



Conscious Dating
Tele-Seminar Series Transcript

***Conscious Dating and Partner Compatibility:
How to Sort, Screen, and Test***

With David Steele, July 5, 2007

David: Welcome to Conscious Dating and Partner Compatibility: How to Sort, Screen and Test. Last month we covered Scouting, in our program on Conscious Dating Strategies: Where to Find Your Soul Mate, and tonight, we're going to cover the rest of the Four Steps for Conscious Dating, which are: sorting, screening and testing. So, the four steps for conscious dating are: scouting, sorting, screening and testing.

We are going to cover tonight, what to do once you identify a potential partner, including, "Conscious speed dating: how to determine future potential in five minutes or less," "How to avoid wasting time pursuing dead-end relationships," "So many singles, so little time: how to narrow the field to find the best prospects," "How to use the first date to lose the losers" -- and really, I don't like that term, it just sounds good -- but there's no losers, it's just a matter whether we're aligned or not. You want to find that out as soon as possible. The important difference between dating and a relationship, we'll talk about that and, "How to know: is this the one?"

I would very much like you to have the study guide in front of you for this seminar, it will really help you follow along, and you can print it out and take notes.

There's a download link at www.consciousdating.com/compatibility.htm That's <http://www.consciousdating.com/compatibility.htm>

It's funny, today I was talking to a newspaper reporter, and she was asking me, well, you know, scouting, sorting, screening and testing and requirements, needs, and wants. Where did you come up with this?

And I sort of hesitated, like I'm hesitating now, and said, well, ah, I kind of made it up! It's partially observation about what is happening out there as far as what works and doesn't work for singles, and it's partially about what makes sense to me if you're single and you'd like to find your life partner, how do you do that?

The top two questions that I get from singles are this: "How do I find my life partner?" They're just confused, it's a big wide world out there, and the old rules of dating and mating don't apply anymore and they don't know what the new rules are. How do I find my life partner? And the second most common question I get from singles is "where do I find my life partner?"

Well, shoot, there's a hundred and one million single adults in the US, 43 percent of the population, where to find eligible singles is not a problem, the problem is, where do I find singles that are highly compatible with what I'm looking for. And, we covered that last month in our program on Where to Find Your Life Partner.

So, tonight we're going to cover the rest of it. Looking at the study guide on page 1, the four steps for conscious dating are scouting, sorting, screening and testing. If you are ready and available for a committed relationship, you want to find your soul mate. You want a life partner in your life, you're ready for that next stage of your life.

This answers the question of how you find your life partner. Scouting is the process of finding somebody to meet. There's many ways for singles to do that. We scout on the Internet, we scout at the grocery store and the post office, we have our friends scout for us and set us up on blind dates, and really, the most common way that singles find their life partner, nowadays and throughout history, is through somebody they already know. So having your friends, family and community scout for you is a pretty good thing.

Sorting is the process of quickly determining if somebody you meet has potential for you. And we will talk today about exactly how to do that. Then, screening is the process of collecting information about this person that you're getting to know. It's sitting down for coffee, and asking questions and sharing your life story. It's talking on the phone, and exchanging emails. This is what we do anyway.

However, if you're doing it with intention, you're doing it to collect enough information to know that your requirements and your needs and your wants might be met, especially your requirements because those are the deal breakers. Any requirement that is not met means that the relationship is doomed. It's not going to work, so we have to look for those first.

And then testing is the process of actually getting an experience that your requirements might be met. Testing out the information you get. I've learned the hard way that testing the reality is pretty important because people aren't always what they say they are. Even if what they say about themselves is true, it doesn't necessarily mean that it's going to work for you.

An example I like to use is, let's say you play tennis and you're looking for a tennis partner. So you scout to find somebody that plays tennis. Maybe you do

that at your tennis club. You sort and identify people that are looking for tennis partners. You screen by giving people a call that you find that are looking for tennis partners and you talk with them. Testing might be playing a game of tennis with them.

Now just because somebody plays tennis doesn't mean that it'll be a pleasant experience for you. Let's say you play tennis with someone and they are just so bad, it is not a pleasant experience for you. Or they are so obnoxious and competitive that it's not a pleasant experience for you.

The requirement on paper is different from the requirement that you need to experience for your life and relationship to work.

A requirement is really a characteristic or trait of a relationship. It's the experience that you need to have that you require in the relationship. It's not really a trait of a person. It's that trait getting translated into the relationship.

It's a fine distinction, but it's an important distinction because especially in testing what we need to do is to evaluate whether our experience of this relationship works for us or not.

So those are the four steps for conscious dating. If you haven't seen or heard them before, they're in the Conscious Dating book. We've certainly talked about them enough, but for those of you who are new to the conscious dating model, welcome. Here's an introduction.

So on to page two of your study guide. Sorting strategy number one: "How to use conscious speed dating to determine whether someone has future potential in five minutes or less."

This is the Power Introduction. It's in the "Conscious Dating" book. It has to do with initiating a conversation with intention starting with small talk and sharing something important about yourself that is related to probably your most important requirement, and gauging this person's reaction, and then maybe asking something about them.

It is a form of speed dating. Speed dating is a five to eight minute conversation with somebody usually organized by a singles organization where you sit down at a table with another single and you have five minutes to determine whether this is a red light, green light, or yellow light for you.

Green light means "go" -- you want to follow it up and maybe exchange contact information. Yellow light means "not quite sure. There's promise here but I need more information." Red light means "no."

There are a lot of singles out there, so sorting is a critical activity because you

want to find somebody highly aligned with what you are looking for and it starts with your most important requirement.

For example, when I was single and looking, one thing I would do would be to share the fact that I have twin boys, young twin boys. I would find the earliest opportunity possible to share that fact.

Let's say I am having a conversation at a singles dance. We might dance and we might have a good time then I might look at my watch, and then I drop the bomb and say "Well, I have about another half hour then I have to go home and relieve the babysitter who is home with my young twin boys."

I would watch for the reaction I would get, and it would be pretty interesting. Some women would react like, "Oh, twin boys, that's so fun. You're so lucky!" and I know they love kids and maybe there's some possibility here that they wouldn't be overwhelmed by my energetic young twin boys.

And I've gotten other reactions, like, "Oh, twin boys. Do you ever get any time to yourself?" Based on that reaction I know that whoever's speaking sees children as an inconvenience, as something that gets in the way. And I know there's not quite enough alignment there. I'm not going to go down that path.

Whenever you share something personal about yourself like that, it opens the door and it becomes socially appropriate to ask them, "You got kids?" Then I get a bit more information about them, about something that's very real, something related to my requirements.

So that is a form of speed dating. I call it "Conscious Speed Dating" because we're not just talking about the weather. We're not just talking about things we like, what kind of movies we like to watch, what kind of food we like to eat, and the fact that we like walks on the beach and things like that. We have in mind a requirement and we want to check out our top one or two requirements and get that out of the way immediately.

Also during conscious speed dating or "the power introduction" you want to check in with your intuition or your gut. We have an inner wisdom. Our brain can pick up way more information than we can consciously process. So you want to really listen to what your gut reaction has to say, because it's more than just a feeling. It's all sorts of information based on non-verbal cues that you're not even aware of.

You might want to use a score. I've found this helpful. On a scale of zero to 100, or one to 10, where does this person fall for you? Let's say you use a scale of one to 10. And let's say this person you would give about a five. Well, there are a lot of singles out there. You're looking for the love of your life. Chances are when you first meet that person and you practice your conscious speed dating, you

would get an eight or nine or ten from that kind of person. The chances are if they score a five you should probably take a pass.

Now it doesn't mean you can't give people a chance. Certainly you want to give people a chance. However, in my experience - this is just me talking now, it's not scientific research - in my experience, when we do give people a chance, and we continue the conversation and we continue testing things out, we end up reinforcing our initial reaction. Think about it. This has probably happened to you. Whenever you've gotten an initial reaction, an initial hit on something, how many times have you not trusted yourself and given it more time only to find out that your initial reaction was the correct one for you?

So, chances are you'll be avoiding a lot of dead ends if you trust your initial reaction during conscious speed dating. Just a suggestion.

Now, moving on down to number three, sorting strategy number two: "how to initiate contact with that attractive guy or gal using the Rule of Three." The Rule of Three is my favorite strategy for initiating contact with people that are attractive to you. And if you think about it, this is what is most important to singles. A successful single is able to connect with people who they want to connect with. Go after somebody that's attractive to them. A shy, insecure, or unsuccessful single is going to wait to be approached, is going to be scared to take a risk. And if you want to be a successful single, it's a pretty necessary skill to go ahead and initiate contact with somebody that you're attracted to. And the strategy for doing that that I suggest -- one of them, I'm sure there are many of them -- but the one I've hit on that I like best is the Rule of Three.

The Rule of Three says that it takes at least three contacts for you to connect with someone and build up enough comfort level on both sides to know whether this is a possibility and to decide whether to move forward on it and get together for coffee or further the conversation. So it takes at least three contacts. Now the first contact, the very, very simple goal of the first contact is simply to disengage, pretty much as soon as possible; within five minutes or so, having left a positive impression.

That's it, and if you are truly attracted to someone and you see the long term benefits of using the 'Rule of Three', you don't want to use your first contact to scare them away. To get and give too much information that you and they can't assimilate all at once. If you truly are attracted to somebody and you're using the Rule of Three, the initial contact, you want it to be short and sweet and to break it off having left a positive impression of some kind.

So what is socially common and appropriate when you first initiate contact with somebody? Just being friendly, it could be the teller at the bank, it could be the cashier at the grocery store, it could be the little old lady next to you at the bus stop, or can be that hot guy or hot gal.

Wherever you are, whatever you do, say, "Hi," maybe introduce yourself, maybe make small talk, maybe ask a question; "Know what time it is?" "You know how to get to the movie theater from here?" And you're making small talk, "Oh, hot day isn't it?" Maybe pay a compliment like, "Oh that is a wonderful scarf, I really like that scarf, where did you get that?" So these are very, very common, very socially appropriate strategies; you will not turn anybody off if you are just following social convention. You're just being friendly.

And if this is hard for you, that means you're a bit shy and you haven't practiced these skills enough to be comfortable doing this and I would highly suggest that you practice this skill with people that you are not necessarily romantically, attracted to. Go ahead and be more friendly, practice being more outgoing with everybody you come in contact with. Make it game for yourself to initiate contact with people that you wouldn't ordinarily initiate contact with. So you're walking down the street and you see somebody watering their lawn; normally you would just pass right by, go ahead and say hi, act like a friendly neighbor.

We're social beings and we need social connection and this is how it starts, just by being friendly. We kind of lost the art in today's world, but it doesn't mean that's a good thing. And we can certainly get it back.

So that's the first contact, is just initiate contact and say hi and pay a compliment, initiate small talk, you want to break it off pretty quickly having just left a positive impression. You certainly want to introduce yourself and say your name; you want to ask their name, maybe you want to shake hands, you know, you're meeting each other for the first time. You're fellow travelers on this planet, sharing the same space at the grocery store or the bank or the sidewalk so you're just being friendly.

Then the second contact is where you share something a little bit more personal about you, kind of like we did in conscious speed dating and this can be the next day, could be the next week, it could be a half hour later.

Let's say you're talking a walk and you initiate contact with somebody watering their lawn. Let's say you circle the block and next time you come in front of their house you say hello again. So, you know that's a funny example, but it's an example.

If you're at a singles event then you can break off the first contact and say, "You know I'd like to mingle, I'll catch you later." And go ahead and get punch, or go to the bathroom, say hello to some other people, and then if you want you can get back with them. So the 'Rule of Three' can be applied over a matter of days, weeks or a matter of minutes.

The second contact you will say hello, you'll smile and it's like a reunion. You've

already made a connection, you already know their name, you will use their name. Say, you know, "Hi Sally." and you will remind them who you are, in case they forgot. "Remember me? I'm David." And then you will continue your small talk this time you will share something a little more personal say, "Oh yeah, I'm taking a break, I'm walking around the block, you know I got another half hour until I pick up my twin boys at school. So I decided to get some exercise."

And I'm going to watch her reaction as I mention that I have twin boys. And just like in conscious speed dating, the reaction will mean everything. It will tell me all that I need to know, generally and it gives me the open door to ask a question of her. "Hey, you got kids?"

So in the second contact, we are also going to spend about five minutes, and I'm going to learn something a little bit more real about Sally. And then I'm going to excuse myself. As tempting as it might be, I don't want to spend all day talking to Sally because I want to use the Rule of Three, I want to build up some comfort level. This is sorting now, and I want to get the third contact.

Now, the third contact is similar to the second contact. I'm going to initiate that contact, I'm going to share something more about myself, I'm going to ask something more about her, and by this time, when you initiate the third contact, it's like a reunion of old friends. You've had two other contacts. There's been smiles, there's been handshakes. You know their name, they know yours. You've shared something personal, you've had a meaningful connection in a very short amount of time, and the third contact, you're renewing that.

So by the end of that third contact, even though it's just small talk, even though you're just sharing a few things about yourself, by the end of the third contact, if you want to, if you're ready to, now's the time to suggest that you get together. "Hey, you know, I really enjoy talking with you. Would you like to get together for coffee sometime? Would you be interested and available for that?"

And I like the wording "interested and available". And by saying so, it gives this person permission to let me know if they're not interested or they're not available. I'm not attached. I don't want to push this person into getting together for coffee if they don't really want to, only if they're interested and available.

So if that's scary to you, get over it, you know? We need to stretch, we need to take a risk if we're going to be successful in any goal that we have in life and you're going to have to put yourself out there sometimes. And the more you do it, the easier it gets, the more comfortable it gets, so it's just a matter of practice.

So I would highly suggest practicing the Rule of Three. You can do this when you're networking, you can do it with people you're not attracted to, just want to be friendly with, and then you zero in on a target, somebody that you're attracted to, and go ahead and use it with them.

You can also extend the third contact, if you want, as long as you want. I mean, you can go a year, you can go five years in the third contact - initiating small talk, talking about something personal, sharing a little personal information then breaking it off, then coming back, then doing it again, then coming back. So you can really drag it out, if you want to.

The goal is to build enough comfort level for you and for them, that when you do initiate something else, like getting together for coffee, it won't be taken as an offense. It won't seem too pushy. It will just be taken as, you know, a friendly offer, you know - no pressure. So if it takes you five contacts to do that, that's just fine. What I've found is it takes a minimum of three contacts to do that, so that is the Rule of Three.

So on to page three of the study guide. Item four is screening strategies. So we've gone from sorting, now we're into screening. How to avoid wasting time pursuing dead-end relationships. Remember, screening is the process of collecting information about this person related to your requirements and knowing what your requirements are is critical to this. Now all singles have their list and all singles believe that their list is comprehensive and thorough and they would be ecstatically happy if they met somebody that lined up with everything on their list.

What we've found here at Relationship Coaching Institute is that very few singles have a list that is clear about their requirements, their needs or their wants, especially their requirements. Requirements are absolutely non-negotiable. If one is missing, the relationship won't work.

Think about it. If you have a requirement like financial responsibility, you require that we manage our money, that we don't gamble it away, that we talk to each other about making big expenditures. You get together with somebody that is a gambling addict or impulsively spends money, racks up debt, and that relationship is not going to work. That's a requirement for you. Many people have a requirement about monogamy and fidelity. If that person sleeps around, then it's not going to work for you.

A requirement is that black and white. We don't have a million of them. In my experience, most singles have somewhere between eight and twelve. That's kind of the average. If you think about it, the test for a requirement is that you would walk away, no matter how in love you are, no matter how much you really want this relationship to work, you would walk away because you would end up breaking up anyway because of it.

So, if this person was tall, dark, handsome and rich, you would still say no because this is an absolute requirement for you. If it's possible for you to make the relationship work, if they were tall, dark, handsome, and rich, and you go

ahead with it, and make it work anyway, then it's not a requirement. You probably have, if you're like most singles, somewhere between eight and twelve.

An activity that you can try is to make this nice long list of what you want in your ideal relationship and whittle it down. Separate out your requirements. Those things that are relationship breakers. They are deal breakers. They are core. Then you want to use them for screening.

If you think about sifting flour or running water through a sieve, screening is collecting information. This does not take forever. We can talk on the phone a few times. We can get together for coffee one time. We can exchange emails. What matters here is that you get all the information you need to know whether your requirements will be met or not. Since there is somewhere between eight and twelve for most people, you can do that pretty efficiently.

You're going to collect a lot of information that's not related to your requirements. What kinds of movies you like to watch, where you like to go on vacation, what you like to do on the weekend. Not all of those are related to your requirements. You're certainly going to be learning a lot about this person that's related to your needs and to your wants. But for screening, I especially want you to pay attention to your requirements. Have those on top of your mind. That is what will help you avoid dead end relationships. That will help you avoid relationship failure.

At the very minimum, if none of your needs are met, none of your wants are met, but all your requirements are met, you have the foundation of a great relationship. Trust me on that. You're going to still be happy. You can still build a great relationship that is happy and fulfilled. If you get together with somebody if your requirements are met, but not your needs and not your wants. Requirements are that core. Everything else can be built over time.

The caveat to that is there's this little thing called chemistry. Chemistry is either there or not there. You would not pursue anybody that you weren't attracted to. Right? Hopefully. If you're attracted to them that means that there's some chemistry. It's kind of a given. That's why I'm emphasizing your requirements so much because I'm assuming the chemistry is already there. I'm assuming you're doing this with somebody you're attracted to.

If you're not attracted, then you're wasting your time anyway. A lot of people ask me, "Can chemistry grow over time?" Well, it can. It's remotely possible. But that's kind of like trying to fit the round peg in the square hole. It's like "Well, you know, I see a lot of potential here, but it doesn't quite fit, so I'm going to try to make it fit". If it's not a fit, then go ahead and move on. It's the best thing you can do for yourself, especially when you're single.

If you're in a committed relationship and you don't feel chemistry or there's a requirement not met, that is a totally different question. Commitment in a

relationship is what makes it work. There are many things you can do to make that work, but when you're single, this is your time, this is your opportunity to choose somebody that's aligned with what you are looking for. The chemistry, your requirements, your needs and your wants. But in screening, especially your requirements. Chances are, some of your needs are going to be met anyway and some of your wants are going to be met anyway.

Now, in item number five on page three, "How to use the first date to lose the losers." [laughs] And I apologize for using that term. I don't mean to put anybody down. It's just that it would be a loser of a relationship for you if you didn't lose it, if you didn't get out of it if it wasn't a fit for you. So the first date, it's not really a date; think of it as an informational interview.

Screening takes one meeting, two meetings, three meetings. These meetings can be in person or over the telephone. Ideally, you would have a meeting in person, because that's really where you can gauge the chemistry. It's really tough to gauge chemistry over the phone.

So the general wisdom is to go ahead and meet in person as soon as possible. Don't spend weeks and weeks exchanging emails and talking on the phone. Meet in person as soon as possible. So the first date, it's not really a date, it's an informational interview. You want to ask questions, you want to share your life story, you want to hear their life story. You want to collect all the information that you need to know whether your requirements would be met.

And then, remember, as we mentioned earlier, you want to check in with your gut. What does my intuition say? What does my inner wisdom say? I'm collecting all this information, certainly, in my consciousness, but my brain is also collecting so much I can't even process it. So I have to check in with how I feel; I have to check in with my gut. What is my gut telling me here?

And I suggest that you use a rating scale. And if this person falls too low on your rating scale for your minimum that you're willing to accept for yourself, then just graciously disengage. Say, "It was really nice meeting you, but you know what? I don't think we're quite a match. Thank you very much for your interest." And move on. And that is basically screening.

On page four of your study guide, now we're getting into testing. Testing is getting an experience that this relationship might work for you or not. It's an experience of your requirements. Remember the example about playing tennis. It's actually playing tennis with them.

So how far do you go with testing? Well, I suggest you don't go so far as going to bed and testing out the sexual chemistry because that opens up a whole other can of worms. We kind of lose our emotional objectivity. There's a lot of hormones that come into play, and we become emotionally and chemically

bonded with this person as soon as we have sex with them. We start feeling like a couple right away. It's very hard to have casual sex, although some people are able to do it, especially younger folks.

But in conscious dating and scouting, sorting, screening, and testing, we suggest that you practice this from a single mindset. You are single. You are available. And because you are dating this person for a little while, because you're testing them, you are still single and you are still available. You are not exclusive. You are not in a relationship yet.

And you should probably give yourself a minimum period of time for you to make a decision before you decide that you're going to be exclusive, that you're going to stop looking elsewhere, that you're going to be a couple. And I've heard singles say anywhere between two weeks to two months or three months.

So right now, I suggest that as you're listening and you're thinking about this, what is your minimum time frame, from the time that you meet somebody to the time that you decide, "OK, this is it. I want to be in a relationship with this person. I'm not looking any more. I want to be an exclusive couple"?

Now, it doesn't mean it's a committed relationship. You are in a pre-committed relationship. You're a couple. You're exclusive. You're not yet committed; that might be your goal. A commitment means like getting married or having a commitment ceremony. It's a very serious thing. And typically, couples get together and what's on their mind is, "Hmm. Is this the right relationship for me? Well, I don't know. We'll see how this goes." And we call that the pre-commitment stage.

So if you're conscious and you're in the pre-commitment stage, you will be an exclusive couple, but you'll realize this isn't commitment yet and you're still testing it a bit. You're spending time with each other. You're getting to know each other better. You're deepening your relationship. It's still kind of a testing phase; however, it's testing from inside a relationship.

This testing is when you are still single and available, and you're not testing inside a relationship, you're testing outside a relationship. You're not in a relationship yet. So that's the difference between a date and a relationship? A date is where you have a single mindset. You're not exclusive. You are totally available. And a relationship is when you are in a relationship. You are a couple. You are exclusive. You are not available.

So creative testing strategies. How can you experience your requirement being met in this stage? It depends upon what your requirement is, and it depends upon your creativity, of course: creative examples, like if you're a dog owner or dog lover, then you might want to have your dog sniff them. [laughs] Dogs are very wise creatures, and if one of your requirements is somebody that has a

good relationship with your dog, then go ahead.

If children and family and co-parenting is an important requirement of yours, if you already have kids, you don't want to expose your kids to everybody you date as part of your testing. But one of my favorite strategies is to meet for coffee at a park that has a playground. And so, for our second meeting or so, after the first initial meeting, I might suggest, next time we get together, that we meet at a park, bring coffee, and sit on a bench, right next to a playground.

And if you spend any time around playgrounds, you know that kids are loud and energetic, and balls are flying all over the place and bikes are going back and forth, and somebody that loves kids just LOVES watching kids and enjoys the noise and the activity. Somebody that is not crazy about kids won't be able to stand that for very long. That's a testing strategy that I've used.

Many, many ways to test. For example, let's say integrity, honesty; many, many ways to test that. You can even set up tests. I know singles that set up creative tests. Here's one that I've heard a lot of guys tell me, which is they like being a gentleman, they like opening up the car door for the woman and letting her in the car and closing the door, and a little test that they set up in their mind is to watch for: does the woman unlock the driver's side for him? I'm not making this up.

These guys would dump a woman who showed no interest in whether the door is locked or not and just left him on his own. And it kind of makes sense to me, that you want it to be reciprocal. It's great to be a gentleman, but it's also nice for the lady to be considerate and to unlock the car door for him, things like that.

I've heard a lot of people talk about watching each other's behavior in restaurants, and how does this person treat the waiter or waitress? And how does this person handle tipping? How does this person handle paying the check? And a lot of singles set up little tests in their mind for what that means to them.

And given that nothing ever happens just once--behavior follows patterns--so if you observed one thing about somebody, it's a pretty valid idea to extrapolate that and assume that it happens all the time, assume it's a pattern, and assume it happens in different ways as well.

On page four of your study guide, section eight: "How to know, is this the one?" Like I mentioned earlier, I strongly suggest that you set a minimum time frame for testing. You will date somebody and you will test them for a minimum of how long? Two weeks, three weeks, a month, two months, three months? I like the idea of three months.

Here's another test. I've heard single women -- in fact, I've encouraged them to do this -- when a guy appears to be a little too interested in being physical and having sex before the woman is ready, I've heard that single women tell these

guys, "Well, I don't believe in sex before marriage." Now, this isn't necessarily true. However, if somebody is pushing for sex, wouldn't it be nice to know if they can let go of it and be in a real relationship, or if the sex isn't going to be there pretty quick then they're moving on.

I kind of like that. And how to know if this is the one is if somebody passes your testing. Whatever little test you set up that are related to your requirements. You need to have an experience that this works for you.

Now, I want to share an idea--a little paradigm with you--the idea of "screening in" versus "screening out." "Screening in" is where you are finding reasons why this might work. You are giving them the benefit of the doubt, and giving them a second chance, and just trying every which way to let them in, to screen them in as much as possible. So, that's the idea of screening in. You want to give them chances. You want to find ways to make it work. You want to give them lots of the benefit of the doubt.

"Screening out" is the opposite. Screening out is where you are finding reasons why it might not work. You're being critical. You are looking under a microscope looking for reasons why this might not work. Now, if I had my choice, if I had to give you advice to do one or the other, I would suggest screening out.

Now, there are people that go a bit overboard and they get perfectionistic about this. But generally, especially if it's related to your requirements, go ahead and be picky. I've heard from singles a lot of them have a fear that nobody would meet all their requirements.

Well, if you understand what requirements are -- that they are core bottom line things that must happen or a relationship won't work for you. And there are not a million of them. There are only somewhere between eight and 12.

In fact, I've known people that after doing our Conscious Dating Relationship Success Training for Singles Program, and they worked with a coach, that they only have like two or three requirements. Now, that's the exception not the norm. I've also known people that had 20 or more. But the average tends to be about eight to twelve. So, the odds that you can find somebody that's lined up with eight to 12 requirements is pretty good.

And the Law of Attraction is with you here. If you require that, and you look for it, you will find it. If you believe it's not possible, if you believe you won't find it, then you let go of that, then you won't find it. People are going to come to you that are close but no cigar. But if you really stick to your requirements, I promise you, you will find it.

So, in testing you want to be very, very clear what your requirements are. You want to have an experience that your requirements are met here. You want to

date as long as necessary to get that experience. And to date as a single person--to have a single mindset that you are available. You are not exclusive. You are not in a relationship yet. You're just hanging out. You're just getting to know each other.

And if you're with somebody who's in a hurry, who is moving faster than you are, you need to have "the talk" with them. And explain to them that you want to take it slow. You want to get to know each other. You want to find your life partner. You want to be with your soul mate. And you need time to take in information, to get to know them, to really have an experience that this truly does work for you. It's called being the chooser.

Most people will respect that and appreciate it. And the ones that don't, that think you're being unrealistic, or you're being pushy, or you're being rigid, well, as a friend of mine says: RLH -- run like hell. Turn around and don't walk away, run away. You do not want to be with somebody who discounts your needs, who invalidates where you're coming from in terms of a relationship.

Susan: I have been single for six years since my last divorce. And I've read your books. I've listened to your classes. And a month ago I met a man that I've been seeing regularly every weekend since. Emotionally, or at least values-wise, he's pretty much what I have on my list. Yet he's so different than anyone I've ever dated in terms of career, profession, and a few other components. How do I know if I'm screening-in, or screening-out?

David: Well, do you have a requirement about what they do for a living, and profession, and all that kind of stuff?

Susan: I used to think so, because of who I was, or what I've accomplished. I'm at the point of wondering--how important are those pieces? What I really wanted was someone who respected me, which he apparently--which he clearly does--who liked me for who I am, which he does--who was the assertive one or aggressor, which he is. He's very different than any man I have gone out with in the last six years.

David: Well chances are, different is good. [laughs] If you're trying to change patterns, and you're trying to go after what you really want, and that hasn't worked in the past--then different is good.

But the thing about a requirement is, there is a lot of energy around it. If you don't have a lot of energy around, well his profession--it's different--do I need it to be the same? If you don't have a lot of energy around that, than no problem.

What would be your top reason for "No" at this point? If you had to say "No" to this relationship today, right now with all of us--what would that reason be?

Susan: He's dealing with so many issues, that he does lack certain self-confidence or self-esteem, that I need in order to be totally attracted. I'm willing to be patient with certain things, except I want to be clear with myself that I'm not on my missionary role of saving him.

David: Oh yeah, I know what that's like being a counselor, or a coach. You want to help--I mean I've fallen in love with potential in the past. So you want somebody that can be an equal to you, somebody who's self-confident, somebody who is accomplished, and so that's a question for you that I hear.

If he meets your requirements, and you're not clear that what is not in place is not related to your requirement--I mean like self-confidence, is that a requirement that you have?

Susan: Yes.

David: OK. So, are you not sure if he has enough self-confidence? I mean it's not like he had no self-confidence, right?

Susan: That's true.

David: So if you had to put it on a scale of zero percent self-confidence, and 100 percent self-confidence, where would you put him?

Susan: I'd put him I guess around 50-60. He's working on it...

David: OK.

Susan: ... although he's still overcoming a lot of old stuff.

David: So 50 to 60, and what would you say would be your minimum requirement--your minimum requirement and won't except anything less?

Susan: OK. Maybe 75 to 80 percent.

David: OK. So here's your opportunity, give it a time frame, hang out in that space for awhile. Ask yourself, "Am I settling?" Which is a good question by the way. "Am I settling? I want somebody that is self-confident to like 75 percent. He's at about 60 percent -- close -- but am I settling?"

So, give yourself a time frame--like a month, a couple of months, six months, a year--however long you feel like is appropriate for you to devote to this, and then answer that question. Answering the question is not necessarily going to be easier in six months.

I don't know about you, but I've had lots of life questions, and relationship questions, where the equation has been 51 to 49. [laughs]

Susan: Yeah.

David: It's like 51 percent this direction, 49 percent that direction -- oh my gosh! It's not usually clean--well 100 percent this direction, 0 percent that direction.

Are you happy?

Susan: Yes.

David: OK. Well, the fact that you are happy is important information. It could be infatuation, it could be a honeymoon period. Generally this wears off in three to six months. The pre-commitment stage should be at least that long, right?

Susan: Yeah.

David: So if the honeymoon wears off in six months, and you decide, "It's close, but no cigar," then you can still back out, and it's not the end of the world. So, enjoy being happy in your new relationship. Congratulations, Susan.

Susan: Thank you, David, thank you for making it sound so rational and sane.

David: Well, that's me, Mr. Rational-Linear Guy.

Susan: Yeah, I appreciate that and I needed that, thank you.

David: All right.

Susan: Yeah.

David: And so, initiating a get-together; to chat, to get to know each other better, if he's open to it, that's important information. If he's not open to it, and he says, "Well no thanks," then that tells you all you need to know.

Woman: Well, that's true, now here's another question and that brings me to my next question. Which is how, how to do this, I'm a woman, he's the guy, isn't it supposed to be where the man is supposed to be doing this? Isn't that what...

David: Oh, gosh.

Woman: ...their, their whole challenge is to get the courage to do that...that kind of thing?

David: No way.

Woman: No?

David: Let me remind you, you probably already know this, but if you don't it might be news. The number one thing that men fear, the number one fear that men have, absolute, unarguable, proven, well-researched number one fear that men have is what?

Woman: Rejection, probably.

David: Yes! See, you know this. Rejection. In today's world men love it when the woman is very clear about where she's coming from and initiates contact and initiates, you know, anything. Because that lowers his risk of rejection. Most men love it, most men are flattered, most men breathe a sigh of relief, "Thank you." So I'm sure there are some men out there that are rigidly you know macho and "I'm the man, I'm in charge. You woman, you shut up and wait for me to initiate" but you know what, I haven't met very many of them.

Woman: And maybe I wouldn't be interested in that kind of person anyway.

David: So please, be empowered to speak up and initiate what you'd like to have happen. And if he is an adult, whether he's a man or a woman, he will speak his truth about what he'd like to have happen. "Would you like to get together and chat?" "Sure, I'd like to get together and chat." Or, "Well, no, no thanks, not really interested." So treat him like an adult.

And I think an important piece of it is to let go of attachment. You have a goal but you're not going to be so attached to it that it's not OK if it doesn't go the other way. That make sense?

Woman: Yes.

David: When we take a risk, and when we allow ourselves to connect with somebody, there's always the risk that we could be hurt and we have a choice to make. Which is to take the risk and do it anyway because we want the payoff, the benefit, we want to love and be loved. Or to play it safe. And when we play it safe and guard our heart, because we don't want to be hurt, then we keep people at a distance. I mean it's possible to be in a relationship and keep your partner at a distance.

And really, if you are hurt, is it the end of the world? I mean are you going to die? It's the kind of thing where you might choose to allow yourself the risk of being hurt, because the rewards are so much greater and even if you are hurt, it's not the end of the world and you'll get over it.

Woman: Yeah.

David: I think part of being hurt might also be being too invested, allowing yourself to be ahead of where you are. So for example, if you're dating somebody and you're enjoying the relationship for what it is, and then they decide, "Well, you know what, I'm moving across country and I think this is a good time for us to breakup." And yeah, you might be disappointed, but unless in your head you're already married with children living happily ever after, are you really going to be hurt or how hurt will you be?

Sometimes being hurt means that you're just ahead of where you are in the relationship. If it's not yet a committed relationship, then either party can say "no" at anytime...

Woman: Right.

David: ... and say, "You know what? I've come to the conclusion that this isn't really what I'm looking for. I mean it's a hard decision to make, there's a lot of value here. But in order to get what I really want, I have to say 'No' to this as much as I like you, as much as I love you."

In the pre-commitment stage that's what we have the ability to do. It takes a lot of courage, and it is emotionally gut-wrenching--but is it being hurt? Well, is hurt the same as being hurt?

Woman: I know.

David: So keep your marbles and stay grounded in reality. Take risks, but don't be ahead of where you are.

Woman: Yeah.

David: Chances are being hurt is not going to be a big risk you're going to take, and even so, you want to take that risk. Because the consequences of not taking that risk are, being alone being isolated, even being alone in a relationship--because behavior follows patterns. So, if you're in the habit of guarding your heart because you don't want to be hurt, when you get into a relationship you're still going to be guarding your heart.

We have a question here that came in from Jenny. Her question is, "If the first date's at a coffee shop, and the man doesn't offer to pay for the cup of coffee or tea--does it mean he's either not interested, or not the gentleman's type? Does it indicate he'll be stingy to his partner in a relationship?" It's a great question!

Now for an initial meeting, the very-very first date, the informational interview--it's quite normal in today's world for people to pay for their own coffee, to come separately. So, I wouldn't expect that somebody would pay for your coffee. If you go to a restaurant, and you receive the bill, it is nice and gentlemanly to offer to pay. Sometimes people, they refuse to take "No" for an answer. They take the check and say, "I won't hear anything about it, I'm paying."

Well, I question being that controlling--I think that's an indication of being controlling. But I do think it's gentlemanly to offer to pay, or to have a conversation about it. I mean you think about it--if this person is relational, they're communicating--they have some communication skills. You say, "Oh gee, how would you like to handle this check?"

That would be a very honoring, respectful conversation to have from somebody that's relational, and wants to have a conversation about making a decision rather than just making assumptions, or making the decision on their own.

Most people don't want to be obligated during the initial meeting, so they will arrive separately, and they will pay for their own thing--of course we would like for people to offer to pay. It doesn't necessarily mean anything, because even though there are few rules now a days, and the old rules don't apply, and we don't really know what the new rules are. One of the new rules is, "People generally pay for their own thing on the very first meeting."

Woman: Sometimes I'm feeling at this point, that I'm not quite sure what all my requirements are. For instance, the person that we were discussing just now has kids--I don't have children. I have not really thought about wanting children in a relationship, or joining someone who has kids.

However, at the same time I'm finding that there's a certain yearning that's there to be connected to young people in a family way--in a family relationship.

David: Yeah.

Woman: So, what would you suggest that I do about that? I wouldn't walk away--let's put it that way.

David: I would suggest that you let it evolve.

Woman: OK.

David: That him having kids, and the kids themselves, and your relationship to them, and to him, and the situation--just let it be what it is, and just let it evolve. Don't try to make it happen. Kids need space, and they need to be able to establish their own relationship with you.

They don't want you to come in and take over. They're not necessarily looking for a mommy, or maybe they are, and even if they are it's not necessarily appropriate for you to come in and be a mommy.

Woman: Right.

David: The step-parent, step-family situation is almost always problematic when the outside party comes in and plays "parent" right away.

Woman: Yeah.

David: It does need to be a very slow process--certainly for them, but also for you. If you don't have kids, this is a whole new world for you. As a parent I can tell you that the reality of a parent, and the reality of not having any kids, are very different realities.

Woman: Yeah.

David: So, you're entering the world of somebody that has kids, and it's best to take it slow. It's best to let it evolve, it's best to just be with what it is. You might

decide that it's not a fit for you, that at this stage in your life you're not ready to take on something that a 20, or 30 something would take on--I mean starting a family.

Maybe you're old enough that you want to travel, and you want to have the kind of experiences in your life that you can't have if you are participating in parenting kids--so that's up to you. If you're unsure--you see a lot of value in the situation, and you're open to the situation, I would suggest that you just let it evolve, take it slow--be with it.

For some people that's really hard, they try to fit the round peg in the square hole, they try to force and push things. Just be with it--just hang.

Woman: Yeah.

David: See how it fits for you, see how you feel with it, see how the situation evolves. The worst thing that can happen is if one of the kids--they end up resisting and hating you, because you're being too pushy. Then it really won't work if one of the kids is turned off by you, and they don't want to be around you.

Woman: Yeah.

David: If you're a safe adult who just embraces them for who they are, and just hangs with them--kids like that.

Woman: So the first time that's OK, but if it's an ongoing thing, if the guy always wanted to split half and half, that doesn't mean anything?

David: Well, see regardless of your culture--every person, every relationship has its own culture. So, you get to choose what kind of relationships you want. For example, in my relationship we take turns. We go out, one of us pays for dinner--we go out again, the other pays for dinner. We take turns, it's reciprocal.

So, there are some situations where one of you is a student and doesn't work, and the other does work and has the money, than the one that has the money would do the paying. The one that doesn't have the money might reciprocate in other ways--not with money.

Woman: Right.

David: But. I think that most people do want a reciprocal relationship. They want give and take, and what matters is that your requirements are met. The culture thing doesn't matter as much as what your requirements, needs, and wants are--the kind of person you are, and the kind of relationship you want.

Woman: More than likely women get married, and they raise children, and they stayed at home. So, they're looking for a guy that can be capable of covering the costs for two people, right? Be comfortable with that.

David: Yeah.

Woman: I mean, how much does it cost to just go out to eat? I mean...

David: [laughs] If that situation fits you--you want a man to take care of you, you want to stay home and raise the kids, you want a man who's generous who's going to bring out his wallet and not hesitate about it--then absolutely that's an appropriate test.

When you go out with somebody for the second time--the first time it's usually appropriate for people to pay for their own coffee. The second time, you go to a restaurant for breakfast, lunch or dinner, and your little test might be how quick does he pull out his wallet? Does he offer to pay? The kind of guy that would just freely reach for his wallet to offer to pay is the kind of guy you want to be with. The kind of guy that would play games trying to get you to pay for it is not the kind of guy you want to be with.

Woman: My observation is someone may not necessarily be unkind. He might be a kind person, but when it comes to dating, some guys just don't think he should pay. So, it should be half and half, just like go out like a friend.

David: I don't know any man who thinks that he shouldn't pay. I know women who think they shouldn't have to pay. I don't know any man who thinks he shouldn't have to pay except for the ones that are extremely cheap. In our culture, the men, from caveman days, are programmed to be the providers, right?

So the ones that abdicate that say, "I don't want to be a provider. I want you to provide. I want you to pay." Those are the ones in our culture that we don't have much respect for. They don't have much respect for themselves. I've heard lots and lots of horror stories about really, really cheap men. I'm embarrassed for them.

Does he spend any money on you? Does he offer to contribute? Does he offer to share expenses?

Woman 2: If I tell him, he will do, but.

David: If you say something, he will. If you don't say anything, he pretty much acts like he wants you to pay for it. Is that correct?

Woman 2: Right. Yeah, that's correct.

David: OK. Personally, I would be bothered by that.

Woman 2: OK.

David: If you're an older woman who wants a younger man and to take care of him financially, then that's fine. But what I'm getting from you is that that bothers you.

Woman 2: Yeah.

David: You want an equal. You don't want a younger man. You don't want a man who earns less and doesn't contribute. I get that he doesn't have to earn the same as you, but I do get that he needs to contribute. There needs to be a free flow here. We need to be equals. We need to be generous with each other. We need to share the expenses, and have it not be a power struggle. Is that kind of where you're coming from?

Woman 2: Yes.

David: You truly understand. You're being bothered. There's something real there that doesn't work for you.

Woman 2: OK. Thank you very much. If two people, who have both raised children have no desire to have anymore children, meet; and how to address the money issue about possible inequality of finances? How to actually scout or screen for this? What kind of questions or how to introduce that?

David: Chances are there's going to be a lifestyle thing, like the kind of car this person drives, the kind of place this person lives in, the kind of vacations or what they do with their spare time. Chances are there's going to be enough clues for you to know there's alignment. Of course, you want to know about debt. Is this person financing all this out of debt and they're bankrupt and they have this comfortable lifestyle?

Certainly you want to pay attention. This is the kind of thing where, as you are getting to know somebody, you're sharing about your career, profession, future, retirement, vacations and interests. Money is just another topic. You're not going to share every little detail, like exactly how much you have in your retirement fund, but money is another topic just like anything else.

So, you don't have to shy away from it, but definitely bring it up and talk about it in conversation, just like you would have a conversation about anything else. Then match the words, what this person says with their behavior and the things that you're picking up. Does that make sense?

Woman 2: Yeah, I like that. Match words with behavior.

David: Yeah.

Woman 2: OK. Thank you.

David: Thanks for joining us and we will see you next time.