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The New Year is off to a bittersweet start for Neenah Pickett.

The New Jersey media consultant, 43, spent all of 2009 searching for love and not finding it. Still, Pickett emerged with hope and pride intact.

At her Web site “52 Weeks 2 Find Him,” she chronicled her dozens of dates and introduction to online dating and social networking sites — her message being that finding the love of your life *should* take work.

“I did not put any effort into dating and went on two first dates in 14 years,” she said of her past approach. “I thought, ‘If I give all my effort like I do in my career and other areas of my life, will that make a difference?’”

Pickett included video posts and interviews with successful couples and dating experts and tackled topics like knowing when to throw in the towel. She also gave herself weekly challenges like going to church outings and barn dances.

“I wanted to really explore not just meeting guys, but understanding marriage,” she said. “It was more about how to have something healthy and happy.”

Click here to read more about Neenah’s love search

At first, Pickett struggled with how open to be about her dates on her site. She also had to grow a thick skin to ward off nasty commenters. Updating and managing the blog was one of the hardest parts of the entire experience.

“It was definitely an adventure for me,” she said. “I think people looked at it and thought I was obsessed with it. I had vacations and friends and work.”

Pickett’s efforts garnered attention from the media and struggling single women



around the world. She also connected with like-minded women on Facebook and says their support was one of her favorite parts of her journey.

But not everyone praised Pickett. Lisa Abbie Paz, LMFT, PhD, a therapist in Miami, commends her “effort and willingness to be open minded,” but cautions against trying too hard.

“... Mr. Right can be in the most unlikely of places and faces,” Dr. Paz said. “That said, Neenah’s mission including being overly diligent about dating and setting a time limit of one year seems rather restrictive. Instead I would encourage people to adopt Neenah’s overall attitude, but perhaps not at the same pace or with the same definitive deadline.”

Pickett has actually vowed to take a break from dating in 2010. But she still believes love is out there.

“I don’t know how I’ll feel at the end of 2010. In 2011, I won’t continue at the pace I did, but I will continue being proactive. I won’t be one of those passive people. I don’t think it’s true to who I am.”

What do you think of Pickett’s efforts to

find love? Do you or would you ever publicize your quest for “the one”?

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