**Red Flags on the First Date**

You have decided to go on your first date off-line after many emails and hours of interaction. You are nervous and distracted. But sometimes through all of the excitement people forget basic precautions and do not see the “Red Flags” that they should have seen on their first date.

While most everyone’s idea of what a first date should involve is different, there are still solid guidelines that should be used. Oftentimes people do not listen to their intuition or the “Red Flags” that can lead to possible suffering, hurt feelings, financial damage, or physical harm.

**Before the Date**

Tell a Friend

Before you go on your first date tell a friend or family member when and where you are going and when you will return. Bring a cellular phone in case you need to call someone or have your friend call you periodically at certain times.

Use Your Own Transportation

Have your own transportation incase the date does not go well so you can leave when you need to. Use a taxi if you do not drive.

Have a Backup Plan

One cannot be too cautious, just remember you have never met this person before. Always have backup transportation if you rely on public transportation. As well, if you do not have a cellular phone then either borrow one or buy an inexpensive pay-for-usage type phone.

Meet in a Public Place

Never meet in aprivate location, remote place, or anywhere that makes you feel uncomfortable. There are several places you can meet such as a restaurant or museum.

Phone Number

Do not exchange phone numbers or email addresses before your first date. If a phone number is given, then when you first call them use star (\*67) before you dial the number. Star 67 blocks your number. Never use your home phone and opt for a cellular or public phone.

**The Anticipated Date**

Stay in a Public Place

Always stay in a public place. It is advisable to never go to your date’s home or have your date come to your home even if you feel extremely comfortable with them. Keep the first date short (approximately 45 minutes) and be sensible. It is a Red Flag if your date continually suggests that you go somewhere private.

Is Late or Cancels the Date Again

It is alright if your date is reasonably late, life does happen. But if they are very late or have canceled the date more than once then it is time to throw in the towel. More than likely they are too busy for a “potential” relationship or they are just not that interested in you.

Their Profile or Information Does Not Match

If your date is nothing like the way they describe themselves or their profile information is not even similar to what they said, then you should be concerned. Either your date is insecure, a liar, or a fraud. Pay attention to your instincts, if you are questioning what was really said earlier then you are probably right.

Alcohol and Drugs

It is best to stay sober in order to keep your senses about you. If your date shows up drunk or is high on some type of drug; end the date quickly. More than likely if they are drunk on the first date then they have a drinking issue.

Mickey Finn’s

Be on the lookout for Mickey Finn’s. A Mickey Finn is a slang word for a beverage that is laced with a drug (oftentimes chloral hydrate) in order to incapacitate a person or render them unconscious. Although this term originated in 1918, Mickey Finn’s are still widely used. Keep your drink with you at all times so it cannot be tampered with. If you suspect mischievous behavior, end the date quickly.

Do Not Leave Personal Items Unattended

Always keep your personal items with you. If your date has roving eyes on your personal belongings it is a definite Red Flag.

Wandering Eyes or Crooked Neck

When your date cannot keep their eyes to themselves and get a crooked neck from staring at waiter or waitress or some other person, it is a good indicator that they do not care that much about you. When someone is interested in everyone that passes by, they usually are interested in everyone else or they can be egotistical.

Shifty Eyes

It is a Red Flag when someone is not able to look at you when they talk and have to always look away. More than likely they are not honest and have something to hide or they are so shy that they are nervous.

Asking About Personal Information

Never share any of your personal information such as an address, phone number, birthdate, or birth place. Be on guard if your date is insistent on wanting personal information; identity theft quite common. Sometimes information is gathered by using false pretenses such as asking for your address so they can send you flowers.

Ask For Money

If your date asks for money, heed caution. Whether the money is for a charity, a sick grandmother, or a child; this is a Red Flag.

Talks about “Fate” or “Destiny”

It is a Red Flag if your date talks about how you were meant to be together and destiny or fate are mentioned often. Although our heart may long for “destiny”, more than likely it is not so. Either your date thinks that this “line” will get them their catch, or they are desperately lonely. But for whatever reason, be sensible.

Says “I Really Like You” or “I Love You”

Showing strong affection towards someone you do not know is a Red Flag. There are many reasons for using these superfluous words such as loneliness, insecurity, or dishonesty. It takes time to fall in love. Always question the words “I really like you” or “I love you”.

Inappropriate Physical Behavior

Any inappropriate physical contact such as touching or kissing is a Red Flag. Most often your date has only one thing on their mind and does not respect your wishes.

Pressure for Sex

When someone constantly pressures you to have sex it is a big Red Flag. One needs to know someone before entering this type of relationship. If you express your feelings of being uncomfortable with their advances and they continue, then they are dismissing your beliefs and values.

Rude Behavior

If your date is rude towards you, other people such as a waitress, or cashier; then more than likely it is a sign of how they will treat you. If rude comments are made about a roommate, coworker, ex-girlfriend, or sibling; they will probably be far worse than rude later.

The Complainer

If your date consists of nothing but complaints about life, relationships and so on, then it is a heads up. This person could be selfish, egotistical, high maintenance, or not happy.

If they are complaining now then one can imagine how much they complain when you get to know them.

Bad Habits

If your date has bad manners, interrupts you frequently, uses their fingers to eat food that requires silverware, or uses foul language often; then these are Red Flags. You might brush these bad habits off now but give it time and they will be quite irritating later.

**Note:** Listen to your instincts during the first few dates. One can never be too cautious. Although you can meet a lot of wonderful people through online dating; there is always someone that sends Red Flags. Take your time and get to know the other person. If it does not work out then that is absolutely fine, for not everyone is a potential partner. Just remember to watch out for Red Flags and be alert.