

Two Less Fish

(Steve's answers in blue and Lisa's in pink)

Why the internet to find love?

If you do what you've always done, you'll get... Well, that and that I heard some success stories from someone younger who said I was old/outdated/minority if I DIDN'T look on-line.

Why not? I was tired of being set up on the cast asides of my friends' friends, and the bar thing just wasn't working.

Does it make a difference if you pay for a dating site?

Only did the one...POF...it was free. I wasn't interested in E Harmony, having to fill out a long Questionnaire and having matches based on that.

Nope, not one bit. I actually found the paid sites worse. There are less people willing to pay when there are so many decent free options, so your pool is smaller when you have to pay. I heard the worst was "it's Just Lunch"....VERY expensive and terrible! Plus, the free ones are funny from a voyeur perspective. It was fun scrolling through profiles to get a sense of people and what makes them tick. You can't do that on a \$\$ site. (Just be sure to click the option in your account set-up where people can't see you've viewed them.....or else be prepared for A LOT of strange notes)

What do you like/hate when you look at someone's profile?

Good pictures are vital....diverse ones...not the same self-posey pics taken 8 different angles or pics from a billion years ago. Humour! Sell a little of what the experience will be like. Don't write a 12 page novel about yourself and what you're expecting and end it with..."I really just want a casual meet, be friends and take it from there." Really. I wrote profile in 5 mins and was very conversational...I didn't over think it. I got a lot of good feedback about my profile from people. Those who knew me said yup, that's you. Your profile is the first meeting really...market yourself a bit.

If there are no pictures or even just one.....it makes people wonder what you are hiding. The countless stories of people showing up 10lbs heavier and half the hair are also frustrating. You aren't doing yourself any favours by representing yourself incorrectly. On the flipside, a sense of humour is key. Just being "normal" is a huge plus. There are SO many profiles where guys mention how "sex is important", etc. EWW. Online dating still has a bit of that creep-factor, so don't use words like, naughty, frisky, and such. It just sends the wrong message.....unless that's what you're looking for. Oh, that and very poor grammar. The amount of people who misuse "there, their and they're" or "you're and your" is outstanding. Your profile is your 1st impression, and typos just aren't cool. You are selling yourself, people! If you are careless on a profile, which takes 10 minutes to set up, it reads as lazy and they'll most likely go on to the next. Every single one of my friends who have tried online dating say the same thing, so be sure to do a spell check. Think of it as your personal resume!

Best dating experience?

Beers at Stellas. She was a little hung-over, and had road rash on her leg from going over on her wedgies in the gravel in front of the Roxy the night before. Of course I had to marry her...lol. But to her credit, she didn't whine about it or let onto it. She sucked it up, had some personality, but not overbearing or trying too hard...just real and casual.

I'd say the above, but more so our 2nd date. We had a 3 hr coffee date at Starbucks a few days later. He said he "felt like he could talk to me forever". The date itself was just lovely and normal. He spilled coffee everywhere, I dropped juice on my tee shirt, but it was still awesome. I got the feeling he wanted to kiss me at my car afterwards, but we kept chatting and the moment passed. He didn't force it, as I think we both knew there would be another opportunity. That was important to me, as it proved he liked me for me, and wasn't in it for some cheap thrills or anything. I told my sister in law that afternoon that he was the guy I was going to marry. 6 months later I was wearing a ring! Note: (Ahem, but it was actually 5 months later) Ummm, actually 5 and a half. 5 ½s...

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Worst dating experience?

My fiancé was only the 2nd person I met on line.

How much time do you have? I went on a coffee date with somebody once, and he told me he "wasn't very ambitious". Nice. Or then there was the guy who dropped me off in a snow bank after our datebut still tried to kiss me. He didn't feel like driving me home because traffic was bad, and he was getting road rage. Funny thing about him is he asked me out again. No thank-you. Hmmm, then there was the guy who told me after dinner he had "explosive diarrhea", has a low sex drive and may be infertile. He texted and called me for days wondering what went wrong. Note to daters: do not use the word explosive + diarrhea EVER in the same sentence. You'd think that was pretty self explanatory, no? In a nutshell, they all had issues, but that's the chance you take.

What do you find the most frustrating about internet dating?

I got asked to meet by all these creepy chicks, some getting upset if I didn't respond to the mssg's right away. Relax people. And POF tries to pre-group. That wasn't working, so you have to do some work to find what you're looking for and not just rely on them thinking they know what you want.

The unknown was the worst. You always think, this could be the one....but it usually never is. As long as you do your homework and be smart about it, the worst case scenario is an awkward coffee and some more hysterical stories for a girls-night. And because nobody ever remembers anyone's name, all of them have taken on a nickname of their own....there's snowbank guy, poop guy. It's dating folklore!

Do you hide the fact that you use a dating site? If yes, why?

I think I'd still prefer if it were a more natural way like a friend of a friend/family, but no! The stigma is over. When you're not meeting the right people through your friends or work, it's time to try new things.

I felt strange about it at 1st, but not really. All of my single friends were online dating, so you just get used to it. I think the stigma does still exist....but more for women than men. In the end it's all about expanding your social circle.

Do you have any tips/warnings for potential internet daters?

- Meet somewhere comfortable for both. Don't go where you'll run into a hundred people you'll know.
- It's perfectly ok to meet and get out quickly...meaning you don't have to invest money and time if you're not interested. There are a lot of lonely people out there and they see a coffee meeting as a chance to spend all day with you. Don't get sucked into that if you're not interested. Be respectful, but be strong.
- If you're interested, let it be known/act accordingly without seeming desperate. I waited a few days to respond after the 1st meeting and as I found out later, a little more 'forwardness' on the timing would have been better. I could have lost her ☹

It is VERY easy to become disgruntled. I tried a few sites here and there.....and after a string of bad dates gave up a few times. It really isn't any worse than meeting in a bar, and your chances of a bad date are just as equal..... you just have a higher volume of them when online. As a woman, be careful.....tell somebody where you're going and don't go to his house or let him over to yours right away. He might be a total closet perv, so be careful. A day date is nice, because A: you see them in natural light and B: its quick and easy with less chances of it dragging on and on.

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Any hilarious stories?

(see 1st meeting/date. I can laugh now cause, well, you know, but on our coffee date she talks about above, I'm telling my 30th bday kidnapping story with great vigor, meaning the hands were flying, and then, splooooooosh....a 3/4 full grande coffee goes flying onto the floor, narrowly, but incredibly luckily missing her white T-shirt. Whew! THAT would have been one her girls would have heard and laughed about...). (Don't worry, we still laughed.....☺)

I have thousands.....but one that stood out the most was when a few of us got messages from the same guy. We thought he was a total jerk....had comments about making sure we were honest about our size, fitness levels, etc, and that he "chose" us as somebody he would like to see in person. Realllllly.....so, after a few white wine spritzers we all agreed to meet him for coffee within a day or so of each other. Here's the kicker, we all told the same story.....that we were independently wealthy because our Dad invented the cat leash. Just imagine the 1st time he heard the story.....he's thinking....this is crazy, but cool! A rich girl! Then imagine date with bachelorette # 2.....and then #3.....needless to say, we never heard from him again.

Just remember it's all in good fun. Good luck out there, ladies – I pass the torch on to you. ☺

Steve and Lisa are getting married in September, 2010.