



Don't Avoid Romance

表达爱，接受爱

Date: Jun. 1, 2023

The solution to the decline in happiness—for the nation as well as among individuals—is simply to encourage more people to **pair off**, right? Maybe not. A closer look at the singles trend suggests that the problem is not a lack of available partners, but that young adults may **inadvertently** be avoiding romantic **attachment**. That is the challenge we face.

对国家和个人来说，解决幸福感下降的办法就是鼓励更多的人结婚，对吗？也许并非如此。仔细观察当前的单身趋势就会发现，问题不在于没有能谈恋爱的对象，而在于年轻人可能在不经意间回避了恋爱关系。这就是我们面临的挑战。

Psychologists commonly measure the health of attachment through two **dimensions**: anxiety and avoidance (the latter meaning a resistance to **intimacy**). To score lower on each dimension is better: Healthy **bonding** is neither anxious nor avoidant, hence the phrase secure attachment. In contrast, an insecure bond can involve someone being anxious but not avoidant, avoidant but not anxious, or both.

心理学家一般从两个维度来衡量情感的健康程度：焦虑和回避（后者意味着抵触亲密关系）。在每个维度上得分越低越好：健康的亲密关系既不是焦虑型的，也不是回避型的，因此有了“安全型依恋”这个词。相反，不安全的关系可能包括某人焦虑但不逃避，逃避但不焦虑，或者两者兼而有之。

The **prevalence** of avoidant attachment is a more **plausible** explanation for the increase in unhappiness among young adults than their simply being uncoupled. After all, we also know that

533 Words

pair off (使) 结成一对 | All the others were pairing off and I was left on my own. 其他人都出双入对，就剩我形单影只。

inadvertently [ˌɪnəd'vɜ:rtəntli] *adv.* 无意地，不经意地 | He inadvertently broke the glass. 他不经意把杯子打碎了。

attachment [ə'tætʃmənt] *n.* 依恋，爱慕；信仰，拥护；附件，附加装置；连接，连接物 | Mother and child form a close attachment. 母子情深。

dimension [di'menʃn] *n.* 维度；方面；范围，规模 | Her job added a new dimension to her life. 她的工作为她的生活增添了新的内容。

intimacy [ˈɪntɪməsi] *n.* 亲密，密切 | Their tone suggests there's a deepening intimacy between them. 他们的语气显示出他们之间有日益加深的密切关系。

bonding ['bɑ:ndɪŋ] *n.* 人与人之间的关系（或联结）| mother-child bonding 母子亲情

prevalence ['prevələns] *n.* 流行，盛行 | the prevalence of lung cancer among the local population 当地人

singlehood can make some people happier, and that a bad romantic partnership is clearly worse than no relationship at all. But in contrast to that mixed picture, many studies show that avoidant attachment is associated with lower satisfaction with life.

相较于单身，回避型依恋的盛行是年轻人越发不快乐的一个更合理的解释。毕竟，我们也知道单身可以让一些人更快乐，一段差劲的恋爱显然比没有恋情更糟糕。但与这种复杂的情况相反，许多研究表明，回避型依恋与较低的生活满意度有关。

So what is **provoking** this mass romantic avoidance? Two psychologists provided clues in a paper published in 2022 that was based on surveys of university students in Cyprus, including what led them to prefer being single. Strongly predictive of singledom, the researchers found, was not only a **preoccupation** with work and career but also the **pervasiveness** of so-called **dark-triad** personality characteristics (**narcissism**, **Machiavellianism**, and **psychopathy**). In other words, people may avoid romantic commitment if they are especially self-centered or work-focused.

那么，是什么导致了人们普遍不想谈恋爱呢？两位心理学家在 2022 年发表的一篇论文中给出了线索，该论文基于对塞浦路斯大学生的调查，研究了他们更喜欢单身的原因。研究人员发现，倾向于单身的人不仅通常专注于工作和事业，还普遍具有所谓的黑暗三联征（自恋、马基雅维利主义和精神病态）。换句话说，如果人们太以自我为中心或以工作为中心，他们可能会避免确立恋爱关系。

I believe romantic-attachment avoidance is the **missing link** in the research between singlehood and the **epidemic** of unhappiness among young adults. Happiness is decreased by emotional isolation; we need people who know us deeply and with whom we can be **vulnerable**. All of this suggests that to get happier, “**Pair up**” is probably not the right advice. Better to

中肺癌的流行

plausible [ˈplɔːzəbl] *adj.* 有道理的，可信的；花言巧语的，能言善辩的 | Her story sounded perfectly plausible. 她的说辞听起来言之有理。

provoke [prəˈvʊk] *v.* 激起，引起；挑衅，激怒 | The article was intended to provoke discussion. 这篇文章旨在引发讨论。

preoccupation [priˌɑːkjuˈpeɪʃn] *n.* 全神贯注，专注；使人全神贯注的事物 | The safety of their children is a constant preoccupation of most parents. 儿女们的安全始终是大多数家长的牵挂。

pervasiveness [pərˈveɪsɪvnəs] *n.* 普遍性

✧ 背景知识

dark triad

黑暗三联征，是三种人格特质各自独立又相互交织的特质群，且在西方文化中都属于反社会型人格特质，包括自恋、马基雅维利主义和精神病态。自恋 (**narcissism**) 特征：自我中心、爱慕虚荣、自我吹嘘、支配性、优越感、傲慢无礼和自以为是。马基雅维利主义 (**Machiavellianism**) 特征：冷酷无情、擅长操纵、阴谋算计、实用主义、注重结果和忽视道德。精神病态 (**psychopathy**) 特征：行为冲动、寻求刺激、缺乏共情、缺乏责任感。

missing link （理解问题或使事

solve the avoidance problem **per se**.

我认为，在研究单身与年轻人普遍不快乐之间的关系时，恋爱回避是缺失的一环。情感孤立会降低幸福感；我们需要那些懂我们的人，在他们面前我们不用假装坚强。所有这些都表明，想要变得更快乐，“谈个恋爱”可能不是正确的建议。我们应该解决回避本身。

Some of the causes of avoidance are obvious, such as the way social media encourages an intense focus on oneself rather than others. Research shows that social-media use is associated with greater narcissism (as well as depression and anxiety). In addition, a **diminished** influence of traditional institutions that provide meaning, including religion and family, can explain why young people are turning to work to find a sense of life's purpose.

回避恋爱的一些原因是显而易见的，比如社交媒体极度鼓励人们关注自己，而不是他人。研究表明，社交媒体的使用与更严重的自恋（以及抑郁和焦虑）有关。此外，宗教和家庭等提供人生意义的传统组织影响力减弱，促成了年轻人转向工作，以寻找人生的目标感。

If we want to create a happier future for ourselves and others, we will need to invite more love and romance into life. Or as E. M. Forster put it **pithily** in his novel *Howards End*, “Only connect!” The trends are discouraging, but the good news is that a plausible source of our romantic-avoidance problem is not a mystery, and we can combat it by speaking the truth about life and work, as opposed to **propagating self-inflating, workaholic nonsense** that pushes love away.

如果我们想为自己和他人创造一个更幸福的未来，我们需要给生活增添更多的爱和浪漫。或者正如 E·M·福斯特在他的小说《霍华德庄园》中简明扼要地指出，“唯有联结！”当前的趋势看起来不妙，但好消息是，回避恋爱的一个可能的原因并不神秘，我们可以通过揭示生活和工作的真相来对抗它，而不是宣传那些自我吹嘘和鼓励工作狂的胡说八道，把爱拒之门外。

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物完整的）必要的环节，缺少的一环 | Could this be the missing link in the search for a cure for cancer? 这会不会是癌症治疗方法探索过程中的缺失环节呢？

epidemic [ˌepɪˈdemɪk] *n.* 流行，传播；泛滥，猖獗 *adj.* 盛行的

vulnerable [ˈvʌlnərəbl] *adj.* 脆弱的，易受伤害的 | Old people are particularly vulnerable members of our society. 老年人是社会中尤为明显的弱势群体。

pair up (使) 配对，交往；结成搭档 | We learned later that he and Tanya had paired up. 我们后来得知，他和塔尼亚交往了。

per se [ˌpɜːrˈseɪ] *adv.* 本身，从其本身考虑 | The color of the shell per se does not affect the quality of the egg. 蛋壳本身的颜色并不影响鸡蛋的质量。

diminished [dɪˈmɪnɪʃt] *adj.* 减少了的，缩减的

pithily [ˈpɪθɪli] *adv.* 简洁地，简单地 | The essay was pithily written. 文章写得很简洁。

propagate [ˈprɑːpəgeɪt] *v.* 传播，宣传；繁殖 | The group launched a website to propagate its ideas. 这个团体建了一个网站来宣扬他们的主张。

inflate [ɪnˈfleɪt] *v.* 使充气，膨胀；鼓吹，吹捧，涨价 | The success further inflated his self-confidence.

To that end, let me propose a place to start, with three simple messages: You are not better or more special than others; you are not alive simply to work; happiness comes from loving and being loved. These three ideas **transgress** conventional modern thinking—and that's exactly the point.

为此，我想说三句简单的话，以此作为开始：你并不比别人更好或者更特别；人活着不仅仅是为了工作；幸福来自于爱和被爱。这三个观点与常规的现代思维相悖，而这正是问题的关键。

那次成功使他进一步自我膨胀。

workaholic [ˌwɜːrkəˈhɒːlɪk] *n.* 工作狂

nonsense [ˈnɑːnsns] *n.* 胡说，废话；胡闹；毫无意义的话

transgress [trænzˈɡres] *v.* 违反，违背

➤ 脉络梳理

- Para. 1 引出话题：当前的单身趋势源于年轻人对恋爱关系的回避
- Para. 2-3 介绍衡量情感健康程度的标准，指出如今回避型依恋盛行，导致年轻人越发不快乐
- Para. 4-6 分析年轻人普遍不想谈恋爱的原因
- Para. 7-8 提出建议：要提高幸福感需要给生活增添更多的爱和浪漫

➤ 长难句拆解

状语 | 主语
In addition, a diminished influence of traditional institutions

定语从句，修饰 traditional institutions | 补充说明
that provide meaning, including religion and family,

谓语 | 宾语从句，作 explain 的宾语
can explain why young people are turning to work to find a sense of life's purpose.