



Conscious Dating
Tele-Seminar Series Transcript

***Conscious Dating at a Distance:
What to Do When You're Attracted to
Someone 1200 Miles Away***

With Frankie Doiron and a panel of RCI coaches, February 1, 2007

Welcome everyone and thank you for joining our monthly conscious dating seminar. This seminar series is designed to help you find the love of your life and the life that you love. So please mark your calendar and be sure to join us on the first Thursday of each month and we hope we will knock your socks off. It's an outstanding one of a kind program you will not want to miss. I am Frankie Doiron, president of the relationship coaching network and my job is to creatively apply all the resources in our organization to help you have successful relationships. For example, on the third Thursday of each month David Steele and I will conduct free monthly conscious dating tele-clinic and that provides some real time coaching and relationship advice. For information about the tele-clinic you can visit www.consciousdatingteleclinic.com. That's

<http://www.consciousdatingteleclinic.com>.

Tonight our tele-seminar is called "Conscious Dating at a Distance." What to do when you are attracted to someone who is 1,200 miles away, or even further, or maybe a little bit closer.

We're really fortunate to have four very qualified RCI coaches who will share their professional and personal insights about long-distance dating. And I'll let each of them introduce themselves a little bit later and share a little of their personal

experiences.

In this program tonight, you'll discover the eight biggest challenges to long-distance dating, tips and insights to overcoming those challenges, how conscious dating can help you conquer the scarcity mentality, and hopefully much more. We know that one of your highest goals is to find your life partner and our mission and commitment in this program is to help you achieve this goal. We will pull out all the stops tonight to do so. We will be recording this seminar, so if you would like to receive the audio file and a complete written transcript, visit www.consciousdatingaudio.com. Tonight's seminar will be approximately an hour in length and includes a question and answer period at the end of the program. Please make note of any questions you may have as they come up during the call. If you have a specific question that you would like to direct to one of our panelist, please jot down their name beside the question. Otherwise, it might get a little bit confusing.

We are prepared to extend the call durations a little bit, if we have a lot of questions. Don't be worried that you are not going to get your question in. As I said, in order to eliminate the background noise, which could affect the quality of the sound, I have muted all the callers so that I can't hear you now.

When we finish delivering our content, we will open the lines again for questions and comments. So let's begin. While it is really important to deliver a balanced program to you tonight and that means being clear that we are not advocating long distance relationships over traditional face to face relationships. Indeed, being a conscious dater means you are aware of the opportunities around you in your local geographical area. It also means you don't buy into the scarcity mentality, which could lead you to seek a partner from further afield, like 1200 miles away.

Long-distance relationships are really not for everyone, and many don't work. But

some people, including myself, have had very successful experiences and have found our life partner that way.

Tonight our panel will address the major challenges facing long-distance lovers and provide tips and suggestions on how to overcome those obstacles. And now I'm going to ask my guests to take a few minutes each to make their own introductions and share their personal experience with long-distance relationships. Randy, would you kindly begin?

Randy: Okay great. My name is Randy Hurlburt. I'm not sure why Frankie has me going first here, I think maybe it was because she heard my Playboy radio interview last week and wants to get me off the air quickly , or maybe she knows I'm calling on international long distance and trying to save me some money. I'm not sure which it is but anyway.

I guess first I would like to say my business in San Diego is Conscious Dating San Diego and that's a part of David Steel's Conscious Dating network and I'm really proud of that. <http://www.consciousdatingsandiego.com>

Secondly, I want to mention my book which is called 'Love is not a Game, but You Should Know the Odds' and this is a book about why good love is so hard to find and what to do about it. And among other things in the book including chemistry and emotional maturity, it talks about long distance relationships and which ones have the best chance to succeed.

So my book is found at <http://www.loveisnotagame.com>. In my own life, I've had two -- well, probably more than two significant relationships -- but two that were significant and long distance. One is my marriage and, in that case, we got married right out of college. We had gone to two different colleges, hundreds of miles apart, and didn't really spend the time that we should have spent to get to know each other. Plus we weren't very conscious at the time. That ultimately ended in divorce. Although we're both good people and are still friends and that

sort of thing. That's one story that didn't work very well. On the other hand my current relationship with my fiancé is also a long distance relationship. You know, Frankie mentioned 1200 miles, but in this case 12,000 miles; she lives in Thailand and I am right now calling from Thailand because I am here visiting her. So I've kind of been on both sides of this and have I think perspectives that will be interesting to share when it gets to be the right time.

Frankie Doiron: Okay, thank you Randy. Lois

Lois: Hi everybody. My name is Lois Barth and I'm really delighted to be part of this panel today. I'm a coach and a facilitator and a writer, and my company is One Dream at a Time Coaching and Consulting Services. I have private classes in New York City; my website is <http://www.onedreamatotime.com>. The focus of my work is with relationships: relationships with self, with one's dreams and -- of course -- romantic, or, as I like to put it: luscious life partnerships. Because I truly believe that life partnerships are meant to be luscious. I mean, why else go through the work that it takes to not only bring a life partner into our lives, or, as I call it, "the getting ready to be ready process." But, once we have one, to really rise -- as opposed to fall -- in love.

I'm a life coach for Fitness Magazine Fitness Makeover and I've been featured on "Good Day New York," and have facilitated workshops around the country. My articles have been published in the New York Times and Massage Magazine, amongst others, and I'm accredited through the Empowerment Institute, Life Blueprint Institute and RCI.

In terms of today's topic, "Long Distance Relationships," my experience is both personal and professional. For a year and a half, I was involved with what I called "a local long-distance relationship." What I mean by that is my partner at the time traveled over 75% of the time. Though it was a hybrid, it definitely spoke to the challenges of the long-distance relationship. Thankfully, I am a retired serial dater, having met my luscious life partner Charlie five years ago.

In my practice I've coached countless professionals who, in their work, travel a lot and met many prospective suitors along the way. I've seen long-distance relationships work and not work. My personal goal for today's call is that people will come away with information and resources, so that they can powerfully choose what feels right for them, given what they want in their life.

One of my favorite tag lines comes from Syms, which for those of you who may not know, it's a local clothes store chain in the northeast. At the end of every commercial Sy Sins[sp] always says, "An educated consumer is our best customer." Well to me, what works for finding the ideal outfit works for creating the ideal relationship. It's important to be educated.

Frankie Doiron: Well thank you. I love that luscious partnership concept.

Woman 1: I'm glad you did. [Laughs]

Frankie: Sounds delicious

Woman 1: Absolutely, it's the only way to go. [Laughs]

Frankie: So Melvin

Melvin: I'm Melvin Allen from Las Angeles California. I've been here about two years. I used to live in New Jersey which will tell him to -- the long distance relationship that I had with my wife for years.

A little bit about me. I've been on national television at the Starting Over show twice as a coach, relationship coach expert. I have been on television last year four times. I've been on radio. As a matter of fact I've been on a radio show this morning. I've been on radio more than three or four times. I also have a television show, cable show, here in Los Angeles called Relationship 911, where I bring people all talking about various aspects of relationships. My wife also works with me. I have been married four times, not once, not twice, not three times but four

times. And after the third time in 1990 I decided that I was going to go in a quest to find out why relationships didn't work out and why they don't work. So for the last 17 years I've been looking at relationships. I've talked to over six thousand women for various reasons in the last twenty five years. I have a Masters Degree in Spiritual Psychology; I also have been studying ontological studies over twenty five years. I graduated from Results Life Coaching and I did that about fifteen years ago. I finished Relationship Coaching Institute work sometime in the middle of last year. And I have a series of seminars that I've produced on relationships. Currently we have one called Relationship Readiness Intensive which is a full weekend where we actually help people on a spiritual place become conscience of what is necessary to have a successful relationship. So I, like David, still believe that I'm committed to decreasing the divorce rate and improving the quality of the relationship worldwide. My website is <http://www.melvinandsherrie.com>.

Now, my long-distance relationship -- after three marriages I said I would never get married again, and I was the only common denominator in every one of those relationships. But I found my current wife, who was living in Los Angeles and I was living in New Jersey. So, for five years, we went back and forth from Los Angeles to New Jersey in this long-distance relationship, long-distance calls, trips and the whole nine yards.

We started out dating, got engaged, got married and were still long distance, and I've been in L.A. the last two years of the last eight years that we've known each other. So, I know something about long-distance relationships.

Frankie Doiron: Thank you, Melvin. And I love that Relationship 911, great concept as well. Janice?

Janice Bennett: Hi, Frankie. Hello everybody. I am very excited about participating in this panel tonight, mainly because my 19-year marriage began as a long distance relationship. Successfully navigating the three thousand miles

between us during our courtship has made me believe that long distance relationships can and do work. In addition to utilizing my 21 years of psychology skills and experiences, my own dating experience has informed much of my philosophy and practices now as a relationship coach.

My website is <http://www.drlovecoach.com>, and I have been quoted in Us magazine and Cosmo magazine on issues pertaining to creating healthy relationships. I believe it a privilege to have coached singles to help them find life partners, despite the challenge of dating someone who may have initially been considered geographically undesirable. A little back story may, I guess, be required. I was living in Los Angeles, had just completed my doctoral studies, and taken the licensing exam and agreed to attend a girlfriend's wedding in New York.

I was set up on two blind dates during my trip by friends. And one of the men I met happened to be Richard, my future husband. We went out twice, agreed that there was mutual interest and decided to continue quote-unquote “dating long-distance.”

Now remember, this was in the late-80's long before the internet and email, cell phones and text-messaging. But enough of my relationship requirements and needs were met, so I decided it was worth it to see what would become of our courtship. Most importantly, we both had the same ultimate goal: that of marriage and children.

Having both been through painful breakups with significant others earlier in our lives and neither of us had children, we each knew we were looking for a committed relationship.

Working professionally with singles toward the end of the 20th century, and now in the 21st century, I've witnessed and now believe that while dating someone

long distance might be a bit easier with the Internet and cell phones, it still remains challenging.

Singles have, and will continue to meet when they attend far away from home family functions, business meetings, or vacations, and when they travel by plane, train, bus, ferry and/or car pool.

So, you have my personal experience, philosophy, and belief in long distance dating. The thing that shouldn't surprise you is that my coaching approach is consistent with the "Principles of Conscious Dating." Whether a coaching client comes to me already trying to navigate a long distance relationship, or is considering entering into one, or met someone who was geographically undesirable after we had started our work together. The first step always consists of knowing who you are and what you want. For me, I knew that I wanted to be happily married. After I met Richard I realized that it didn't matter where I lived as long as I could work in my chosen profession. And in New York City that wasn't so difficult. I wanted to have children and be with someone who shared that goal. And being a mental health professional with many years of my own psychotherapy I wanted someone who was emotionally healthy and stable. Having that vision of my ideal relationship helped me to see how we could move closer to one another despite the distance. The principle of conscious dating, "be ready and available for a commitment," was already in place for me. The next principle of conscious dating, "learn how to get what you want," required that I be a good detective. Consequently, we spent a lot of time on the phone asking each other questions, as well as just sharing some of our past experiences and of course about our daily activities. This way I was able to determine that he was a good listener, shared my values and goals, cared about me and was indeed emotionally stable and healthy. These are just some of the strategies that I encourage my coaching clients to use as well. While I didn't have my own personal coach at the time, I knew that in order to get what I wanted, I had to keep focused on obtaining the information I needed to keep moving forward. I'm

happy to say that just about all of my coaching clients report that they valued the constant redirecting I provided as well as the emotional support I gave them to stay the course. And it looks like a few of us have traded coasts, right? I'm going to stop now and turn the tele-seminar back to Frankie, and the other panelists, and I'll share some tips about how to handle a couple of long distance dating challenges later on.

Frankie Doiron: "Okay, thanks Janice, you know what? I am listening to all of you, about your background - and by the way, thank you very much for sharing your background and experiences - and it occurs to me how qualified is this panel, to talk about this subject? It's amazing!"

"Yeah, yeah" [laughter] "Yay!"

Frankie Doiron: "So let's get right into the top eight challenges facing long distance lovers, so Randy, you're up first again. What are your top two challenges?"

Randy Hurlburt: " Number one I call the conventional view of love and marriage, and what that mean is that most people picture relationships as living together and sexually exclusive. And although love and marriage don't have to be that way it is the most common vision. And so if your desire is to live together and be exclusive and if your belief is that's how it should be and if your expectation is that this is how it will be then the reality of long distance relationships is likely to lead to disappointment especially if you're in a hurry. The reality is that even if both people want to live together and be exclusive, it's more difficult because it's inconvenient and it may take longer to resolve these issues than you think. You've all had the experience that when expectations are different from reality you wind up in disappointment and frustration. It can be even worse if one person wants to live together and the other doesn't. Or for one it's important and the other it's not that important. Or the timing is off. So although couples living in the same locale have the same problem, it's exacerbated by the distance and just the sheer difficulty of having to make a move to another city. The same is true with the exclusivity side - there is deprivation and there is temptation and

these are forces and stuff happens. That can cause guilt and emotional distance and insecurity. If one wants the exclusivity and the other doesn't, that can lead to conflicts, especially when there is so much opportunity.

Frankie: So Randy, what are the solutions or tips to overcoming this particular challenge?

Randy: Well, as Janice said, number one is to be clear in your own mind about what you want. At the same time, what I coach my clients in is to be prepared to change what you thought you wanted into what you really want. A long-distance relationship can be a testing ground to determine what you really want and whether you're going to be up to the challenges and get through those tests.

Talk to your partner about what you each want, but don't get entrenched too soon while you're still testing and maybe changing. In addition, I think Lois mentioned this, consider alternative "design your own relationship" styles, something that works for you and may not be the conventional view. Negotiate how much time you really need, and consider whether that requires living together or moving to the same city. Certainly take reasonable safety precautions with regard to sex; don't tell philosophy with regard to exclusivity; and probably most important is don't be in any rush to make important decisions. That means enjoy the moment with what's going on and let the decisions come in their own time.

Frankie Doiron: Really terrific insights Randy, thank you. You know, when you realize that conscious dating is about making choices that meet your specific situation requirements, this thinking is positively, really outside the box and it's wonderful. You know, think about what you want and it may not be the traditional relationship that were used to. So what's the next challenge?

Randy: Well this one I call the, "Limited Opportunities Trap," and people who have long distance relationships often cut themselves off from more local opportunities to meet people, and they do this based on fantasy instead of reality. So, rather people are dating long distance or locally, they need a period of

non-exclusive dating to find someone who truly meets their needs. The fantasy and long distance relationships may cause one or the other person to become exclusive before they should. In other words, while they should still be dating a variety of people, because to find a life partner, one who really meets your requirements and needs, you need to meet a lot of people. You need to screen and test, find out if they're a good match, and that takes time. It usually doesn't happen with the first person, or even the second, third, or fourth, and sometimes because of the long distance relationships and the high fantasy it could be enticing to abandon meeting other people.

Frankie Doiron: Very true. So what's the solution then?

Randy: Well, number one is to bring the fantasy down to reality. For that, its important to meet your long distance partner soon, meet them often, and meet them for extended periods of time. Secondly, in order to find the best match for you its important to continue dating others, whether its local or long distance, until one of those relationships, and I emphasize the plural, becomes the secure and real relationship and that usually takes some time. It might be six months, it might be two years, it depends; it might be more.

Frankie: That's exactly, and that's the rule of non-exclusivity that's part of the conscious dating principal. Well thank you Randy, that was terrific. Janice, would you like to take the next two challenges?

Janice Bennett: Thank you Frankie. I am going to talk about the challenge of missing each others physical presence. When you are attracted to or dating someone long distance it's pretty much inevitable that you are going to miss each others physical presence in your daily lives. This can lead to feeling disconnected and the challenge therefore becomes how to keep an intimate connection going even from a distance. The risk, though, is creating too much of a virtual intimacy that doesn't match the real or actual level of intimacy. This can happen in a couple of different ways. If you've only met virtually, like in an online dating website or before a blind date, that's usually when you talk on the phone ahead

of time, the desire to feel connected can lead singles to spend too much time sharing intimate details about themselves on the phone or over the phone or by email. This creates what I call “virtual intimacy” which is not a real or actual intimacy because it doesn't take into account the intangible aspect of chemistry that only happens when you are in someone's specific presence.

So if you've met someone online or over the phone and you think that is potential for a relationship, then it is understandable that you feel disconnected from the person until you've met him in person.

So instead of having hour-long chats or exchanging long emails to close the gap, you need to make every opportunity to and meet the person in order to gain a real or an actual connection. However the more common problem that singles dating long distance experience is when they've already met in person, have experienced chemistry and agree to pursue the relationship across the distance. Feeling disconnected is then normal and understandable, so the challenge is how to maintain the contact and intimacy until you can see each other again.

Woman 2: That is a really tough one, Janice, so what are your recommendations?

Janice: I have a few suggestions based not only from my own personal experience but coaching others in long distance relationships. I guess you could say these are tried and true techniques.

I don't think there is any thing wrong with sending quick e-mails and text messages to one another during the day but only to the level that each of you are comfortable with. This is just as true for couples, and friends, who live and work in the same city. People have different tolerances for being interrupted while going about their daily lives. This is something you have to figure out together.

Whether or not you are in periodical virtual contact, I suggest you schedule

phone-dates. These are times when you've planned to give each other your full attention, so you can discuss the events and experiences in your life. And if you both have webcams that's even better.

By sharing aspects of your life on a regular basis by phone you are able to better focus on a message and the person while not getting distracted by the environment like if you were in a restaurant or a bar. There is unless a very loud distraction is around you or screaming and yelling children.

My suggestion is really try hard to make this an alone time. Intimacy and connection is increased as you relate stories about your day and the feelings that they bring up. These disclosures may seem risky but being on the phone can actually help to decrease the sense of risk taking. But that also means you need to do some degree of self monitoring while talking on the phone. Don't let go off all your inhibitions. I strongly suggest avoiding phone-sex, because it only makes you feel more frustrated.

An important tip on phone-dates is that you attempt to use the time productively. While you are understandable missing one another and feeling disconnected. Rather than just mope and complain about how you can not be together, agree on a book or magazine article that you both want to read and then discuss it. Continue to ask questions about the kind of life and relationship you each want and get to know one another in substantial productive ways.

Frankie: A mystery like you said. That is great advice. A lot of common sense, too. So what is challenge number four?

Janice: Challenge number four has to do with recognizing and handling red flags. While it can be difficult to recognize red flags even when dating someone nearby it's true that recognizing red flags is especially challenging while dating long distance. But it's not impossible. A red flag is something that your dating partner might say or do that warns you of a problem area in the relationship.

More specifically a problem area in the other person. Rather than go into a lot of detail about defining specific red flags I want to present a real life example from my own coaching practice. Jerry, we'll call him Jerry, was visiting New York City last January from Florida and attended a singles event where he met Michelle. He was a forty year old divorced father sharing custody of his children with his ex-wife. He was very motivated to remarry and because he wanted to date in an efficient and conscience manner he hired me as his coach. After the first meeting Jerry returned to Florida. He and Michel began speaking on the phone and emailing one to another pretty frequently. He would travel to New York City every other weekend and would stay at a friend's home in the city or with family members in New Jersey.

Then Jerry and Michel would get together two or three times over the course of the weekend for their date. They quickly determined that they had the same relationship goal which was marriage and children in a traditional sense. Okay Randy?

Jerry started be certain pretty quickly that Michelle met his relationship requirements and needs and said they were comparable in many levels. But Michelle was 32 years old and never married and so Jerry knew he had to be patient to allow their relationship in blossom. Jerry and I monitored the development of their relationship in his weakly telephone coaching session. We decided to emphasize pretty early on, on identifying any red flags that he encountered. We had agreed to look out for red flags, since he knew he initially had deeper feeling for Michelle than she did for him. So, he wanted to be sure that he could be conscious in his decision making -- in other word, use his head -- rather than just be led by his heart.

The first red flag he encountered was when he wanted to be exclusive with Michelle. Michelle hesitated. Jerry had decided he, himself, would not date anyone else, and he had simply assumed that she also was not dating anyone

else.

But, because of the distance and knowing how he felt about her, I encouraged him to share this and to ask Michelle sooner, rather than later. He did, but it took about six weeks for Michelle to agree not to go out with other men, which she did agree to, wholeheartedly. So Jerry no longer saw this red flag for the relationship.

Another red flag that Jerry saw was Michelle's apparent lack of warmth when they were around children. Not only did Jerry have children already, but he wanted more, and while Michelle said she wanted children too, he was concerned about how she interacted with the various children they met, like their nieces and nephews, or children of friends, when they went out together. Jerry and I discussed if how Michelle behaved around children was going to meet his relationship needs and requirements, or become a deal-breaker.

Again, I encouraged him to talk about this with Michelle and to be conscious about this aspect of their relationship's future. So he brought it up for discussion, first over the phone. Interestingly, Michelle responded by saying that she saw this more as a reflection of their different styles of relating to others, especially children. Jerry acknowledged that he is a more outgoing person in general. That's true. But more importantly, she revealed that because of the long distance, the frequency of their dates and the time they spent together, she felt like she was under a microscope when they visited others. This made her feel pressured.

But as they continued to date and socialize more over time, he saw how she made greater effort to engage with others, and not just children, and so, this eventually no longer remained a red flat. A few other red flags were identified during the course of Jerry and Michelle's long distance relationship which were discussed during our coaching work together. Like the two I just described, they were viewed from the context of knowing they were living 1500 miles apart and unable to address and resolve many of them face to face. It's possible that they

appeared as red flags specifically because of the distance but they were able to work them out over the phone and when they could be together.

Frankie: That's a good point Janice, because of the distance. And thank you for those great examples of how to screen and test potential partners. Because it really is a process that takes time and you can't rush it can you?

Janice: No, you can't rush it. But as I said earlier recognizing red flags while dating is a challenge even when you live in the same neighborhood.

Frankie: That's for sure. What's the solution to this challenge?

Janice: Well, often because of the constraints of distance couples with the desire to make the relationship work many red flags might go un-noticed. So the solution to this challenge is to be particularly observant of the words and behaviors that concern you. And it is better to raise these concerns sooner than later. Now Jerry benefited from having a coach to work with who could legitimize his observations and help him develop tactful ways to raise his concerns and share his feelings and needs. As coaches, I'm sure I speak for all of us on this panel tonight, to let you know that were available to help you navigate your relationships, whether they're over long distances or not, so you can attain gratifying and fulfilling life partnerships. Okay, Frankie?

Frankie Doiron: Thank you very much. Thank you for sharing your insights. And there is no shame in asking for help, no matter what it is. So I'm going to turn it over to Melvin now for challenges five and six. Melvin?

Melvin Allen: Okay, challenge five: Making a decision to move and live together, before they have spent enough time together.

Long distance can extend an infatuation period. A long distance relationship is difficult as it is, but deciding to move it is like buying a pair of shoes without trying them on. They may fit, but they also could be very uncomfortable. And moving in together can be a very fatal mistake. It's an intense form of a mini-marriage.

Frankie: That the deadly mini-marriage. What's the solution?

Melvin: Before moving, the couple should consider themselves in a pre-commitment or pre-marital stage. That means that you haven't made the commitment to get married, and you're doing this, as someone said earlier, detective work, on a personal level, for each other. They should examine what it takes to create and maintain a successful relationship.

They should also hire a relationship coach or someone to determine their individual visions, their values, and the requirements of the relationship. This is critical. Even if you were living together in the same city, you would want to do the same thing. But distance, you definitely want to do that. When you are in love or infatuated, it's hard to be objective and balance the heart with the head. Requirements -- if they're not met -- will cause someone to leave the relationship. Relationships are difficult as they are. So, if the requirements are not met -- and it's something that you don't want to get confused with your personal ideal deal-breaker. People think that their deal breaker might be, "If you lie to me" But, that doesn't really focus on the relationship, which are the behaviors of the relationship -- not the behaviors of the person -- but the qualities of the relationship. They also need to uncover the unique emotional and functional needs and wants, which -- after the relationship -- are the next most important things.

Unmet and undistinguished needs will trigger issues. Everybody has issues, which may or may not be solvable, but they will not destroy the relationship. So, after you are able to distinguish your requirements, your needs and your wants, you are able to navigate through this difficult channel of water. And, emotional needs are necessary to make you feel loved. Functional needs are necessary to make you feel loved. And functional needs are necessary for the relationship to function. Like who pays the bills or who would take the garbage out or who does the housework. And wants are like extra credit. It's like a sixty inch television in white with surround sound for the Super bowl party. That's really nice, but you

don't have to have it. Testing the relationship, asking hard questions, meeting the relatives and friends will provide you with some insight. Because relatives and friends will unconsciously say things that will give you a tremendous tip into whom you're dealing with. And those are important intimate details that a person may or may not bring up. And both parties should know everyone's financial background and status before moving in. So that you're not moving across the country and finding out that the person doesn't have a really good job but on the telephone they sounded wonderful. Plan a lot of trips. Also, plan the future especially talk about "Why am I moving, and if I do move what does this mean? Does it mean we're getting married, or does it mean that we're going to be able to date other people? Get that very clear; even have it to a point that that person can share that with their friends, family and community so you know that they're just not talking to you, but they're really putting it out in the universe.

Distance can add to the fantasy and fairy-tale belief that extraordinary weekends, hot sex and mini-vacations can sustain or even increase when a couple decides to live together. Anybody can dance for 30 days and have a wonderful weekend, but if you can actually sustain that and be with a person day in and day out, and go through the trials and tribulations of a normal day and a week and a month and a year or a lifetime, that's a different type of relationship than a long distance relationship. Expectations are filled with unrealistic beliefs, filled with unrealistic goals and loss of freedom, unanticipated changes in routine, financial challenges, friends and individuality. Because when you move you give up all that comfort and security to go live somewhere else, and that can be very dangerous. Before anyone decides to relocate I recommend an extensive testing plan which could be supported by a relationship coach or someone objective to be able to really help them ask the really difficult questions that they may be too uncomfortable asking other potential partners in order to have a successful relationship.

Frankie: Good tips Melvin, and you know when you were talking it occurred to me that one of the differences between conscious and, let's call it unconscious dating, is when you're unconscious, if your friends or family have a comment

about your boyfriend or girlfriend, you don't want to hear it. It's like an ostrich putting their head in the sand. When you're conscious, you ask your friends and family for their opinion. You want to know what they think about your potential partner. So thank you very much, terrific insights, and so what's the next challenge?

Melvin: Challenge #6 is expecting exclusivity when neither party can control it or observe it or promise it, when they don't intend it. That's very difficult for people also.

Sometimes a long-distance relationship is a cover for someone's inability to make a commitment. People can make commitments two feet away, or they can make it 2000 miles away. If a person finds it convenient to have a long-distance relationship, it may be a sign that they can't make a commitment, because they look at it as like, "Well, they're not living close to me; they don't know what I'm doing." It makes it very convenient to then just live in fantasyland. The freedoms to go and to do whatever you want, when your partner is hundreds or thousands of miles away, are available with a long-distance relationship.

I believe complete trust is critical. If there's any doubt whatsoever, leave the relationship. Because if that little voice inside of you says something's off, and you know something's off, then I think you should trust that little voice and realize that you don't want to move across the country or 50 miles if necessary to find out that that little voice was telling you something that you didn't pay attention to.

And here is where a coach can help again. Some important exercises to do with a coach are looking at someone's family history, looking at past relationships actually to see relationship history as well. Have the past relationships been successful, unsuccessful. Have they had a problem with commitment or trust or intimacy, because typically history repeats itself, and if you really can listen to people who know the person that you're involved with, they'll tell you things if you listen well enough about their family history about their relationship history, and

then you can get a sense of who you're dealing with.

And the last thing I want to say is that moving across the town or the country or the city or wherever you move is a very, very serious decision, and I don't think as someone said before, you can do enough investigative work in order to be comfortable that you know who you're dealing with.

Frankie: Very, very sound advice and I just want to add something to that. I always tell my clients, "Your inner voice never lies." Now, that's distinguishing inner voice from inner critic. Inner critic I don't like to listen to, but the inner voice will never lie to you. So thank you very much, Melvin, for that great advice.

And, Lois, you've got the last two challenges.

Lois Barth: Challenge number seven is understanding the interplay of infatuation, true chemistry, and emotional maturing. And the distance makes it much more difficult to get all of this into a realistic footing. And this is a really rich, multifaceted issue that speaks not only to long-distance relationships, but really burgeoning relationships as well. Now I have a running joke with my clients. When they go out and they start to date a lot, they complain and they go, "Oh, there's no chemistry, no chemistry!" And I say, "Well, what is chemistry?" Usually they can't even define it. They'll say something vague like, "I don't know; excitement?" To which I say, "You mean like sweaty palms and a racing heart?" And they're like, "Yeah, sort of like that." To which I respond, "You know, sometimes sweaty palms and a racing heart isn't always chemistry. Sometimes it's food poisoning."

We laugh about it, but they get the point. We give so much power to "feeling a certain way" that when we meet somebody and then we name that chemistry, then out of that we just snap to a yes/no decision instantaneously. Either that's present or missing. I call that "just add water" chemistry. It's tenuous at best and rarely sustainable. Unfortunately this is very prevalent in long distance

relationships. Now I just want to clarify that I'm not talking here about the desire to have rapport, you know, when you enjoy each others humor, their mind, and by the way they're not too bad to look at either. Now that's healthy desire.

Where long distance gets tricky is that you don't have the nuance of non-verbal communication, to accurately read the person, the relationship, especially in the early stages. They're usually very much like a whirlwind. You have condensed pockets of in-person intimacy that doesn't give you the information that the day-in day-out getting to know the mundane as way as the stellar moments in another persons lifetime.

Frankie: I agree; this is very treacherous ground. So what's the solution to this challenge?

Lois: Well to kind of resonate what we've all said is about really realizing right off the bat that right there some of the relationship puzzle pieces are inherently missing in this equation. So how do you deal with that? You go slowly.

I suggest to my clients who are entertaining long distance relationships: don't make any major decisions until you really log in the hours, the weeks, the months and pay attention to those red flags that dance by those phones, emails, or intensify truncated visits.

One time I always just have to say aside, when these relationships or any kind of relationships have fallen apart, when we go back, my clients, invariably, have always been able to pinpoint the red flags, where they said "Thank you voice of instinct but I am going to do what I am going to do."

I always encourage them to really honor the red flags. Another point is, know your soft spots and know them well. Now I have to admit, if you're like me, someone who is literally all too many times falling in love with a man who played me with language like a violin; be careful of prolonged conversations. They can

be very misleading and totally intoxicating. The other thing I think is really important is to be real in what you want in your life. How does this relationship support or not support that. In other words in terms of having conversations with people I suggest that they have very pointed vision oriented questions to ask and kind of a very easy playful manner. Such as questions like "if you had a magic genie who granted you your perfect life what would it look like in five years?" Or "If you won the lotto what would change in your life? What wouldn't change?" Questions like this are very helpful in finding out where you partner's priorities and values are. Another big thing is to really go on with your non-relationship life, and see this journey as icing, but not the batter, of the cake.

I see so many clients who are in a stuck place in their professional life. They use a whirlwind long distance relationship as a distraction to avoid looking at the bigger picture of their life or avoid taking actions they really know that they need to take.

And of course like everyone else said, whenever possible, spend as much prolonged in-person time with them as possible. You don't know the person until you know the person, end of story.

Frankie: How true. And like I always say, love isn't a race. There's no such thing as a relationship emergency, so it pays to take it slow and steady. Thanks very much Lois. We have one more challenge.

Lois: Well challenge number eight, and this is a big one, thinking that they're in love based only on e-mail and telephone contact. And then they're either very disappointed or persist in the fantasy when they finally do meet. I call this "virtual relationship syndrome." I find it very prevalent not only in long distance relationships but intimate relationships as well. We're in such a high tech period that people are so busy and people have entire relationships without ever spending any one on one time with each other. And it fosters a level of fantasy and for the most part it eliminates, as I said, the richness of the non-verbal

communication. Many times I'll ask clients, well how long are you dating this person? Only to find out that they've had four hour conversations and enough e-mail to fill a notebook and they've only met twice. And in some cases, they haven't met at all. And with only phone a e-mail to base your relationship on you could really have a hey-day with fantasy and assumption.

Frankie: Oh big time, big time, absolutely. So, what's the solution, Lois?

Lois: Well, I think the first step is to meet in person as soon as you can, and you'll get more information, more in-person meeting, than in several days, weeks, or even months of phone or e-mail. And when you do speak, I would suggest being very intentional about what you speak about. First get clear with yourself what you're looking for, first in your life and then in your relationship. And be honest about your lifestyle.

If you just want something casual, than perhaps it's a good fit for now. If however, you're looking for what I call, "A luscious life partnership," then use the phone and e-mail sessions to really get to know the other person. Not just flirt, and to answer back and forth. Nothing builds more fantasy than juicy content with no context. Listen intently on their lifestyles, their choices, their values. How do they talk about their family, friends, co-workers? Do they like their work? That's a very important thing. Are they a good listener? Now, for some people it may not sound very glamorous or romantic, but will save you from falling into the "fantasy pit." And what I think is one of the biggest indicators - is how do they react when you suggest an in-person meeting? That will tell you a lot. If they make a lot of excuses of why that can't happen, pay attention, and in my book - run the other way. I call that behavior - you know behavior is bold, and words are weak sometimes. You know they may only be interested in a virtual relationship. And relationship success resides between the spaces between the words, not just the words themselves.

Frankie: How true. Thank you, Lois.

Lois: You're quite welcome.

Frankie: What a fabulous job, Coaches. Thank you very much for your insights. You know, this is an area that's rife with pitfalls. And I think tonight you've given us a lot to think about, and some really fabulous tips that hopefully will help people avoid those pitfalls. So before we open it up to questions I'd like to remind everyone that you can get a written transcript and audio recording of this seminar. And here's another URL, we've got a few more, you can go to <http://www.consciousdatingaudio.com>, It's only \$9.95 and you'll get immediate access to the replay line until we have the edited version of the MP3 recording. Also, if you're serious about finding your soul mate and want to kick start the process; we have a four week Conscience Dating Relationship Success Training for Singles program. It's a tele-program beginning Tuesday February 20th, and we have a free information call on February the 7th at 8:30 PM Eastern. So to register for this free call, go to <http://www.consciousdating.com/ready.htm>

Woman 2: Yes. This is Susan from California. I like what you are saying to meet each other as soon as possible. People are going virtual dating through the internet. What would be the least amount of time before they get to meet each other?

Lois: This is Lois. I'll take that, because I really resonate with that. That's a great question. I like to create principles for my clients, support them in ordering their principles versus rules, but I suggest to them what are three to four key pieces of information that you need to know, not that you are going to drive off into the sunset with this person. Usually they come up with about three or four pieces of information that they need to know and then from there they initiate meeting this person.

Frankie: Lois, can you give us an example of one of those criteria, maybe?

Lois: Sure, well, I think it depends on what the person's requirements are -- but one thing that really speaks to a lot of people is, does this person like their job? Do they enjoy what they do? Is there a passion when they talk about the things that are included in their life? That's a big one. Also someone's values as well. Does this person talk about partying a lot? That might be a real red flag. So things like that.

Jennifer: This is Jennifer. I would like to comment on the question too. I think it is really easy to get seduced into doing a lot of emailing and phone calling before you've met somebody in person, regardless if you have a criteria, or requirements, or needs, or standards, or principles. After a while you could be spending hours still on the phone, and still doing the emails without meeting. I think that there has to be a time when you say, "I am saturated. It's enough already." We need to graduate to meeting in person. So I think it's important to be in touch with your own inner voice, your own inner gyroscope. I don't think I can go on continuing to have this pseudo intimate relationship, and I have to meet you in person. And you start negotiating on that, and I think a red flag there is if somebody says no, I really can't make it or I have to get my passport together and you start hearing the hems and the haws or you hear "Yes, I'm getting on the plane tomorrow; I'm going to come out to meet you."

Randy Hurlburt: This is Randy. I want to agree with both Lois and Janice and add one additional thing. In addition to finding out who they are and meeting soon, there's a reality issue here. It matters if your virtual relationship is with someone who's 20 miles versus 2000 miles away. If it is two thousand miles, it may take some time to figure out the logistics of getting together and meeting.

So you know, you may need to give it that necessary amount of time don't get too far bought into it. This is like what Janice is saying, "Give it the time, and work out the logistics." But, you know, don't continue to get yourself bought into it until you have met in person.

Lois Barth: That's a good point because restraint, emotional restraint, I think is what will save a lot of people from getting into a difficult situation where emotionally they are involved, but as Janice has called pseudo-involvement.

Janice Bennett: Yes, pseudo-intimacy, is, can be shattered within thirty seconds or two minutes of meeting somebody in person after you have invested so many hours on the phone or by email. You have to give that so much credibility and balance that out, that investment. As Lois says, she has principles; I have a principle, which is I'm trying to save my clients the time investment and the money investment and the energy investment of going after something that may not give them good return on the investments.

Woman 2: I have a question for Janice.

Janice: Go ahead.

Woman 2: Janice, I just wanted to go back to what you were mentioning about running the other way if the person reacts when you want to meet them. I'm in a situation where I was dating somebody who ended up leaving out of town a few months after we started dating, to start school for a couple of years. Opposed to what everyone is saying, where it's really fantasy over the phone and then when you meet, things are different, it's actually really great when we're together, but it's over the phone that it's really complicated and difficult because we really can't be with that person. I'm not sure how to look at this based on what everybody's saying.

Janice: I think we're trying to differentiate between dating somebody virtually and never having met before in person. But you already started having met and dated and started a relationship, at least the beginnings of a relationship, in person. Is that correct?

Woman 2: Yeah, that's correct.

Janice: So what you're experiencing is a problem with being able to maintain your connection across the distance. Is that right?

Woman 2: He's experiencing more than I am. He is having really hard time with having a long distance relationship and he is not even interested in having me come up for the weekend because as I leave, he crashed it.

Janice: Right.

Woman 2: And so he [xx] just not see each other until there is a long period of time when he can't see me because he is in school and he just focus on school.

Janice: So what's your reaction to that?

Woman 2: I'm okay with him being in school but I would like to see him a little bit more often but I'm trying to understand from his perspective.

Janice: Yeah. It sounds to me that you do understand from his perspective but it might take some more communicating and negotiating and compromising. It might mean that you can still have a connection and you do trust him and he definitely wants to focus on school and if you support him in his school and ever, you don't want to distract him from that of course.

Woman 2: Right.

Janice: Right. But it might then take more communication so that he understands your feelings, he understands what your needs are, and that you can come up with a plan together that you've negotiated and compromised, so that you can still get some of your needs met, and he gets his needs met, and he can get straight A's in school, and you're not going to feel so frustrated and distant.

Woman 2: Right. Okay, great. Thank you, Janice.

Janice: You're welcome. Thank you.

Melvin: You know, I'd like to add something to that, too, because if you're very clear about where your relationship is going, then you have a road map, with some intentionality and a goal.

So if you know that you are looking at getting married, you think differently than someone who's just dating. And if it's going to be recreational, where everybody gets to go date each other because you're so far away, and then that gives you a different framework. So anywhere from dating to being married will give you a different course in every one of those scenarios.

So if it's pre-commitment, where you haven't made a commitment to really be a couple yet, exclusively -- then there's one set of rules. And if you're, like, pre-marital -- where you're getting ready to get married -- it's a different set of rules.

So, I think that from where you are, you need to really look at where you're going and see if both of you are on the same page, because I think that will set a lot of things in motion as far as intentionality, purpose, time commitment and trust.

Janice: You know, it's amazing to me, Lois and Melvin and Frankie, especially. We're all thinking the same way; we just say it a little bit differently. But we all are really thinking so similarly about relationships and about connecting and how to connect. It's so inspiring for me.

Woman: I'm going to ask a question that might get some people reacting.

Frankie: Oh, good, a challenge. We love a challenge.

Woman: Can you really ask someone -- I mean, I know you can -- but for me to sit and say, "What's going to happen in a year and a half? I want to know" -- to me, it seems a little bit absurd. Yes, we've talked about marriage; yes, we've talked about our concerns about marriage. There's a bit of an age difference; how is that going to work out? How is somebody who's just finishing school, who

doesn't even really know where he's going to be placed when it comes to work, really answer me, to say, "Oh yes, for sure, I'm going to marry you in a year and a half when I'm done school."

Woman 2: Before anybody answers that, I just do want to say that that can happen even if you're not in a long-distance relationship, right?

Woman 1: Correct. Absolutely. So I have a bit of a hard time just listening to what Randy has said. It's not pre-marital. It is exclusive, and at the same time I feel like it's in-between.... Is there such a thing as saying, "Yeah, I want to know in three years what's going to happen..." It's almost like I'm asking for a guarantee, when I'm very clear there are none.

Randy: Randy here and would like to respond. I think what you are saying is right on target. It is very difficult to ask somebody for a guarantee in the future. I don't know how long you have known each other. Let's say you have known each other for six months, a year, or a year and a half and some of it has been long distance you can't really tell for sure. You need to base more on what you feel is happening in this relationship. What is it that Yoda in Star Wars says, "Trust your feelings."?

I'm not talking here about the chemistry, infatuation that Lois is mentioning. I'm talking about your gut feeling about his level of attraction and commitment to you. And if day-to-day and month-to-month, it keeps growing, then that's something that is worthwhile, if in fact it's that important to you. My mentor, Dr. Basell, a psychologist - who is the co-author on my book - says "direction, not perfection." So if it's moving in the right direction, then you kind of stay with it, and you can't really expect a guarantee.

Frankie: OK, that's great. Thank you for putting that in. It makes a big difference.

Female: Well, I don't have a question; it is a statement about something that happened. I met a guy a year ago and I just went out with him once. And he

called me again this year, right after Christmas.

We spent the weekend together, the first weekend. He went home at night but he was here all day because we had a snowstorm and we were kind of stuck inside. So, he came over and we watched movies.

We started developing this chemistry or started noticing that it was there. He came back again the next weekend. We hung out, and watched movies, went out, did some things, and did a lot of talking. Then it happened again the third weekend, but he said that he could only spend Friday because this was going really fast. He said he was only going to spend Friday but it ended up being Saturday and spending the night Saturday night. He woke up Sunday morning, and he said you know what. I'm like overwhelmed! And I said why? And he said, well my whole life I've spent living my life with my intellect. This is the first time in my life I've actually sat this much, and I've never felt this much chemistry in my life. I'm going to have to take a couple of weeks just processing this and thinking about what's going on.

Well that's now two and a half weeks ago; he called me once and said We should have lunch later this week which should be this week, but it hasn't happened yet, and I'm wondering what the heck is going on. This must be a male thing that I don't get.

Melvin Allen: I'll take that. This is Melvin; I think that men do that. I think that it is not uncharacteristic for us to back off, to re-access where we are. Especially if we're in a territory or an area that we're not familiar with. We're trying to figure it out, and we're trying to see like, "What am I doing? Should I go back - should I not go back?" and we do that. On the other side, I would probably suggest to you, "Just watch," because if you really watch and listen, you probably will be able to learn a lot about who you're dealing with. And don't be uncomfortable, because if he's not pursuing you, I definitely would not pursue him. And it may be that he is really not that interested in you, and he doesn't know how to call. Or it

may be he's processing the information and experience, and he's got to like figure out what to do next. And just sit back and wait, and don't make anything up, just face it. You know, face it thinking on facts versus what you feel, and you will know, one way or the other.

Woman 2: He's told me he's never felt this kind of chemistry ever in his life.

Randy: First of all this chemistry thing is very unreliable for the first, I'll say, few months. It starts to become more reliable as you get toward the end of the few months. In the beginning phase it's very unreliable and it's really more like infatuation. So you need to give it that three month period of time to find out whether it's real or not. And then another aspect of finding out if it's real, and this is another thing I learned from Dr. Bassell and it's included in the book we wrote "Love is Not a Game" book, is a questionnaire that tells you what your real true chemistry is. It's not the sex and it's not the infatuation. It's after you get to know someone you ask yourself these questions like "my friend is a beautiful person" rate that 1-5. Or "this person's approval is very important to me" And you rate that 1-5. And you answer these questions and you get a real honest to gosh reading for the true chemistry.

Frankie: It's very true Randy, because the initial chemistry, your system is flooded with hormones. So it's true, you do need to wait. Melvin's advice is very sound, don't chase let them come to you. So let's take to the gentleman who asked a question and he has been waiting.

Man: This question is for anybody on the panel that wants to field it. It's pretty obvious it's very important you want to be true to themselves and the values that they have. And this can be true whether it's a close relationship or a long distance relationship. But I think it's a little more difficult when you're dealing with a long distance relationship and my question is, how do you really get a feel for whether the other person is really being true to themselves? As opposed to maybe there are some red flags or even pink flags, if you will, in their mind but

they just kind of gloss over them because they are wrapped up in a long distance relationship. Do you understand what I'm saying?

Melvin: I would suggest you hire a coach or find somebody to support you because I think that someone outside out of your relationship could possibly guide you into asking those difficult questions. And to have you think about things that you typically may not think about. No one taught us how to do relationships but mostly we're running on impulse, gut feeling, chemistry, infatuation, love. And all of those things can get us in trouble.

So, there's very systematic ways of really testing any relationship and seeing where it is and where it's going and how you feel. Is it infatuation? And having the kind of conversation and dialogue with the other person to find out where they are. They may be in a totally different place and you might not feel comfortable asking those questions, because you don't know how. So, get some support whenever you're stuck.

Frankie: I think that it's really important that you do have somebody who is objective enough to help you pick up on the cues and clues that are out there in the relationship, that you might not be able to see. You know, a lot of times, we're looking to see if the person is honest and kind and generous and has integrity and if they're ready to be in a relationship. But we can be seduced by the fact that they are the same kind of religion we are or they're very financially stable or successful or they're gorgeous. Lots of different things that could seduce you into thinking that all of those other necessary qualities are there, but really they're not. Having an objective third party to help you pick up on those cues and clues, especially the honesty one, could really be helpful.

Lois: There is no road map for relationships. But a guide, a coach can help you find sign codes That what's important because you know the answers is just sometimes there are too buried. And that's where coaching is very beneficial.

Man: I have a question; how do you find the right coach?

Frankie: [laughs] Good question.

Man: It sounds like great people on the panel but is coaching at a distance as effective as just trying to find somebody locally?

Janice: Most coaching is done over the phone. Geographics really, I don't think enter into it. Certainly when you are coaching singles, that's my experience, but you can take a look at the International Coach Federation, they have a "find a coach" service. <http://www.coachfederation.org> And just checking, I think even, in your local phone directory you may be able to find coaches.

Lois: Well, thank you. David's going to kill you for not mentioning that the Relationship Coaching Institute does have a "find a coach" system at <http://www.relationshipcoachfinder.com> And the four of us who are on the panel tonight we all have our bios and links to our websites on the tele-seminar page at <http://www.consciousdating.com/distance.htm> And I know you're heard from all of us and maybe you'd like to contact any of us to either buy books or to sign up for comp sessions or to subscribe to newsletters.

Melvin: You know I'd just like to say for 30 seconds, the right coach for you is a person you feel connected to just like you are in a relationship with, because I would interview 2, 3, 4 coaches until you found someone who could really hear you, at a point where you know there's a difference, a connection and you can hear them as well as vice versa - they can hear you and you can hear them. So I would look at least 2, maybe 4 coaches and actually interview them to find out which one works for you, regardless of this is an RCI, a coaching federation or someone in the Yellow Pages. Spend the time and invest the effort to find out who they are and what they do what they specialize in and do you feel comfortable with them.

Man 2: Right, that's good to hear because partly I fell like I need coaching around some of the relationship stuff and partly around running my business and

work issues, so those are the two areas. Also, somebody I have a good rapport with seems really important to me.

Frankie: That's what we want for all of you. We want you to have somebody that you can trust and that you have a rapport with that you can talk about the things that matter to you. We can then help steer you and guide you and support you as you get the results and attain the goals and have the kind of life that you want.

Female 2: Any other questions?

Female 2: I have a comment actually. I have a lot of questions and there's probably not much time left for that so I just want to comment and say how immensely helpful the call has been tonight and I really appreciate everybody's input and insights and thank you very much.

I have another question. How many people, I mean this is just a generalization, how many people is it going to take to meet on the internet before you actually find the right partner. I mean, I know some people find him on the first one. But for the rest of us is it normal to be doing this for a couple of years?

Janice: I think it's a very individualized process but I think the big thing, I've had a lot of, I've had some of acquaintances on the internet, I think it's really been very specific. One of the distinctions here at RCI which I love is basically people write ads in two different ways I call it the best foot forward ad and we usually get a whole ton of responses and then the one that is really specific to what you are looking for and you will get less responses I can assure you but they will be higher quality or more resonant with your values and who you are and I think that's a really important thing so you know it's not really a numbers game in my mind but the more you get clear both in the listening and who responds, they are asking the right questions and also really presenting yourself in a very authentic way I think it really it kind of shortens the learning curve and as we all said in one way or another meeting the person as soon as possible. People who go to the

internet year after year I find that they do a lot of back and forth email. When I actually ask them the percentage of people they meet, this may be just 10-15%.

Woman: Because I usually meet three or four people a week typically.

Frankie: I would like to add to that. The Internet should be one part of your strategy to find a partner. It should not be the only place that you are present. David talks about that in the Conscious Dating book. It is about the four levels of where you are going to meet a partner. You have varying degrees of potential success based on where you are. When you go to church or synagogue, or if you volunteer at, let's say, Habitat for Humanity, you have more values in common with those people than someone that you would just meet in a bar or even on the Internet. So you have to cast your net wide and I think that's where you can get increased success in finding a partner.

Randy: Are you meeting three or four people a week on the Internet or actually going out and meeting them in person?

Woman: In person.

Randy: OK, because that's what I was going to say, it's important to not just meet them over the Internet, it's important to go out and meet them in person.

Woman: 10 or 15 on the Internet and three or four in person.

Frankie: You're a busy lady!

Randy: You're a busy lady, but the key thing is to be clear on your requirements and test them to find out what kind of people they are and also to have the best dating skills that you can have so that you can put your own best foot forward.

Frankie: Any other questions? We have a few people vying for it. [laughs]

Woman: OK, my situation is the following, I kind of reconnected with this friend I've known for 10 years and when we met we were both married, but our lives dramatically changed in 10 years. We kept in touch all this time, but not very consistently and then he wrote me again in January, he's a single guy, I'm a single mom, but we're like 2,500 miles apart. We've been talking about our kids and our lives, what we are doing and our jobs, it's really nice. I just want to pursue the relationship with him, but I don't know how to ask him about doing this long-distance, it's so complicated because we're friends.

Frankie: So just to clarify, your question is how do you share with him that you would like to take this to a different level? Is that what you are asking?

Woman: Yeah.

Frankie: Who would like to answer that one?

Melvin: This is Melvin. I would suggest that you be very frank, honest and upfront and just say so because if he is the right person and the shoe fits, he'll put it on, lace it up, and wear it. If he is not the right person, and he would like to have a relationship with you as a friend then I think he should have the ability to state that and you should have the ability to hear that, but you don't want to spend too much emotional energy and invest too much time.

Woman: But do you think he might withdraw if I come on so strong?

Melvin: It's like jumping in the water to find out what the temperature is, you've got to do something other than just making assumptions without having him be able to respond to that, or share your feelings so he knows exactly where you are. But if you are just doing this dance of you don't want to ask him and he may not respond, he may withdraw, then it's like having somebody in the door prevents someone else from coming in the door. So you get to be the chooser, you get to decide whether to continue it or not.

Woman: So you think that would be better over email or over the phone?

Melvin: I think that is a personal preference. I think you do it the way you feel most comfortable.

Woman: OK.

Frankie: OK thank you. Next Question?

Woman: Hi it's Nancy here. I was just wondering, when you are at a point where you can meet somebody, let's say you are coming away from two long-distance points and meeting in the middle, where do you meet? What is a good place that is safe? Do you have any tips on that?

Frankie: Who'd like to take that one?

Lois: This is Lois. Obviously you want to, not even depending upon how long you've known the person, you actually don't know the person until you know the person, so I would say, obviously public places is an optimal, make sure that you are safe. I think the other thing that people fall into the trap, they'll do some kind of mini-marriage for the weekend, so they'll spend the time together as opposed to just separately renting, staying in different places then just meeting maybe two or three times during the weekend, if you are both meeting in a middle ground.

But I think safety is a very important thing to be very careful about because people can paint a very different story of the reality of who they are. So you have to be mindful of that.

Woman: Thank You.

Frankie: Any other questions? Have we come to the end?

Woman: No you haven't! I've got one. I'm involved in a "something", I think a pre-committed relationship with somebody I met through the Internet, I've met people locally too, but we've been corresponding for five months and talking on the phone almost everyday. We've met face-to-face once and in another six weeks or so we'll have a chance to be in the same city, his city, for four days.

I'm trying to set priorities, what do I really look for when I've got that limited amount of face-to-face time? Or is that just a function of what my requirements are?

Frankie: I think it's absolutely a function of your requirements and keeping safety in mind and understanding where you both are in terms of what kind of relationship you are both looking for. Are you recreationally dating? Are you looking for something longer term?

Woman: We've both talked about we're looking for something longer term, and we're both exclusive at this point, at least that's what he's telling me and don't have any reason to doubt it, I have lots of evidence that that is true.

Randy: The thought that comes to my mind, there's probably lots of other thoughts as well, but it is to enjoy this time that you have together, you've only met him once in person, this will be the second time so this is really too soon to be making firm judgments and decisions about the future, though it doesn't hurt to talk about it.

But the main thing is to be there in the moment and enjoy the time and ask the questions that you want to ask, but mainly enjoy it and get a feeling for it and then think about it afterwards.

Frankie: I'm a little concerned, actually more than a little concerned about this talk about exclusivity so early on in the relationship, there's a lot you don't know about him, as Lois keeps saying "you don't know until you know", something like that, Lois?

Lois: That's what I said!

Woman: I didn't make a decision to be exclusive, just everybody else I was seeing just kind of fell apart, I haven't met anybody recently and this continues to grow so it kind of evolved, it wasn't like "I'm done looking!"

Janice: This is Janice. I think that again I do agree with Randy, you do need to spend time together and enjoy one another, and I don't know if it, therefore, works if you are exclusive by default. You know "Yeah, this feels good, it's kind of working out, we're on the phone, we're doing email, we're going to see each other in six weeks", you still have your whole life where you are living now, and by default you started to be really invested in this person and I'd be concerned about the balance between your virtual intimacy and your actual intimacy. So one

way to kind of diffuse that is by continuing to have as much of a social life as you can manage in your real life. Otherwise it's exclusive by default.

Frankie: Good Advice. Any other questions? OK, well I think then if we have no more questions, let's wrap up the call.

I'd like to thank everyone for participating and we look forward to seeing you at our next teleseminar, which is going to be held on March the 1st, the first Thursday of every month, and the topic for March is "Conscious Dating for Boomers: Finding Love over 50". That should be an interesting one!

And then on Valentine's Day at Noon Pacific and 3pm Eastern, we are having a very special conference call, it's the one year anniversary of the publication of the Conscious Dating book, and we will also be announcing the winners of the Conscious Dating Success Story of the Year contest. So hope you join us for that.

And then we also in two weeks time on February 15th at 6:30 Pacific and 9:30 Eastern, we have our Conscious Dating TeleClinic, and that's for life-coaching and advice. You can register by going to www.consciousdatingteleclinic.com and it's free!

I thank everyone and have a terrific evening!

[End of Transcript]

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Until next time!

David Steele and Frankie Doiron

