

The Dangers and Advantages of On-Line Dating

Perspective

Once upon a time we used to meet people to date either through:

- a. Other people intro us to other single people they believed would work out
- b. Single dances
- c. Taking out news ads
- d. By accident

The infamous blind date was generally looked down upon as the fear was of appearing desperate. The single dances were like meeting people in a bar. Many people would take on cold, distant, detached demeanors as a means of emotional protection and the slim (but real) possibility of meeting a psychopathic killer because everyone was a stranger to each other. Forced to behave in a peculiar and unfriendly manner, many people opt out of bars relatively quickly as a means of meeting people unless they enjoy drinking a lot when going to a bar. Generally people know that drinking can cause a drastic change in perception, personality, and ability to interact and this is a phony facade. On the surface, bars look like great places to meet people, but we live in a world where people are not always who they seem to be and because of their strong desire to get their immediate gratification needs met, they do not seem to care about what other people want or need. This many times translates into giving the bar a bad rep (not altogether undeserved) of being called a "meat market".

The bar is especially feared by women because of the numerous men who are looking for primarily sex or may be frequented by psychopaths. Many men steer away from bars as there are women who either have personality disorders, are phobic of developing a relationship, have intimacy problems and concerns, and/or are shallow. After wearing a badge of honor and seemingly becoming more mature, you move away from bars (unless you are blending it with lots of drinking), and brag to others how advanced psychologically you are because no more bars anymore. So, the next step is to advertise in the personals section. This turns out to be a haven for very lonely, isolated individuals with limited social skills and lots of fears about meeting people. People still will on occasion will meet by accident, but this is like Jimmy Cricket singing "when you wish upon a star." So imagine the day that the Internet became user friendly on a mass scale. This occurred in 1995. It was originally brought to the public as a means to educate. This is not unlike the intention of television in the 1950's. Both quickly transformed into an entertainment medium and education became a less -2- on-line dating important function and purpose. Along with this change in focus came the dating sites of all different types, costs, and issues. Most people thought that it was a private and confidential way of communicating. Of course, this is not true. Every written statement leaves "tracks" as every statement has some type of IP address. The rush for a business to have a web page seemed to happen overnight. Very quickly,

it became known to produce 5,000 new sites per day. Today it is more than triple that figure. Then add into the mix people's personal web page and the Internet became endless.

One of the realizations that became obvious and apparent was that electronic medium was a good way to meet somebody for dating purposes. An individual creates a profile about themselves and what they are looking for, as well as a means to be contacted. At first, most people were appalled by the idea of meeting somebody to date and then it became very acceptable to do so. Now in 2015, no one even flinches when they hear that a person had met somebody through an electronic medium. On-line dating has several advantages and unfortunately some serious disadvantages. Some of these are: meeting somebody to potentially date, meeting people you would not know otherwise, an opportunity to develop friendships, companions, falling in love, meeting for primarily sexual purposes, and of course meeting new people.

The downside is also apparent. There is a lack of anonymity and privacy, meeting somebody who is able to hide their psychopathology until you know them long enough, a false facade, and a good writer who is able to create a fake profile and emails that is able to persuade a stranger that they are emotionally healthy. On the deepest level an individual can effectively deceive others through being kind on the surface and a psychopath on a deeper level (ala craigslist killer). At times, the Internet has become a haven for sex offenders especially child molesters, as well as pornography addiction. Sexual fantasizing could become rampant in a very lonely and isolated individual. Sexual obsessiveness could develop and be strengthened by Internet porn, chat rooms, and private sexual sites. It is estimated within the child pornography research literature that viewing pornography has increased approximately 1500 percent within the past 10 years. Internet has entertained, educated us, been a source to both meet somebody or to buy airline tickets. It has enhanced writing allowing for increased efficiency and productivity, but it has replaced many workers with computerized robots. Therefore an individual has to approach the electronic media known as the Internet cautiously as life altering decisions are potentially made through our exposure to it. This is especially true if we make the choice of dating somebody who we meet on-line or within a personal's dating site.

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