Christine, whose fiancé broke up with her six months shy of their wedding. "It's a tie between that

and thinking you can change a man."

Then there's George. We all know him... and wish we had more of him. Christine personifies money as George. "The relationship with money is probably the worst relationship we have," Christine said. "I thought if I could make money a person, maybe it'd be easier to see

that money is a relationship that needs attention."

Christine would agree that your most important relationship is the one with yourself.

One phenomenon she calls "not enoughness" is when 20-somethings fall victim to "I wish I were more." Christine asked women across the country between the ages of 23 and 32 to rate their self-confidence. On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being the best), the average was 4.

*Is enough ever going to be enough?*

"It's enough when you decide it is," Christine said. "Set your goals and manage your expectations, but there's always going to be somebody better, prettier and smarter ... always, *always!*"

"To combat 'not enoughness,' you have to shift into gratitude. I think in our 20s we don't have enough gratitude."

Well, thank you Christine for your quarter-life guide that not only pushes me – us – to jump the 20s' hurdles, but also makes us stron-

ger for the mid-life crisis we'll face in another 20 years! If "home is where the heart is," *BAM!* Your book hits close to home.

Visit [www.twentysomethingwoman.com](http://www.twentysomethingwoman.com) to sign up for Christine's quarterly newsletter-*Talk of the 20-Something Woman.*

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