

Demographics: Straight, Hispanic woman. High Income. Relationship status: single and currently on dating apps (Hinge)

Interview Summary:

Julia is a direct but easygoing 24 year old. She recently found a promising relationship off of Hinge which she has been exploring. She emphasized, however, that this relationship feels like an anomaly relative to other fledgling, “met-online” relationships in that it doesn’t feel superficial or small-talk-based.

She emphasized feelings of mistrust with how people present themselves on dating apps, as well as the need to be strategic in how you use the app to attract the kind of partner one is looking for.

Prevalent Themes:

1. The gamification of dating
2. Online vs. In-person norms
3. Safety of dating apps

Interview date: 11/14/2023

Transcript:

Interviewer: Okay, so just first any background can you tell me like your age, your current relationship status? Any demographics you feel comfortable sharing, like ethnicity, sexuality and income.

Interviewee: All right, tell me if I miss any: 24, Hispanic, Relationship status is single but asterisk. *laughs* That's it. That's everything. Oh, income, but I mean, I think like 115 to 120.

Interviewer: Are you currently looking for a romantic partner?

Interviewee: Um, yeah,

Interviewer: And how have you been going about doing that?

I'm a mixture of like in person slash hinge.

Interviewer: Okay, is hinge the only dating app that you've been using?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Have you ever used other apps?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: Can you tell me a little bit about your experience with hinge, like, generally kind of like pros cons, how you feel about using it, and like the interactions you've had on it.

Interviewee: Um, I've had it since June. So like five months now, I'd say I like paused using it. June or July. So I've had it for five months, maybe really used it like three and a half ish. I like it, I think you can it's a really quick way to filter out people who you know, you're not going to have a connection with or there's just like a glaring red flag. Um, I think one of the cons and like I'm guilty of this like you can change the city that you're in or like that you appear to be in so it's like you can make connections with people while you're traveling or while you're somewhere short term. But then if like you're another user on the app, and like are looking for something more long term or like stable, you might kind of be ear like misled that like, oh, wow, this person could be it but then turns out they don't actually live full time in the city and often doesn't have a way to like disclose like, whether or not you're actually from there or just stopping by existing

Interviewer: Have you ever ever met with someone off of a dating app?

Interviewee: One person

Interviewer: How would you describe like the general feelings of the quality of that interaction relative to like most of the interactions you might have in person with someone you met in person?

Interviewee: Like comparing meeting somebody that I met organically versus somebody that I met on hinge or like quality of interaction in person versus quality of interaction on hinge? I think quality of interaction with this with the person that one person I matched with, compared to other interactions we've had on Hinge is like 100 to 10 like, 100 being amazing. Just because this person, like had a lot that I liked, and we got along we did a really fun activity versus the conversations that I've had on hinge something has been interesting, but most remain very superficial. Most don't get past the small talk. And I'm just bored. Like I'm just like I can I have this interaction with anyone on their mother on any social media platform not necessarily hinge. Quality of interactions on hinge versus quality of interactions with people I've met organically, um, I'd say organically are better. Overall, just because you, when you I feel like when you have a face-to-face conversation with somebody you can judge really quickly like, am I vibing with this person? Am I genuinely connecting, versus on your phone or whatever, you can filter out a bunch and you don't really get like a full read on the person.

Interviewer: Would you say it is kind of like pre selection process around dating?

Interviewee: Yeah...., I've never taken this approach to dating or meeting a significant other so this is a change for me. But I feel like some people look at it negatively, that you're like being so critical of others, or, like have so many filters, but I think you can play the reverse and say, you're saving yourself a lot of time and energy in not investing in somebody that you know, on paper you don't connect with, or they will not connect with because you have a fundamental difference.

Interviewer: Yeah, so fair. What made you start using it and you said it was kind of like a newer thing for you?

Interviewee: Um, I hate to be cliché, but I feel like everyone fresh out of a breakup is like, Okay, it's time to go on the app, and I've never been on them. So they've always been kind of scared of the notion of like, meeting a complete stranger on the street. Just been in a long term relationship. But I feel like I decided to like Finally, check it out. Because I was curious. Like, honestly, Curiosity was the biggest factor.

Interviewer: Do you find that like, when you like, talk me through like your regular like day on like, if you open the app, like kind of what happens?

Interviewee: I'm sure I've got a time limit on the app for 30 minutes, and I don't think I've ever hit it. But essentially, I open. How familiar are you with the hinge platform before I like start giving you the names of like the different sections of the app? Should I share my screen? *Laughs* I think like there's a standout section, that hinge that hinges algorithm will pull like I don't even know how many people what is things like 10 people open the app. Look at my standouts clear them out. Look at my inbox. To the first top people are who would like like to improvise. I don't even know what that section is called. We haven't like really matched but they've expressed interest, whatever that section is. I think I haven't gone through that list of people since like, the early October. Okay, so I have like it's at the point where it won't tell me how many how many notifications I have, just because I don't check it because I don't I'm like not actively actively browsing.

Interviewer: Is there a specific reason for that?

Interviewee: Um, I guess like, there's the first relationship that I found on hinge, that relationship is in it's the developmental stages. So kind of letting, letting that play out a bit. And that like I've had one really good in-person organic connection that's also playing out so I'm like, I don't really feel like I need to continue to explore things with other people very proactively when I have something else kind of going on.

Interviewer: Do you think that that is like a sentiment that is shared by a lot of people or do you think like, how do you feel like the kind of like committing to a hinge date coming someone you meet off of hinges like kind of like a you specific thing?

Interviewee: I feel like most of the people that I know on Hinge are like there for one night stand. Or girls who are just like still kind of figuring out what they want relationship wise and kind of just want like dating practice in a way. Which like you're saying, do whatever you want, but I say I think I'm more of an outlier in the sense that like I'm satisfied with having a two person roster yeah there's there's people who want like a lot of different options and choices and try trying out different people's the right expression, but just like getting a feel for others.

Interviewee: Yeah. Have you ever had an interaction with someone that felt like it was more like that?

Interviewee: The in-person connections have been like organic... Yeah, like long term more stable, like seeking something like healthier? Versus yeah, I've definitely had conversations with people on hinge that you can tell are just like in it for like, the very near term and just want to kind of meet you and it you basically. Yeah. I do think there's obviously like exceptions. But yeah.

Interviewer: Talk to me about like, your own profile.

Interviewee: Um, I haven't really edited my profile since I created it. In June, I spent maybe 15-20 minutes on it just like doing all those security checks that have verification of identification. And then answering the prompts. I think the prompts took me the longest because they all thought very, like a large majority of them felt very superficial, or just like cheesy in a way, like they don't like I didn't connect with them. They didn't resonate with me. I'm sorry, I didn't want to have that on my profile. And then some of the questions that I did, like, I'm like, How do I answer this in a way where it will filter people out, but also not come off as she supercritical? Yeah. So almost like being strategic with it in a way. Like, you want to be approachable, but you also want to be approached by people who fit the bill.

Interviewer: Yeah, interesting. super interesting. Are you open to meeting people on hinge in the future?

Interviewee: Um, I mean, I'm still on the app. So clearly, I'm still I haven't made a decision to like, ditch it. But the way that I use it right now and have been using, it has been so casual that I could see myself like, if something else changed in my life, I could see myself maybe being a little bit more committed to having conversations with people and actually meeting up with people to progress those conversations in person versus like, continue them on the phone or whatever. But I also wouldn't say like, I'm done with the organic, like, I just feel like I'm kind of an intermediary point. I don't know, if my phone fell into the ocean tomorrow. I couldn't use hinge my life would continue exactly the same.

Interviewer: Talk to me a little about the relationship that you're kind of currently in?

Interviewee: We have actually talked about it a lot, the fact we met on Hinge. I think in a way we kind of defy a lot of like the stereotypes that come with relationships born in an app, if you will, because we kind of skipped over the superficial stage and skipped over the small talk. See Age. And, again, breaking in another stereotype the person that this person portrayed themselves to be online matches to achieve who they are in person. So, yeah, I guess, I don't know if that was the answer you were looking for.

Interviewer: No that's great, thank you for sharing that. And I just want to like, hit on a few things that you mentioned. And then I will let you go. But you mentioned kind of like how you

guys break the stereotype. So, talk to me a little bit about what you perceive the stereotypical online relationship relationships should be like, or like online started, or like I heard, like a lot of like, small talk and kind of like maybe like, you're not portraying yourself as like your full, authentic self. Talk to me a little bit about those feelings.

Interviewee: Yeah, I just think people have reservations about the apps because you can so easily either tailor your profile to a specific type of person that you're looking for. And like, that might not be who you are. But like, I don't know, financially, it just makes sense. To be with this person, or I don't know, whatever reason you want to be with this person. Or even like, once you're past the just like, initial, like, browsing of profiles. You can act as a person. Like, I don't know, you can tell me. Oh, yeah, I live in Brooklyn. Turns out you live on Staten Island. Yeah. Like I have no way of like, I can't filter that out until I like meet you in person and you like reveal this to me in one way or another? Yeah, so those are those are their stereotypes, which is assumptions about online chips and meeting people online. And I think for like conversations tend to say superficial views I think and especially in my case, like I just feel like I don't want to deep dive with somebody that I like barely know or just like, like not feeling it.

Interviewer: That makes sense. Thank you, going to stop recording now.