

**Demographics:** Straight, Hispanic man. Low Income. Relationship status: single and currently on dating apps (Hinge)

**Interview Summary:**

Luis is an affable and easygoing 29 year old Hispanic man. He was born and raised in New York and is currently unemployed and single. He has been using Hinge for about a year, a decision influenced by his limited social interactions and desire to expand his chances of meeting someone.

Luis mentioned that he has only gone on two dates off of the app, neither of which was in New York. He explained his process of checking for matches and initiating conversations, but emphasized a feeling of laziness around actually keeping up conversations or meeting in person with people online. He explained a perceived need to figure out “how the app works” in order to better understand how to present himself to gain more matches, and how he is willing to present himself differently online than in person.

He emphasized how different in-person dating feels for him, as it is more exhilarating and engaging compared to the online experience. He notes a lack of pressure and connection in online interactions, leading to a different emotional experience compared to asking someone out in person. He suggests that the virtual nature of online dating lessens the impact and importance of interactions.

**Prevalent Themes:**

1. Difficulty finding partners online
2. Lack of commitment in online dating
3. Online vs. In-person norms
4. Gamification of dating

**Interview date:** 11/14/2023

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**Transcript:**

**Interviewer:** Can you start by telling me a little bit about yourself? Any demographic info, what you do for work, relationship status you'd be willing to share.

**Interviewee:** Yes. I'm 29. Right now I'm not working. Before I was working... My last job was working at a life insurance startup and customer success. And demographics, nationality... My, my dad is Costa Rica. My mom is Puerto Rican. So Hispanic. I was born in Brooklyn, but I've lived mostly in Long Island. And relationship status? Single single single.

**Interviewer:** Are you on the apps currently?

**Interviewee:** Ah, yeah, I'm on hinge but not really any success there. I think I've maybe met up with like, one or two people on there. And that's actually while I was on vacation. So I've never actually had anything like home base was interesting.

**Interviewer:** How long have you been using like dating apps?

**Interviewee:** I want to say this hinge probably like, probably closer to a year now. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So you were kind of like later in the game to joining the dating online dating trend? Would you say that's that's fair?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I do kind of like enjoy meeting people out in person. But like, I also don't go out that often so that makes it harder.

**Interviewer:** Why did you kind of decide to join?

**Interviewee:** I just felt like I knew I was restricting myself so much to my social interactions like that. If I didn't try something like this, I probably wasn't gonna get anywhere.

**Interviewer:** Interesting. When you open up Hinge, what do you do?

**Interviewer:** Um, open up Hinge, I'll probably check and see if I have any messages or notifications because I do turn my notifications off. Then I'm also on Hinge pretty much just taking a little bit of time to swipe through and kind of see if that I guess there's anybody that I like, or just kind of when I do, go on there I am, like reading files, I've been looking at pictures and then if I do see, like, someone that I find attractive, or that I think I might be compatible with I'm kinda like, analyzing their profiles, just try and find something that I can use as a conversation starter, and I'll probably try and send a message like that.

**Interviewer:** Gotcha. So you're kind of checking out if they'd be compatible with you before you even like introduce yourself?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, yeah, no, for sure. Like I'm kinda like putting in precursors and yeah, kind of have I guess like a certain type and an ideal person in mind.

**Interviewer:** You mentioned that haven't met with someone in person yet in New York, is there a reason for that specifically?

**Interviewee:** Um, I would say like, I feel like I do have conversations like where I am getting to that point like, Hey, let's go out and do something. But I just, it just never happened. Yeah, yeah. Like really, like, bothered back and forth or, like, they are suggested, I feel like I also do pull myself out of it, like, out of like, actually meeting up with people. So like, I feel like people also

do the same thing. I guess, like with tangent this too. Like, there's just the ability to like, kind of like disconnect from actual conversation and just like, say, like, it almost feels like a game at some point.

**Interviewer:** Interesting. Can you expand on that a little bit?

**Interviewee:** Um, yeah, I guess because of the fact that you don't have that like that, well, not really physical. Like being in person, you don't really feel like that, that you don't feel that pressure or like, again, that connection to like, kind of dry the rest of interaction. I think it's something that I've definitely noticed like from in person interactions like versus like asking a girl out in person versus like doing it on Hinge there's the feelings that you get are nowhere near the same.

**Interviewer:** Fascinating. Can you describe the feelings in person versus on hinge a little bit?

Ah, yeah, I think like in person for me, like, it's almost it's almost like an adrenaline rush. And like a little bit of angst and nervousness. So like... It's something I actually realized when I did it the other day, I kind of liked it. So I think I'm definitely probably going to start doing it more. And you know, at least for me, just realizing there's nothing to lose, so why not? Yeah. And so like, I guess, with Hinge like that gets lost? Again, because there's no real interaction in person.

**Interviewer:** Does it matter to you that it gets lost? Or is it just something where it's like, oh, this is the new way things work?

**Interviewee:** I wouldn't say it matters to me. But I think like trying to figure out how to actually use the app and understand it. Like, that's what the mindset of the path is, like, to figure out the reason why I'm not really having success with it. But I'm sure it might be other reasons why, too. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Fascinating. Can you expand on that idea of how to actually use and understand the app?

**Interviewee:** Oh, yeah. I mean, I would say like, from all the stuff that you kind of hear about online, I know that, you know, the pictures are like a really big thing, the prompts that you have too... and then I guess how you, how you initially interact with people, I think that's a big deal. Like, are you gonna hit somebody with a one liner? Are you gonna try make a genuine? And, you know, so those kinds of things, I think, do play a factor.

**Interviewer:** Do you think it's different than the kind of like social feelings that come up when you ask someone out in person?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I mean, at least for me, like, I'm not the type of person where I'm gonna go and try a one liner. Like, introduce myself or say something or give a like, I definitely don't use one liners... Yeah, I feel like go online, at least for me, like I tend to sometimes will get lazy with

the way I'm like, kind of crafting responses where like, if I'm in person, like, I know that I gotta be sharp and be like, you got to be on and you got to be paying attention to the things that you do say in person. So, I feel like at least in person, like you've met the person already, you know, I mean, like, versus where you have probably a high probability, you may never meet the person, So you don't really have to, I guess worry about it.

**Interviewer:** Interesting, super interesting. How have you felt like the two people you've met with from Hinge?

**Interviewee:** Um, they were actually good. And one of the girls that I did meet, I actually went to go visit her in Pittsburgh, but like, it was just like, it was a long distance thing, and I just knew it wasn't gonna work. And again, we met on vacation. Like, when I went to go see her, like, in our home place, like it was a completely different dynamic. So, yeah, yeah. But like, they were positive interactions and like, you felt like they were still kind of like good, good dates, if you will. Yeah, definitely people that I would say were my type but in New York, that's kind of been hard. You know like, I am like, kind of very picky so like... in person, I can get like a general vibe of like, you're like, cool or somebody that you know, that's intellectual and fun to be around, but online its harder.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, that makes sense. Well, this has been super helpful. I really appreciate you taking the time.