

Curiosity Is a Very Helpful Tool in the Dating World



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I recently read a book by Hollywood producer Brian Grazer called *A Curious Mind: The Secret to a Bigger*

Life. The book's point is that curiosity is a valuable tool for learning about people and the world...and for making life richer and more interesting.

In the book, Grazer discusses how he had "curiosity conversations" when assembling the cast and crew for the many TV shows and films he produced over the years. Asking people to talk about things related to their background or experiences that piqued his natural curiosity usually resulted in more in-depth conversations and insights than typical interviewing techniques.

I firmly believe the same is true in the dating world. I'm a naturally curious person myself, and I usually ask many questions when I first meet people—and later too—because I'm truly interested in learning more about their life, outlook, philosophies, etc. When I was unattached and crossing paths with new men all the time through online dating sites or at meetup groups or singles activities, it was fun learning about them. And the way I did that was by asking for more detail about whatever we were discussing.

Most of the time, that facilitated great two-way dialogues in which we each asked questions and learned some fascinating things about each other. I really love it when someone is curious enough to ask follow-up questions about me and my interests.

But there's a fine line between being curious and being "nosy". Some people find it intrusive if you ask a lot of questions. They might feel their privacy is being violated. They might not feel comfortable talking about themselves. Or

they might wonder why you want to know so much about them. In general, the latter group of people aren't naturally curious themselves—which is why they can't understand your desire to know more.

In the early stages of meeting and dating people, women are often the ones who ask most of the questions. It's their nature to use conversation to build intimacy. Not so much with men. They talk primarily to convey information. I've heard men complain that women asked so many questions at a first meeting that they felt like they were on a job interview or being "interrogated." Women have no idea men feel this way because they themselves usually enjoy it when someone is curious about learning more about them.

There are certainly some women who use the first meeting to gather the vital "stats" they want on a man about his profession, relationship status, living situation, financial security, etc. And I can understand why some men think women are prying and maybe even "gold-digging" when they ask about these topics. But, more often than not, a woman is just trying to find out how compatible she might be with a certain man...how similar she and he might be in world view, lifestyle, interests, and values.

That was my sole intention when I asked new guys more than just a couple questions at a first and second meeting. The curious side of me was activated. To me, it was a fun adventure to learn what makes people tick and to discover what their stories could teach me about my own life.

How about you? Are you a naturally curious person? And do you think your curiosity

makes it easier to have easy-flowing, fun conversations when you're meeting new people in life and/or in the dating world? I definitely do!

Or are you less curious and thus have some trouble keeping a conversation going and/or feel awkward when meeting someone for the first time? If so, I can help.

Part of what I do as a dating coach is to help prepare people for the dating experience and to build confidence for dating. A big component of that is being comfortable enough in your own skin to be yourself and present yourself authentically to the new people you'll be meeting in the dating world—whether online or at singles groups or activities. And, in my opinion, a natural spirit of curiosity can be a big help in those situations.

If you feel less than confident about your conversation skills, I can offer you tips on "ice-breakers" and conversation starters that help you connect more easily with new people. I can support you as you strive to strengthen your ability to ask questions based on curiosity without sounding like an "interrogator". And, of course, as with all my dating coaching clients, I can guide you to places to meet other single people you'll have enough in common with that conversation is relatively easy—and less awkward.

Give me a call if you're curious about how to use curiosity as a tool to facilitate the getting-to-know-you process in the dating world. I love helping people like you have more success with dating—and this is a great way to do that!

Gayle Crist, M.S., has been a dating coach since 2005. She helps singles discover places to meet like-minded people, prepare to date again after divorce or widowhood, improve their dating confidence, and create online dating profiles. Gayle is also a motivational speaker and author of *How I Met My Second Husband Online at Age 50*. Information about her dating coaching services is at www.datingsuccesscoaching.com. You can reach her at 267-245-3023 or gayle@datingsuccesscoaching.com.



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