



Heartmind Connections

Feature Article: *Safe Strategies for Online Dating*

How does one stay safe when online dating? Everyone is online these days. Yes, everyone! My own Mom is online dating.

However, when the show, *The Women's Murder Club*, does an episode with an online dater as a killer and I just read an article in *Philadelphia* magazine on how this handsome, charming online dater posing as a doctor was raping young women, it can make you want to just stick to meeting men or women through your Aunt Mabel!

And yet online dating is here to stay. 7 million adults have gone on dates through online dating sites and 17% of those have entered long-term relationships or married their online partner.

With such staggering numbers, isn't it worth it to take your chances to meet Mr. or Ms. Right? Online dating has become very main stream. You just have to be smart about how you go about meeting people this way to prevent sticky relationship issues.

Follow my dating advice for women and men and you will improve your chances for a safe and successful online dating experience.

1. Beware of free sites and chat rooms. Scammers don't want to pay any money so they go to the free sites. They don't want to use their credit cards so they cannot be traced. Therefore, sign up for known, reputable sites – ones where you have to pay are the safest.
2. International dating increases your chances of getting scammed. There are criminal rings in Russia and other places that prey on lonely

Americans men! Never send money to a stranger- in another country or in the USA!

3. Do not give your personal details such as: home address, your phone number, your bank account number, your usual email address (get a separate email for internet dating), your credit card number, and your full name (until you feel you know this person is trustworthy).
4. Do not deposit a money order from your date in your bank account. If you do, then wait a couple of weeks for it to clear first.
5. Ask for more than one photo of a person you are interested in. A scammer will usually only has one picture of the girl that is their front.
6. Ask a lot of specific questions. Scammers get uncomfortable with these questions and will answer in a vague manner.
7. Be aware of someone claiming to fall in love with you right away- especially just after a couple of emails and IM-ing!
8. Trust your gut! If it feels wrong, it probably is. If it seems too good to be true, it usually is! You have these built-in instincts for a good reason.
9. Verify your information about your date by googling them- at least confirm their job. You may consider hiring a private investigator to validate key information about the person you are dating online.
10. Meet in a public place for the first time. Tell a buddy that you are going to meet a date with details: where and when. Have that person call you at a prescribed time to make sure you are alright. Call your buddy when you get home.

There are several sites that actually screen candidates for you. Some use match-makers who check out the person and verify key things about them. These sites pride themselves in insuring full integrity.

By follow the above dating tips for men and women, you will lessen your chances for putting yourself in danger. Online dating can be fun and rewarding. Remember to use your head!

If you enjoyed this newsletter, please pass it along to your friends and associates.

Do you enjoy reading the latest monthly Heartmind Connections ezine? I would love to hear your comments on my ezine and any suggestions you may have for future issues. You may contact me at: coachamy@heartmindconnection.com. Please feel free to forward to any of your friends who may be interested in learning more about dating and relationships.

Amy's Vision:

“As a personal life coach, my goal is to bring you the information you need to make intelligent and heartfelt decisions about the most significant relationship in your life. We all desire our best life possible. My hope is that you find this information helpful and achieve all your life long dreams.”

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