

## NAVIGATING ONLINE DATING FOR THE BUSY ATTORNEY

*Lifestyle, Personal Relationship Mgmt*

Being a preoccupied, stretched to the limit professional while trying to have some semblance of a love life can be a daunting task.

Enter: *online dating*. I have heard its praises as well as nightmares associated with getting involved with a cyber girlfriend or boyfriend. Here are the pros and cons as well as some tips on navigating what seems to be a necessity in the life of an overworked professional.



### The Pros to Online Dating

Moving up the ladder of success can involve transfers and that means moving cities. Being in a new area with no friends or support system leaves one looking for love at a disadvantage. Online dating provides that connection. Let's say you leave the office at 8:00 pm and are too mentally exhausted to try and meet someone and not only meet someone but a person you are compatible with. Scanning the dating sites can be done in your pj's and allows you to limit your focus to people that interest you. Whether it's religious, sports, ethnicity, etc. it can streamline the process. Another plus to online dating is that some people are not outgoing socially and the emailing, texting and calling can help ease them into the dating world.

Even if you are not having to move your residence for work, you could have to travel quite a bit or spend a period of time in a certain area. Online dating provides you the ability to meet other people outside of your zip code and Bam! an instant social life instead of eating alone in an unfamiliar city.

## The Cons to Online Dating

Not as many, but worthy of your attention. Emails, phone calls and texts can lure you into a false sense of familiarity and the feeling of being in a relationship. A word of caution, you only know what he/she has told you. That old adage, "Actions speak louder than words" most assuredly applies here. Don't get swept up in the romance of it all until you meet this person and realize he/she is legit.

I had a client describe his online dating experience like "shooting fish in a barrel." Understand that you are not the only person winking. The problem here is there are too many hits and people are always thinking there is someone better coming up. You need to allow yourself enough time to get to know the person on the other side of the screen or you might be passing up a great guy/gal.

All of the hits, winks and flirting can be fun and an ego boost but it also has the potential to be a blow to your ego, a disappointment and dangerous.

### Here are 10 things to take into consideration:

1. Approach things cautiously. Remember their online persona might not match their true self.
2. Texting and emailing too long might cause either of you to lose interest.
3. Don't give out personal information, always meet in a very public place and you drive there and back.
4. Don't waste time answering people without a photo.
5. Look carefully at their screen name. Do you really want to answer a message from ComeNGetMe or WhoseYourDaddy if you want a lasting relationship?
6. Red flags are red flags and do not negate them or make excuses for them no matter how attractive he/she is. Trust your gut.
7. In writing your profile, reflect your true self and not what you think someone will want to read. Come across as a positive person; say what you want instead of what you don't want in a mate. One sounds positive, the other negative and abrasive.

8. Don't take things personally. Not everyone is going to be attracted to you but it doesn't mean you're not attractive. Everyone is looking for different things.
9. Keep an open mind and be realistic. Be open to variations of your "check list".
10. Change your perspective. Instead of going out on your first date with the intent of this being "the one", view it as just going to meet someone new and to have fun. That way, you are not setting yourself up for a disappointment.

In today's society with all the demands put on us, online dating can be helpful in lining up potential dates but I leave you with this one thought... if you are too busy to meet people, are you too busy to sustain a meaningful relationship? Do you have balance in your life?

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Debbie Martinez, MA is a certified, mindful life coach specializing in divorce (aka: heartbreak coach). She professionally coaches clients on how to avoid the breakup backlash and live better, not bitter. As a Supreme Court Certified Family Mediator trained in collaborative divorce, Debbie gives clients the tools they need to successfully untie the knot and stand strong in the wake of adversity. She brings her formal training and life experience into her coaching practice to empower and educate clients through their divorce journey and onto new beginnings.

Debbie received an MA from the University of South Florida in education and was a Behavior Specialist for the school system for five years before launching her private coaching practice. Debbie is a firm believer in giving back to the community and is involved with various charitable organizations in the Miami area where she resides with her two children. To learn more, please visit [www.thepowerofdivorcecoach.com](http://www.thepowerofdivorcecoach.com).