



POINTS OF VIEW

What If We Were Completely Honest With Our Dates?

We crave to be seen and loved as we are, but we simultaneously project stories that contradict who we really are. So we partner with people we want to change and blame them for not changing already.

FEBRUARY 23, 2021

Last year, I agreed to help a close male friend find love during lockdown.

He had been single for years and arduously seeking a partner on Tinder with no success. Being myself active in one of Berlin's international dating communities on Facebook, exclusive to women, I suggested we try his luck there. We drafted a matchmaking post for him. He wrote his own description, and I wrote a short story about how I see him. I pasted the two stories in a single post and waited.

We didn't have to wait long for the post to backfire. As the forefront of all interaction, I took the feedback with both curiosity, and a grain of salt, but couldn't help notice the aggressiveness addressing my friend's "checklist". We came to wonder if it was the contents of the list, the gender of its authors, or its specificity, that met our post with harsh disapproval and critique.

Dating coaches encourage clients to list a set of top five non-negotiable traits they desire in a future partner, and another five, which are flexible. This is not easy. My friend's list briefly

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I will say it again. My tweets are not meant to be universal. They will not nor cannot account for every reality. If something I say doesn't include or apply to you that doesn't invalidate your truth.

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"In attempting to please everyone, we lose ourselves and our own perception of attractiveness. Worse, we start to think there's no one for us."

In the film *The Invention of Lying* (2009), set up in a fictitious world where lies do not exist, Ricky Gervais picks up Jennifer Garner, his date, at her apartment, and she notoriously responds: "You're early. I was just masturbating."

He goes on to say, "That makes me think of your vagina. How are you?"

"A bit frustrated at the moment. Also, equally depressed and pessimistic about our date tonight", she replies.

Which brings the concept of radical honesty, a practice of always being completely honest and refraining from telling even white lies. Whether that means admitting to your date that you're feeling nervous, or you're worried they might be judging you or even admitting you thought about cancelling that morning. In short, *Honest dating* gives you permission to say what you're thinking and be yourself.

Radical honesty in dating validates the idea that there is, indeed, someone for anyone.

Political conscience in dating is necessary but can skew our judgment of wants. Our attraction patterns are rooted in our DNA and bound to a host of factors like upbringing, cultural

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Our wants become shameful, so we deny them, and start to project what we think the others want us to be. When our personal lives are put to public forums where nobody knows our story but everybody has an opinion on it, human beings become a series of psychological and social constructs to be approved or disapproved of.

How to start honouring our wants without feeling shame?

CARNIVOROUS QUEER

ISO SAME

me: emotionally available
tomboy femme with a heart
tender as a grass-fed
steak (charred on the
outside, rare on the
inside). y^{our} hungry
boi who can see right
through me, & isn't so
concerned with side

"We crave to be seen and loved as we are, but we simultaneously project stories that can contradict on many levels who we really are. So we partner with people we want to change and blame them for not changing already."

Psychotherapist, Esther Perel spells Intimacy as into-me-see. One can argue that we should not be vulnerable, or intimate, with someone we've just met. But intimacy is not built on secrecy: it's built on trust and safe boundaries. How can we allow intimacy to develop if we won't allow another to really see into us?

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a poor fit for my needs, only to entertain the idea that something will change. But this is the greatest betrayal, to our partners, and mostly, to ourselves. The process of discovering who we are and what we want in another is hardly a linear journey. It's something we learn with time and experiences, as we emotionally mature. While we question our past choices, we can also view them with compassion.

During one of my lockdown walks, an attractive, friendly stranger approached me at noon, the street. I looked away and walked because due to my upbringing, part of me had internalized the idea that only creeps approach women like that. As he walked what I deemed a walk of shame, I looked back in frustration, wishing I had positively responded while questioning if he was, indeed, a creep.

My friend did not meet anyone in the dating group. He quit Tinder and decided to start approaching women in the real world, once lockdown is over. This inspired me, after much resistance, to rejoin the battlefield and look for love myself. After I joined OkCupid, I was pleasantly surprised when one of the first people I spoke to asked the very vulnerable question: What are you currently struggling with, if you care to share?

I also searched online for the beautiful stranger I rejected and started a Craigslist missed-connections style thread. I could not find him, but the positive feedback inspired me to brave the wilderness and continue to seek love from a place of honesty.

Being radically honest has nothing to do with being a jerk or crossing other people's boundaries. Many people can suit us. Do we need to start a complicated dance with those who don't? *We're all mad here* . It's important to find someone who matches our level of crazy. If we can communicate that sincerely, lovingly, and respectfully, we may find a way to naturally and unapologetically "put ourselves out there".

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@chrissyteigen

hey, not everything I say on my
twitter is going to be relatable to you
because it is my life and my twitter
and my stories.



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