

Dating and Love

A. Dating

During adolescence, the social circle of the youngsters will be broadened and dating will become one of the many social activities.

Through dating, you can get to know about yourself more and also learn how to get along well with others.

Different categories of dating

1. Group dating

This is the commonest type of dating among youngsters.

- Advantages: - It helps to build up friendship and provides an opportunity for finding your soul mate.
- You can reflect on the problems and feelings identified during group meeting, and find out ways to accept others and express yourself appropriately.
 - You can identify and understand more about your own strengths and weaknesses.
 - You can learn about the psychological differences between boys and girls, and in turn learn about how to get along well with the opposite sex.

2. Individual dating

Individual dating is not just limited to dating between lovers. Individual dating may involve friends of the opposite sexes coming together for a common interest, or friends wanting to know more about each other and develop a good friendship.

Attitudes of dating

1. Respect each other
2. Be honest and be your own self
3. No cheating and do not take advantage of others

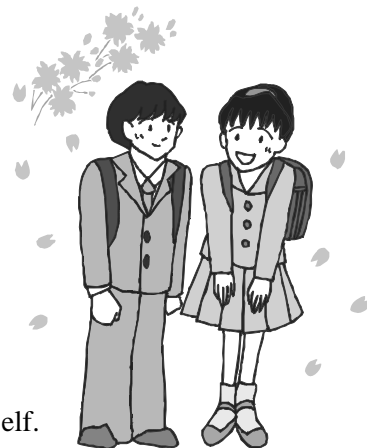
Six Wrong Motives about Dating

Dating per se is a good activity. But if you do not have a correct motive, dating may result in a lot of misunderstandings; moreover you may hurt others and yourself.

1. Peer pressure: Because most of your friends have a partner, you also want to have one.
2. To show-off: To show-off to others that you have many dates.
3. To evade problems: Due to the difficulty in facing family or academic problems, youngsters may use dating as a means to evade other problems.
4. Taking advantage: Some youngsters enjoy dating because they can get some free entertainments.
5. Wanting be mature: Some youngsters think that individual dating represents maturity.
6. Fascination about love: Due to the idealistic presentations in films and novels, youngsters have a lot of dreams and fascinations about love and they want to experience it.

General Advices

The mind of young people is continuously maturing, and their views, attitudes and values will change with time. Therefore, it is not advisable to choose your partner casually or prematurely and miss out on the chance to widen your social circle. If you cannot identify any suitable partner at this point of time, you should instead participate more in group activities, make more friends and develop different interests. Through these group activities, you will meet many people of different personalities. Get to know your potential partner well before you start individual dating.



B. Love

When you first identified a potential partner, you should spend time to learn more about him/her and understand him/her. This will help you to determine whether he/she is suitable as a marriage partner. At this time, you are in love..... But during this period, beware not to fall into the following traps:

Love traps

1. Blinded by love

Many people who are in love think that their partners are perfect without any shortcomings. You have to be very careful about this. Perhaps it is because you are too attracted by your partner to the extent that you cannot see any of his/her weak points; it could also be that your partner is trying to cover up his/ her shortcomings, or to change his/her habits temporarily to suit you. In fact, nobody is perfect. Partners should respect each other and accept each other's merits and faults. It is not advisable to hide your shortcomings; as time goes by, your partner will eventually discover your true self.

2. Preoccupied with romance

Most young people enjoy romance, however, if you are too preoccupied with having a romantic time, you may not have enough time for in-depth communication and mutual understanding. In addition, if you date too frequently, this may adversely affect your school performance, social activities and the time with your family.

3. Intimate behaviour

Young people should not get too intimate when they spend time alone with their partners. Over intimate behaviour will lead to uncontrollable sexual desire. Pre-marital sexual intercourse may result in pregnancy and many other problems, for example, the responsibilities of being a parent, the social pressure and the risk of school discontinuation.

4. Lack of communication

When you are in love with somebody, it is important for you to communicate with each other and be honest. Otherwise, misunderstanding and mistrust may result. For instance, if you think you need to have some privacy to develop your own interests, you have to communicate your needs to your partner frankly to minimize misunderstandings.

Avoiding sexual urge

Whichever gender you are, sexual desire can be suppressed and controlled. You should not be afraid to say 'no' to your partner if you do not want to have sex with him/her. A person with principle would be respected. If your partner is angry about your refusal, you should seriously consider whether he/she deserves your love.

To avoid having sexual urge:

1. Avoid staying with your partner alone in dark and quiet places.
2. Mutually agree on the acceptable level of intimacy. It is important to respect each other when making this agreement.

Conclusion

Love should not be blind and irrational, rather it should be based on frank and honest communication, mutual respect and caring. Proper love should enable the partners to mature, to face adversity together, to complement each other and to bear responsibilities. At the same time, they should also be able to broaden their knowledge and make positive progress in terms of academic achievement, social and family relationships.

Not all relationships will progress to marriage. There are chances that partners will break up. When you break up, it is normal that you will feel sad, but it is really no big deal as love is only part of your life. Instead you should accept the fact, think about why the relationship failed, focus on how to improve yourself and return to a normal life with normal social activities.

