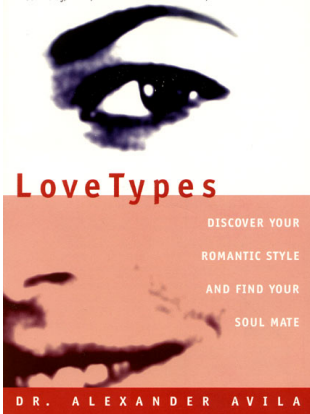


"Dr. Alexander Avila offers a unique approach to identifying a compatible partner...It's a fun, easy-to-use system for narrowing down the playing field of potential mates and finding the love of your life."
— John Gray, Ph.D., author of *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*



Alexander Avila

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A note from Avi...

When I was small, I was read to continually. My grandparents were always telling stories. Our house was filled with books. I saw adults read. Hardly a wonder, then, that I became an early reader of all sorts of things — books for children, comic books, science magazines, history books — anything in which I could find a story. There was kids' radio too, which I adored. Even so, writing didn't interest me.

It was in my junior year of high school that a great crisis took place: My English teacher informed my parents that I was the worst student he ever had. That summer I was required to spend a lot of time with a family friend, a teacher, who tutored me in writing basics. She gave me something even more important: a reason for writing.

Writing, she taught me, was not just for myself or for some teacher. It was a way of sharing ideas and stories with many. With that notion in mind, I set out after that summer to be a writer, though it wasn't until I had children of my own that I began to write for young people.

I believe that as a writer for kids, I have three basic options. The first is to write as well as I can. The second is to be honest. The third is to create a vision of possibility. It doesn't matter if that vision is happy or tragic, funny or serious. What does matter is that I show that life is worth living, that we must at least try to fulfill the promise of ourselves. As one of my characters once said, "A good children's book of promises. And promises are meant to be kept."

I really enjoy meeting my readers. Each year I visit schools and classrooms, and talk to young readers, teachers, and librarians all over the country. We talk about books, the writing and reading of them, how books affect — even change — their readers. It's a good life.