

Title: the path to a positive dating experience
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Date: 25 Aug 2010
Time: 20:30



**Take it slow, get to know, with clear boundaries.*

The love engine

Eros love – obsession, mystery, allure, excitement and passion.

Agape concerns a mature and stable kind of love – solid, enduring, and providing a sense of security.

***Brain relocation phenomenon:** being too physical, too quickly. It breaks down the normal friendship developing part of the relationship and passion takes over. The brain is relocated and nobody is thinking clearly anymore.

Lasts three to nine months. **The infatuation must first pass before real love can grow.

Romantic love is a temporary glue that gives us time to evaluate the person we are with, to consider the more important issues of character and compatibility.

Take it slow

**Speed on the fast lane kills, and also speed on lovers lane kills.*

Study (Kansas State University) *“couples who had dated for more than two years scored consistently high on marital satisfaction.”*

Reason for most couples to divorce? Took it too quickly.

***Take it slow, get to know.**

Three reasons to take it slow:

1. **You need time to get to know somebody**
2. **You need time to bond**
3. **You protect yourself from getting attached too quickly** *Short-term pleasure, long-term pain.*

Six slow-motion dating strategies

1. **Make the two-year commitment** – from first date to wedding.
2. **First date short and casual**
3. **Don't volunteer too much information up front**
4. **Delay physical affection**
 - a. **Refrain from kissing for at least first three months** or as long as possible...
 - b. *If you allow a man to have his way with you, you will never, ever be respected by him.*
5. **Stay connected with your friends**
6. **Don't mention the “M” word** – too much pressure!

Clear boundaries

A healthy dating relationship requires good, solid, and well-defined relational boundaries.

Boundaries are about drawing lines.

***You do not belong to one another until you are married.**

Take it slow, get to know. Set clear boundaries.

1. **Your emotions belongs to you**

Don't allow your partner to completely run your life for you. Your emotions belong to you.

Don't completely surrender your whole inner self to the other person.

****Dating without boundaries:** spend too much time together. Isolated from other people. Surrender our hearts and lives almost completely to one another. Have no life outside of that person. It is dangerous.

2. Your body belongs to you

***boundaries move** - little by little until you have gone too far.

Say "no"!

- **Set boundaries now** – before the time.
- **Sex before marriage? You become One.** Yet if that happens before marriage, then you are in trouble. Why? Outside of God's will. Bitterness of the Spirit can set in.
 - **It affects the sex within marriage** – often the woman is not interested inside marriage.
 - **Many times sex before marriage reduces intimacy instead of building it.** Pseudo-intimacy.
 - **Sex before marriage causes people to feel bad about themselves, destroys self-esteem, self-respect, and plagues us with guilt and disappointment.**
- **Real intimacy requires hard work, honesty, mutual self-disclosure and commitment.**
- **Not just body. Whole being. Spirit, soul and body.** Sex is huge. Sex is only blessed inside marriage.
- **Leave sex for later.**
- **If you have made mistakes in this area before.** God can restore it all.

Root of Bitterness?

Hebrews 12:14–17 (NLT) ¹⁴ *Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord.* ¹⁵ *Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.*

- **Work at living a holy life** – start now already.
- **Look after each other** – accountability. Open your relationship.
- **Root of bitterness:** this follows when we don't live a holy life, especially in relationships
 - **Disappointments in relationships.** Especially overstepping physical / emotional boundaries.