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5 Tips To Be CAREFUL On A Dating App

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More often than not, online chemistry has zero relation to real life chemistry, warns relationship and wellness coach Pooja Khera.



Illustration: Dominic Xavier/Rediff.com

Let's be real.

We live in a digital world and just like most of our other life dependencies, we have ushered into the era of 'Well, we live online; so why not date online too?'

Having navigated my fair share of cheesy pick up lines and bad dates, I know from personal experience as well that online dating can be just as complicated as dating IRL aka In Real Life.

If you are not careful while finding a partner/s (long term or short term), the results can sometimes be catastrophic as we saw with the Delhi murder that has shaken us all up.

Is online dating safe? Well, it is an endless sea of fish of all kinds after all.

Take it from me, there are plenty of tips to be safe while navigating the potentially time-sucking and unknown online dating world.

But my advice comes with a caveat though. While there is no definitive rule book to dating, you may refer to these tips to make the experience safe.

1. A barely filled out profile is a red flag

An online profile is a quick place where one can highlight some very important aspects of their life and personality.

Try to look at what the person is trying to show with their profile.

Are they just trying to show off with their swanky destination pictures or is it just too perfect to be true?

I'm not saying someone will always have a well rounded profile. But if you look carefully enough, you will get clues to whether this is even worth your time or not.

2. Online chemistry isn't something to be taken too seriously

It is tempting if your chats and messages sound cute or something straight out of a rom-com.

But here's the cold truth: More often than not, online chemistry has zero correlation to real life chemistry.

It takes a whole different effort to know someone when you meet the person actually. What's worse is if the chats have gone way too long before the meeting, you build too many expectations of a person.

Try and not get carried away in trusting someone too quickly or have too much basis on online interactions.

3. Ask for a video call before actually meeting

I know for a lot of people, the idea itself is eerie, thanks to the times covid brought in and it may even sound gross!

But catfishing is a reality, let's not forget that.

If you ask nicely, in a proper manner, this ensures that an in person meeting does not get awkward for both of you and least of all, you are meeting the real person!

4. Watch out for demanding and controlling behaviour

First impressions can be revealing.

It is actually possible to detect some red flags for unhealthy behaviour even at the very beginning.

For example, if they are making demands early on -- maybe to meet or hang out at their place rather than go out somewhere together or if they expect you to change your schedule just to accommodate theirs, or to cancel existing plans to meet them.

These types of behaviour can be the beginning of other controlling behaviour.

If someone starts controlling and demanding at the beginning itself, then these are red flags you should not be ignoring as the person is showing you their real personality.

5. Sharing personal information or responding to financial help is a big NO

No matter how convincing the reasons sound or no matter how genuine you think the person is, never share personal financial information or personal identity information.

Never respond to lending money or cries for financial help whether it is domestic or international.

This is a clear red flag that you are going to be deprived of your information or money as the case may be.

You should not only block such users, but also report them.

All dating sites are obligated to take notes of such complaints and pass on information to the required authorities.

Let's face it, online dating is the new form of dating for many people. But just like any other part of technology, it has its pros and cons.

Consider and prioritise your safety first, and enjoy the fun. Who knows you might have your own successful Cinderella tale to narrate sometimes!

- [**You can read Pooja Khera's earlier columns here**](#)

Pooja Khera holds a PGDM in human resources from Amity University and is a happiness and wellbeing coach, certified by the university of Yale.

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