



There is no MICROWAVE DATING :)



This post is written for **both teens** (who are not yet ready for deep dating relationships) and **other young people** (who are mature enough, preparing for marriage and in the right time for developing dating relationships).

There are great pointers for you both in this post :)

We got dressed up with each other's gift (Manju got me a beautiful shirt and I got her a lovely Indian kurtha) and took a pic this morning. Went out for a ride, prayed in the car while we drove, bought some chicken, mangoes and vegetables (I am planning to cook a special chicken dish for the kids today).

It is a beautiful morning. **Today we are completing 9 years of married life. Not a big span, but a good span of time.**

There is no such thing as '**Microwave Dating**'. Let me explain.

FEELING LONELY

Any emotional relationship with the opposite sex that becomes strong very quickly and subsides just as quickly is not made to stay.

True love is gradually formed and it takes time. Whereas often when one is lonely there is a yearning for attention and acknowledgement. So, what happens?

One then falls for any attraction that comes his or her way. Loneliness is the end result of our love tank being "not full". If you remember, each person has a love tank within which must be filled with love from the



right sources like parents, siblings etc. **So, when this love tank is not full the person feels lonely and starts to look out for ways in which to fill the love tank.** Most often this search ends up in finding the attention and acknowledgment from a person outside the 'right source' circle and a relationship begins.

These relationships are founded on **STRONG FEELINGS**. Almost a 'heady' feeling, if you know what I mean. They tend to escalate fast, meaning they grow very deeply emotional very fast, thriving entirely on feelings. Hey, hey, please do not misunderstand me. Feelings are created by God and they are good, but they are simply the wrong things to base relationships on. No strong relationship can be based entirely on feelings.

DATING IS NOT A CURE FOR A LONELY HEART

Many a times, I see that young teens and youth, out of sheer loneliness, try out dating relationships. Let me put it from another angle. For the fear of being lonely, many teens and youth get into wrong, hurting, ungodly dating relationships and put up too much with it.

WHAT HAPPENS TODAY?

1. Putting up with behaviour that is disrespectful in a dating relationship.
2. Giving into things that are not in accord with your values.
3. Settling for less than you know you really desire or need.
4. Going back into a relationship that you know should be over.
5. Smothering the person you are dating with excessive needs or control.
6. Getting into a dating relationship that you know is not going anywhere.

There are quite a few other signs as well.

But to take the 'bull by its horns', one has to deal with the first things first.

In this case the 'lonely feeling' is the first thing to be fixed. So, firstly, strengthen your relationship with God and restore your links with the family support system. Cure yourself of the fear of being alone or rejected and then, if you still feel that you need it, find a relationship.

ONE VERY IMPORTANT KEY

Most importantly, we must understand that God has purposefully instated the family support system. It is meant to be the first place from where you receive all the affection and acknowledgement you may need. But, it also means we must be prepared to receive it from them. **Today I see that, although numerous teens and youth have a lot of friends, and they take pride in their family, in effect these relationships do NOT MEET their deepest needs. So, these youngsters become vulnerable to dependencies in dating.**

But, the truth remains that first, we need to be open and ready to receive from and seek to find strength from our God instated family friendships. It is possible that once we start receiving such love and attention from these relationships we may not be that desperate to get into dating relationships.

WHY TODAY DATING RELATIONSHIPS ARE BASED SO MUCH ON FEELING?

Because teens and young people today are not pursuing wholeness.

They presume that dating relationships will bring them wholeness. No! No! Let me assure you, there is much more to relationships than that.

Wholeness in life can truly be felt only when there is spiritual growth, personal growth, and vocational growth, serving others, hobbies, intellectual growth and the like. So, if you were to pursue 'WHOLENESS' in the right sense of the word and get your life active in different spheres, you may not even come to a point where you would say, 'I need a date'.

Did you understand my point?

DATING then will not be a need, a necessity, an escape route, rather DATING will flow into its right mould when everything else within you is deep and strong. The more you pursue wholeness, the less you will feel like you need a dating relationship in order to be whole.

VERY IMPORTANT STATEMENT

The best safeguard against giving in to bad dating relationships, less than satisfactory dating relationships or bad dynamics in dating relationships, is you're **NOT NEEDING** that relationship.

And..... And.....And.....And.....And..... One can reach that level only by being grounded in God's love for us, grounded in a good support system, working out our issues (past childhood hurts, rejections, recurring wrong themes and patterns in relationships, other areas of brokenness, pain and dysfunction).

When you are in this right position, you feel wholesome within yourself and you will not say YES when you should be saying NO. Did you understand that?

IMPORTANT REMINDERS AGAIN

DATING IS NOT MEANT TO CURE LONELINESS. It is meant only as a means to fulfil the need for male-female romantic relationships between adults, on their way towards marriage.

When even as a single, you are living your life to the fullest, feeling whole and content, you will not be driven to find a relationship just to escape from loneliness or your sense of non-fulfilment.

Choices made out of need are less satisfactory and self-destructive.

Remember, you must get to a place where you are happy with your life apart from a dating relationship, in order to be happy with one at the right time and at the right age.

TOO MUCH! TOO SOON! TOO FAST!

The problem of premature commitment and over involvement in a dating relationship is a common one. The two people find that they have strong feelings for each other. Before they know it, they begin investing enormous amounts of time into the relationship. Without realising it, they suspend or neglect other people, interests and activities. They quickly start dating exclusively. They feel intense passion for each other and miss each other deeply when they are apart.

Now.... another **IMPORTANT POINTER** ~ **They may marry soon thereafter or THEY MAY BREAK UP, ONLY TO REPEAT THE FAST PACE DATING RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE ELSE.**

I call this '**MICROWAVE DATING**'.

Meeting, dating and mating within few weeks or even months is not healthy. I believe Homo sapiens have been given much greater ability to be sensible and mature than animals :) Sorry, but yes pun intended :)

NO SHORTCUTS PLEASE

We need to understand the nature of any relationship as God designed them. This applies not only to dating, but families and friendships. Relationships grow in a healthy manner only as they undergo experiences and there are no shortcuts or substitutes to replace experiences. **In other words, we only know each other to an extent that we experience each other.**

No Shortcuts!

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE STABLE, AT THE RIGHT TIME, AT THE RIGHT AGE, AT THE RIGHT JUNCTURE WITH THE RIGHT MOTIVE, WITHIN THE RIGHT BOUNDARIES, UNDER THE RIGHT AUTHORITY.....here are some tips for HEALTHY DATING RELATIONSHIPS.

Have enough talks to safely open up with each other.

Let somebody mature and Godly know about this relationship and walk with you in a mentoring place.

Understand each other's strengths and weaknesses.

Meet and spend time with each other's friends.

Get to know each other's families.

Take some time off of each other in between, it will help bring in some objectivity. What do I mean? Stop calling and texting each other for a period of one month or so and think objectively. This will greatly help. Purposefully use this time away from each other to think through the relationship, alone and with friends.

Understand your best style of disagreement and conflict management.

Please note: It is hard to imagine doing just these few pointers in just few months.

Why? Because it cannot be done :)

I cannot even begin to count the number of times I have been told, "You don't understand. It is as if we have known each other all our lives", "We are soul mates", "Everyone in my family knows about this relationship and they all agree", "We are madly in love and you will never be able to understand that love", "Our love is not like others, it is very unique and different".

Hey, hey, hey, hey! **There is no MICROWAVE DATING.** Wait for the right time and go through the seasons. Yes, even relationships have their seasons!

It is important to understand that **YOU DON'T FALL IN LOVE**, but **FORM LOVE OVER A PERIOD OF TIME.**

Love formed over a period of time based on mature, Godly, holy, sacrificial, other-centered standards will last for a long time. Love that is formed over feelings will fizzle out during crisis.