

13 STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL DATING

Sylvester Onyemalechi

1. **Build a strong relationship with God.**

A strong relationship with God will help build and perfect your person to be a good spouse to someone. If you are not polished, you will mess up your relationship, even if it is with an angel. As long as Jesus Christ is Lord of your life and reigning supreme in your life, you will succeed in your relationship. Let the word of God purge, clean you up and perfect your character. Let God renew your mind with his word and give you a new mindset that will guarantee success in any and every relationship.

Who to marry is not the first thing to concern yourself with, but making yourself ready by getting close to God and allowing Him to work on you and perfect your person.

Matt 6:25-34

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? 28 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

NIV

2. **Get your relationship needs met outside the dating context.**

People want companions, someone to listen to them, feel with and for them, hear their cry, complaints and testimonies. Some relationship needs of some are someone to confide in, hang out with, love and be loved, play and laugh with. Some want those who will help them carry someone of their life burdens. These relationship needs can be met by family and friends that you have no desire to date. If these needs are met outside the dating context, you will not fall prey to some of the trap and terrible mistakes many have fallen into and regretted the rest of their lives. Let your dating be based purely on love

3. **Learn your patterns (old relationship patterns from your original family, seeking completion for something you lack in yourself, idealistic wishes for yourself, inability to set boundaries, fear of closeness or intimacy) and work on them so you do not repeat them.**

Your family is your first school of relationships. Your past contains lessons for today and tomorrow. To have a good relationship today and tomorrow, you need to take a look at

your past relationships with your family, relations, school mates, acquaintances, colleagues and friends, to identify what is lacking and needing attention and a working knowledge of your person. I believe that when a man does not know his person, he cannot know what will fit him.

4. Date according to a few nonnegotiable values (faith, honesty, sexual purity, etc.).

Avoid vileness, faithlessness, perversity, slander, evil, pride, deceit, and lying. Keep yourself on the path of righteousness. Do not stray from the path of God. Stay with God and resist anything that will want to take you from the right path. Be honest with your self and with your partner. Mind your business and don't concern yourself with other people's business. Remain humble and never let pride take over. Keep your thoughts clean and healthy and never allow immoral things to settle in your mind for it can destroy you with unholy fire of lust and sex. Be a person of integrity and faithfulness to his words. Make yourself trustworthy and worthy of a close relationship.

5. Expand your tastes.

Be open to going out with people who you would normally not have on your list. Many have high tastes in life, as a result, they will never consider people who are lower than the class or standard they have set for themselves. Many times, it is very difficult to find someone that fits into what they want for a spouse. But, if you consider lowering a bit, you may find someone that makes you happy and excited about life, but yet, not up to the social class you wanted.

I know a woman who almost missed the husband she is married to now because, the man is too spiritual that he has no social life. By her kind of person and desire for a man, he is far from what she wanted, after I counseled her, she accepted, and they have been living happily for many years now. He has some things she doesn't have that marrying him will help her gain those qualities. In return, she can brush him up and his social life will improve. Someone contains what you don't have, and you have what someone doesn't have. If you lower your standard a little and observe and investigate with the eyes of God, you will find something good that will excite you the rest of your life.

6. Be yourself from the beginning.

Don't adapt to what you think the other person will like. Be who you are and give the other person the freedom to do the same. Never pretend, but be real.

7. Don't put up with bad behavior, and set good boundaries.

There is a difference between a Christian and an unbeliever. Christian relationship is different from the worldly relationship. The Christian should be guided by the teachings of Christ. The word of God presents to us the principles of God to live by in order to please God in all things. The Bible teaches that in all that we do, we are to do it to the glory of God, so in our dating, we are to say and do all things to the Glory of God.

1 Cor 10:31

31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

NIV

Stand by God's word and define what should be allowed and what should not. Set defined boundaries and keep to it no matter the temptation.

8. Take your time.

You would not allow a stranger into your house without proper identification, but many people allow virtual strangers into their hearts, minds, souls, and bodies. Open slowly as you get to know the person. Do not share everything about you once; take it a little at time as the relationship progresses positively. Do not surrender everything to someone you just met. Take time to know the person, so you don't get shattered and broken in pieces when the ugly truth comes out much later.

9. Stay connected in other relationships.

Members of your support system are the ones who are most objective about the people you are dating. Do not cut off from your church friends and family because you are dating someone. You need their support and fellowship. They may see what you have not seen, or stumble on information that you don't have that may be very helpful to you and your relationship. Don't abandon those close to you because you have just started dating.

10. Get active.

Network with friends and family, pursue the things you enjoy, join others who have the same need, use your gift of hospitality, and do something structured.

11. Take good look at yourself.

Is something about your personality, behavior, or the way you come across to others getting in the way of meeting people? Take a close look at your life and correct or eliminate what is no longer good.

12. Keep yourself free from illegal sex.

Honour sex as something holy and keep it confined to the marriage relationships. Sex outside of marriage is a sin. Keep away from it. All forms of sex should be avoided while dating. Anyone who will sin with you will definitely sin against you in future

13. Abide in God - and have fun!

God is the one who will make a way, so walk with Him daily. Pray about your dating life and ask Him what He wants you to do. Allow God to guide you all the way.