

Is It Real -- Or Is It Event Planning?

"Jennifer Jones used to devise scavenger hunts for her friends on special occasions. Now, as the founder of Go Get It -- an event-planning business that blends elements of "Punk'd" and "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" -- she orchestrates get-togethers on a much more elaborate scale.

Recently, Jones planned a special event for an unwitting guest of honor, Gigi Hamerman.

Hamerman is a serious fan of fellow Texan Dr. Phil McGraw, the tell-it-like-it-is shrink who went from being a fixture on Oprah's couch to being one of TV's most popular talk-show hosts.

It's no surprise, then, that Hamerman was floored when, during a trip to New York City with her then-boyfriend, Alex, she scored two VIP tickets to an off-Broadway play produced by none other than Dr. Phil.

Hamerman thought it was an unseemly career move for the "life strategist" doctor, but she was eager to attend nonetheless. After all, the hotel concierge who presented her with the tickets said the show was so "underground," not even Diddy could reserve seats.

Midway through the show, the actors asked for audience participation.

And just when the night couldn't get any more perfect, Hamerman was pulled onstage to play the role of a fairy princess. After shutting her eyes to kiss the frog back into a prince, she opened them to find herself before 150 audience members, all holding lit candles. And the actor disguised as a frog was -- to her utter surprise -- her boyfriend.

When Alex kneeled down, Hamerman began to sob, having finally figured out what would happen next.

It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for the couple, but a normal day in the life of the woman who planned it. It was Jones who, after being approached by Alex, created fake playbills and tickets, rented an off-Broadway theater and hired actors to fill the audience and stage.

Jones was backstage, beaming, when Alex popped the question. "It always ends up with the woman crying," she said, describing her measure for a job well done.

Jones, 27, a former actress and film producer, launched Go Get It two years ago with a Web site, www.gogetit.org. "I didn't need much to start," she said, noting that she had the benefits of small overhead and a large pool of friends in the entertainment world.

Jones arranges more than wedding proposals; clients also come seeking private jet getaways to Jamaica for anniversaries, midnight desserts in Central Park, or birthday surprises where the man finds himself in an elaborate James Bond car chase or the woman finds herself on the cover of US Weekly and suddenly stalked by paparazzi and reporters.

"We give people the experience of being in a movie," Jones said.

Business is booming. In two years, Jones' client bookings have tripled, with three or four events a month.

One problem, Jones said, is she does not have any repeat customers, a group most service businesses rely on. After all, she said, "Your engagement is a once-in-a-lifetime experience ...

you'd hope."