



Guest Manual

Purpose of Manual

This manual should be your guide through the Dating Course. More so it will assist you in challenging your thinking surrounding dating, and help you to make progress in your ambition to develop a more positive dating experience.

Goals of the Course:

- For you to be more aware of what you are looking for in yourself and in your date
- For you to understand the fears that block your dating experience
- For you to uncover your hidden motivations and unrealised expectations
- For you to date with the intention of creating a relational bond that involves attraction as well as connection
- For you to build practical foundations for a positive dating experience
- For you to know that breaking up can be the right thing to do, and that it should be done with respect and sensitivity
- For you to understand which attributes make for a healthy long-term relationship

Session 1 ‘Date Ready’

Exercise 1:

Defining Dating

*Investing in an **attractional** relationship, with a view to determining its **suitability** for **deeper commitment***

- How would you define dating, based on your past experiences?
- What do you want dating to look like?
- What or whom do you find attractive?
- What kind of date do **you** want to be?

Exercise 2:

Restating Reality

- Are you dating in secret? (if so, why?)
- Are you pretending to be friends with people who you find attractive (if so why?)
- Are you chasing after the next most beautiful person or a unique chemistry?
- Where are you looking to make initial dating connections?

**What kind of person do you want to date?
What characteristics are important to you?**

Are these characteristics that you have?

Exercise 3:

Negative Dating Behaviours

- I see negative dating behaviour in church

◆
All the time Never◆

Self Reflection:

- I tend to use negative comments to win people over

◆
All the time Never◆

- People win me over through the use of backhanded compliments

◆
All the time Never◆

- I tend to go after people that everyone else is going after

◆
All the time Never◆

- I date outside the church to avoid complications

◆
All the time Never◆

Session 2 'How to Date Well'

Exercise 1:

Relationship Metal Detectors

- ⇒ How have previous dates been similar?
- ⇒ How do your 'fantasy partners' differ to real people?
- ⇒ Who are you choosing? (what kind of person do you keep falling for?)
- ⇒ Why do you keep choosing them? (What is the motivation OR what are you hoping they will do for you?)

Exercise 2:

Dating Formula

$$\frac{\textit{Attraction} + \textit{Connection}}{\textit{Time}} = \textit{Relational Bonding}$$

⇒ Do you value connection as much as attraction?

⇒ Do you agree that a long term relationship needs more connection than attraction?

⇒ Think about past relationships, why did they end? Was there a lack of connection or attraction?

⇒ When there is greater connection but less attraction, do you allow time for the possibility of attraction to grow?

Think about **your** dating formula: Does it equal relational bonding?

Exercise 3:

'The Approach'

- I am direct in my interactions with others

◆
All the time Never◆

- I like it when people are direct with me

◆
All the time Never◆

- I prefer someone to have an indirect approach when talking to me

◆
All the time Never◆

- I approach others in an indirect way

◆
All the time Never◆

What qualities are you trying to show in
your approach to others?

What qualities are you looking for when
others approach you?

Exercise 4:

Preparation & Planning

⇒ Do you prepare or plan before asking someone on a date?

◆
All the time

◆
Never

Before going on your next date think about:

- Do you have a desire to date?
- Do you have a desire for the person you are thinking of going on a date with?
- Is the date appropriate?
- Does the person have a temperament that complements yours?
- Are there any social etiquettes you need to be aware of before you go on a date with this person?

Then Consider:

- Time, Place, Company & Activity.

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E

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Exercise 5:

Good Conversation Skills

If you think back over good conversations you've had with others, what was it about the person or conversation that was so good?

-
-
-
-

When having a conversation with someone you should aim to:

- * Ask good questions
- * Listen and reflect to the person so as to show your interest
- * Express empathy
- * Show emotional reasoning
- * Avoid self-promotion
- * Speak highly of others

Session 3 ‘Your Relationship Future’

Exercise 1:

Emotional Bonding

- Would you give a person at least 7 cumulative hours of dating before you make a judgment of compatibility?

◆
All the time Never

- Do you allow yourself to be vulnerable when dating?

◆
All the time Never

- If you avoid being vulnerable or open are you able to explain why?

What strategies can you use to increase your confidence to be open and vulnerable with others?

Exercise 2:

Relationship Scaffolding

Think about current/past relationships...

- Who is/was the one putting in all the effort?
- What kind of dependence is/was there?
- Is/was there an equal give and take?
- Does your relationship scaffolding include: time, proximity, touch, faith, activity, conversation, storytelling and prayer?
- If not, what is missing?

Exercise 3:

Is there a FUTURE

Faith

Unity

Trust

Understanding

Respect

Equality

Exercise 4:

Toxic Reasoning

Expectation Error

- What expectations do you have regarding your future partner?
- Are these expectations useful or realistic?

Excitement Fallacy

- Are you allowing yourself to move from excitement (adrenaline) to emotional bonding (oxytocin)?

The Faith Fail

- Do you feel that you are compromising your relationship with God when you are in a relationship?

The Trapped Trap (FOMO)

- Are you continually going after that which is new?

Don't let Toxic Reasoning **hijack** your opportunity for a long-term relationship

Exercise 5:

When is breaking up right to do?

When there is:

- Mistrust not trust
- Hurt (physical or sexual)
- Conflicting values
- Loss of freedom to worship
- Controlling or manipulative behaviour
- Concerned friends or family
- Persistent emotional distress
- Friendship not relationship

If a break up is needed, don't forget
your SPLITIQUETTE

Exercise 6:

There is a future when...

S

eeeking to grow in love and trust

T

aking time to listen and understand

A

live in faith and fellowship

Y

ou are becoming authentically 'YOU'

**A healthy long term relationship should bring out the
best in you, so ask yourself:**

- What is this relationship doing to me?
- Are love and trust growing?
- Do we listen to and understand each other?
- Am I alive in my faith?
- Am I plugged into a community?
- Do I feel like ME?

Notes

