5 Secrets to Make Online Dating Work for You

Make Attracting the Right Person Work for You

Millions of singles world-wide use online dating sites for a variety of reasons. Many are hoping to actually meet their ideal match. I've heard countless stories from people who tell me why it's just not working: "I'm not meeting the quality and caliber of people I'm looking for;" "I don't get any responses;" All dating sites are the same;" "The people I meet are not as they described themselves:" "There's a lot of rejection to deal with:" or, "Confidentiality is a huge concern."

Let's turn all those negatives around so online dating will work for you. Making good relationship choices requires clarity about who you are and what you want. Many of us think we know exactly what that kind of self-awareness looks like. Most singles have their "list." But really what many people know and understand about themselves is just the tip of the iceberg –the mere 10 percent that shows above the water. Your success and happiness rely on the 90 percent that is hidden beneath the surface of your consciousness. Unless you uncover that hidden 90%, you are operating at a disadvantage!

The work you do to uncover this vital information about yourself (limiting beliefs, values, life goals and relationship needs, wants and requirements) will make it easier to plot your course through life so that you can achieve your goals and have the relationship of your dreams.

What are your limiting beliefs?

We all have limiting beliefs that we are unaware of. You can consciously choose to keep the attitudes that support your relationship goals, and let go of those that do not.

A limiting belief is a belief that holds you back in any area of your life and places limitations on your ability to take action to achieve your goals. They are false beliefs that stem from some

earlier time or experience. It can be interesting to figure out where they originated, but that is not necessary for you to get rid of them! You can look at them as gremlins, your inner critic, negative thoughts or mindsets, excuses, self-imposed obstacles, inner saboteurs – it's all about the programming you have in your subconscious mind.

Some of the top limiting beliefs for singles are:

- I'm not good enough.
- I don't deserve love.
- All the good ones are taken.
- I have to take what I can get or be alone.
- I will be rejected if I ask for what I want, or if I say no.
- I will be abandoned if I care too much.

It's been said that whatever you believe becomes your reality. You do not believe what you see; rather you see what you already believe. For this reason, two people facing the same situation may interpret it differently, act according to their different beliefs, and experience different outcomes.

If you think about it, beliefs create emotions. Emotions result in actions. Actions create reality. If I believe that I am unlovable, I feel inferior and sad. Naturally, I act like an inferior, sad person. I can't help it – it is based on what I believe. As an inferior, sad person in action, what do you think I attract into my life? If I can get rid of the belief that I am not worthy of love, the reality that I manifest will be exponentially more rewarding.

So it is vitally important that you identify your limiting beliefs in order to move forward and take action. The steps you want to take are those that will result in positive change in alignment with your life and relationship goals.

So all this means that you must deal with your limiting beliefs head on! By recognizing your limiting beliefs you can catch them, cancel them and replace them with new rewritten beliefs. Your subconscious will accept your new statements of belief as fact and will no longer sabotage your dreams. Instead… it will start creating them.

Awareness + Choice + Action = Positive Change

What are your core values and life goals?

Your core values serve as markers to let you know your life is on track. When you live a life aligned with your core values you will fulfill one of your highest needs— for your life to have meaning. A few examples of core values are: honesty, stability, openness, self-respect and compassion.

When you find that, in order to maintain a relationship, you are doing things that go against your grain, it's a red flag. That feeling you have in your gut warns you that you are acting in opposition to your core values. Eventually you will feel resentment or a deep, uneasy feeling within yourself. I'm sure you can imagine what effect these feelings would have on your relationship.

Associated with your values are your life goals. A life goal is a powerful force that drives your energy, thoughts, feelings, wants, needs, and choices. Some people's life goals are very much deliberate and intentional while others act according to life goals they are not aware of on a conscious level. When you discover and identify your life goals, you can understand the meaning of your life and your unique role in the world. Taking the time to envision why you are here and how you want to live your life will help you select or create your own unique future. Understanding your life goals will help you feel better, do better, be better. You will be able to focus your life by making choices that are in alignment with your life goals, an important step in determining compatibility in relationships.

What are your relationship needs?

It is important to know what you need in a relationship. Many people mistakenly believe that a need reveals weakness. Nothing could be further from the truth. The plain fact is that we all have needs, and our needs are legitimate. A need is essential to your doing your best, having your best and being your best.

Many needs can be met from within you, but we are talking about the needs that must be met within your relationship – from outside of you. When a need is met by a partner, you may feel soothed, glad, loved, understood and valued. When a need is not met, you may feel hurt, angry, frustrated or rejected. Follow the trail of negatively charged emotions and you will discover themes and patterns – instances of "when this happens, I feel angry or frustrated." This is your subconscious letting you know that you have needs that are not being met. A few examples of relationship needs are affection, openness, communication, consideration, commitment, and trust. What are your needs in a relationship? If you have trouble identifying your needs, it is an indication you may not even be aware of them, or even aware that you have any. All the more reason to get to know yourself a little better.

How able and willing are you to honor your needs and ask others to help you meet them?

Sometimes people feel that they don't have the right to have needs. There are many reasons for this false belief to take root, and often happens when we are young. Some parents believe that since they fulfill all their children's needs, there can't possibly be any left unfulfilled. In other families it is different. Children are allowed and expected to have needs and, not only that, but to make their needs clear to others in the family. The former scenario creates adults out of touch with their needs, or who experience guilt or self-loathing at the thought of having needs. The latter scenario results in people comfortable with their needs and able to clearly express them. Of course, there is a spectrum of possibilities between these two.

You will have learned about your own needs and those of other family members during your childhood. It is important to remember that these experiences will influence how you perceive your needs. They will also have an impact on your comfort levels when it comes to asking other people to meet needs that you have.

Let's look at some different needs – they're not right or wrong, just different.

Tom's needs

Tom was a very affectionate guy. He hugged his friends and family hello and goodbye and would pet any dog or coo at any baby in his vicinity.

Tom had been dating Tracy for about a month when he realized that Tracy was not very affectionate. She might kiss him goodbye when they parted after a date (if he initiated it), but that was the extent of her physical affection. She never reached out to hold his hand, never touched his arm in a conversation or put her arm around his shoulder.

One day he mentioned his observations to Tracy, who replied that she was not at all comfortable being physically affectionate or demonstrative. She grew up in a family where no one hugged, kissed, held hands, or offered any physical contact or comfort at all. That was the way she was and she wasn't even going to try to be different. She added that if Tom was going to become more affectionate or physically demonstrative than he was already, it would not be comfortable for her.

This was a huge departure for Tom and a deal breaker. Their relationship had not even become sexual yet and already she had established a boundary of no touching that he was not willing to accommodate.

You probably know a person who is good at getting his or her needs met. How does this person communicate those needs in order to have them successfully met? Think about the words used to describe those needs. Although asking someone to fulfill a need of yours may feel uncomfortable to you, if you think about how others tackle this challenge, you will probably find that it is not as difficult to be on the receiving end as you thought. If this is the case, you will realize that it is quite acceptable to ask other people to meet some of your needs.

What kind of relationship do you want?

Do you want a long term commitment or are you simply looking for casual dating or companionship? Knowing what kind of relationship you want is crucial before beginning your online dating experience and selecting a dating site. Some sites cater to the more serious-minded seekers who are in the market for true love and a lifetime connection. Others are perfect for you if you are not there yet, and simply want to date for awhile.

What are your relationship requirements?

These are your deal breakers; they are non-negotiable, black or white. If they are missing in a relationship – watch out. A few examples of relationship requirements are love children, love pets, mutual respect, addiction free, financial responsibility, shared spiritual/religious beliefs. If your relationship requirements are not met, you will have to leave the relationship sooner or later. No matter how committed you are or how much love you feel or how badly you want it to work, that relationship is not going to make it. It's tough to examine a potential love relationship through the lens of the relationship requirement, but it's important. Be clear with yourself, don't apologize for your requirements and act accordingly.

Knowing who you are and what you want will attract the right person for you. When you get to know someone who aligns with your core values and goals and is able to meet your relationship needs and requirements, online dating is working for you!

EXERCISE

Part 1: Likes and Dislikes about My Life

Identify what you like/love about your life and what you don't like:

Things I Like / Love about My Life:

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Things I Don't Like / Love about My Life:

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What conclusions can I reach based on the above information?

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What are my insights?

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Part 2: Hidden Beliefs

Complete the following statements. What are your hidden beliefs? Don't **think** about the answer, just write what comes to mind immediately. That is your hidden belief!

Money is _____

Relationships are_____

When I meet new people I_____

I am _____

Love is _____

People think I am_____

I can't_____

My job is _____

My passion is _____

My biggest fear is _____

I am afraid people will find out I_____

Part 3: Awareness about My Beliefs

Review the first 2 parts of this exercise and identify the following:

1. **What are my top 3 insights about me and my beliefs?**
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
2. **What are my top 3 limiting beliefs that hold me back the most and what might be the source of each belief?**
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____

3. **Specifically, how do my top limiting beliefs show up in my life and hold me back from achieving my goals?**

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Eliminating My Top 3 Limiting Beliefs

1. **Write out the old, limiting belies. (**Example: "Once people get to know the real me, they don't like me, and end up rejecting me.")

   a._____

   b._____

   c._____

2. **Write the new beliefs in the present tense.** (Example: "People like me for who I am, and I make friends easily." Or using the progressive tense "I am feeling confident that people like and accept me for who I am.)

   a._____

   b._____

   c._____

Declare each new belief. Practice repeating the new beliefs each morning before you get out of bed and each night before you fall asleep. DO this for a MINIMUM of 30 days.

MY VALUES

We all have values that are aligned with our life purpose, whether we are aware of exactly what they are or not. When we live our life aligned with our values, we fulfill one of our highest needs: for our life to have meaning. When we are not living in alignment with our values, we eventually become bored, numb, or depressed. To experience relationship fulfillment and to make a good choice of a life partner, we must choose to be in alignment with our values.

1. Choose **your top five most important personal values.** Prioritize them, so that your most important value is first, followed by the second most important, and so on.

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2. Choose the **top five values that are most important for you to <u>share</u> with your life partner.** (Note: Your shared values do not need to be the same as your personal values.) Prioritize these values.
   Examples of values: *Acceptance, Authenticity, Balance, Commitment, Communication, Dependability/Reliability, Faith, Family, Financial security, Glexibility, Forgiveness, Fun, Generosity, Health/Fitness, Honesty, Kindness, Listening, Loyalty, Moderation, Nurturing, Parenting, Personal Growth, Predictability, Prosperity/Wealth, Self-sufficiency, Sex, Social status, Trust, etc.*

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RELATIONSHIP NEEDS

Many needs can be met from within you, but we are talking about the needs that must be met within your relationship – from outside of you. When a need is met by a partner, you may feel soothed, glad, loved, understood and valued. When a need is not met, you may feel hurt, angry, frustrated or rejected. Follow the trail of negatively charged emotions and you will discover themes and patterns – instances of "when this happens, I feel angry or frustrated." This is your subconscious letting you know that you have needs that are not being met. A few examples of relationship needs are affection, openness, communication, consideration, commitment, and trust. What are your needs in a relationship?

1. List your **functional needs:**

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2. List your **emotional needs:**

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3. For each of the above, apply the following test: **"Would I experience an issue each time this event did not occur?"**

Examples of functional needs: *Keeps agreements, organization, respect for my space, cooperation, shared domestic chores, financial responsibility, neatness/cleanliness, etc.*

Examples of emotional needs: *Affection, thoughtfulness, trust, commitment, understanding, compliments, loyalty, patience, appreciation, etc.*

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RELATIONSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Relationship requirements usually have the following characteristics:

- They are **non-negotiable** ; the relationship would not work for you if it were missing.
- They tend to be **black or white,** met or unmet, usually not much room for gray.
- While black or white, they also tend to be **subjective** what matters is if the requirement is met or not met to your standards.
- They tend to have much **power;** if you have to think about it, chances are it's a need.
- They are **behavioral events in the relationship, not traits of your partner.**

1. List your **relationship requirements.**

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2. For each of the above, apply the following test; "**Could a relationship possibly work for me if this one requirement were missing?"** meaning that if it were missing, you would have to leave the relationship sooner or later, no matter how committed you were, and how much you loved each other and wanted to make it work.

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3. Be honest and rigorous in testing each requirement. If you can come up with an exception, a way to stay and make the relationship work without meeting the requirement, then it is **not a requirement.**

Examples of requirements: *Addiction-Free, Family oriented, financial responsibility, Health mind, body, spirit, love children, love pets, physically compatible, respect each other's opinions, shared dreams for future, support each other's goals, etc.*

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