

**Demographics:** Bi-sexual, asian woman. Medium Income. Relationship status: in a relationship that started online

**Interview Summary:** Lily is a sweet and gentle individual, she is 24 and in a relationship that started online. She expressed positive feelings around online dating, mainly because she was selective with whom she met, looking for potential friends rather than casual dates. She felt that the non-committal norm of online dating was empowering and liberating for her.

She expressed how it felt easy to find shared interests and that was how most of her matches were established. She doesn't feel strongly about using the apps again if she were ever single again.

**Prevalent Themes:**

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

**Interview date:** 11/15/2023

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**Transcript:**

**Interviewer:** So, firstly, can you tell me a little bit about yourself demographic wise? Like age, gender, age, gender, stuff like that?

**Interviewee:** I'm 24 years old. I'm a student, female.

**Interviewer:** Are you in a relationship currently?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Did you find that relationship through a dating app?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Before you found your current partner, how long were you using dating app?

**Interviewee:** Um, I have first started using it in like 2020. I think I like passively used it for like a year. Yeah. And then I never really went on like, dates, serious date. And I use I delegated again in January of this year, and I got off of it in I think June.

**Interviewer:** Which apps did you use?

**Interviewee:** Hinge and Bumble. But then I think maybe after like a month of using Bumble I didn't I didn't like that either. Mainly just Hinge.

**Interviewer:** Why did you like prefer Hinge to other platforms?

**Interviewee:** I think especially in New York, can just very effective with the type of people I enjoyed and, or like I found, I was interested in. I thought Bumble was a little bit too, like Bumble was really straight. And I can convey this opinion because like I know, I have like straight female friends who found more dates on Bumble because the type of people they were looking for were just like, very straight, like, Okay, this is informal, but like "normie". Yeah, normally, normally people on Bumble Yeah. And be because of those same reasons. Like I did not enjoy it at all. And and I found that I think Hinge has just like a cultural place in New York.

**Interviewer:** Can you expand on that a little bit like the cultural role of Hinge?

**Interviewee:** I think something about this like very minimalist, like very okay, because I feel like Tinder has always been regarded as like, it's very, like, sex board. So people will go on that for that purpose. And so I think it would just like a great thing for people who only want to look for that. But it kind of like the kind of the bad connotations aren't coming when like an app like Bumble got popular because they're like, oh, it's very, like, quote, unquote, empowering and it's like, women's choices. But I think because of those reasons, it also became such a straight space because I think I feel like men started coming on they're feeling like they don't have to put in as much work so I think hinge started becoming popular because it's kind of more a more neutral ground. And it is, I feel like there's not I don't make any assumptions about people who use who I've met on Hinge.

**Interviewer:** In terms of like going on dates with people from Hinge how many roughly how many like dates do you go on that were met online?

**Interviewee:** Between six to 10.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And did you feel like there was like, talking a little bit through the process of like, meeting someone on the app, good, like, converting that into an in person interaction and maybe if you can, like compare that to any relationships you've had that have started in person, as opposed to starting on an app?

**Interviewee:** Um, I feel like interactions through dating apps start off by a shared interest. Whereas I feel like even though when you meet somebody in person, you might be meeting them in a space of shared interests, your conversations or your connection is never me, let me think about this. Let me think how I'd phrases like, the interactions I had, based on dating apps, were kind of like people already put out a feeler of like things are interested in and then you have a chance to directly point that out or like, and you see if you can hold a conversation from there now. Whereas I feel like in person, there's always like, like, a stage before you actually figure out whether they have the same interests or not. Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. And so I think, like with interactions of dating apps, it's like I was looking for whether a person can hold conversation and humor and like, their willingness to, like, try new things. And I feel like when I interacted with people through dating apps, it's almost like, there's so much less

consequences, I guess, it's like, if it doesn't work out, then it doesn't matter. You might never person whereas, like, your chances of you like, asking somebody out who you already know in person is you have to think about that so much more, because you're like, Oh, you don't want to restart things. Whereas a person you meet online, it's like, they're, they're like a stranger. So there's less emotional.

**Interviewee:** Like, there's less at risk. Yeah, that makes sense. Yeah, that totally makes sense. And that definitely, like echoes things that other people have been saying, like, almost like this feeling that there's less like skin in the game with someone that you meet online. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Did you ever feel like, Does that ever cross the line into like, you know, like a feeling of like laziness or like, not caring that much about a certain conversation, like less value on the possibility of the relationship?

**Interviewee:** Yes, for sure. But in a really liberating, yeah, like, very good for me, because I think I'm a very, like, emotion, emotionally low, safe person, like, I don't like feeling like I have to put all my eggs in one basket, like so quickly. Or like, somebody would do that to me. So I think the general sense you get to, from when you meet somebody from a dating app, is also really liberating. Because it's like, you both have the same sense of awareness. That's like, you could be seeing other people and I think that's a really freeing feeling.

**Interviewer:** Oh, interesting. Yeah, that's cool. Did you ever find like something that I think comes up is like, kind of just like, lack of commitment on from online first relationships. And like, I think you're kind of like phrasing it in like, the opposite way of like, it's actually positive. And it can be like really empowering for people. I think that's like an accurate kind of description.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, yes.

**Interviewer:** Something that I feel like has come up quite a bit is like the almost like the dating platform as kind of like a party in the relationship now like how that you mentioned, like, the algorithm like kind of knows you really well and shows you people that you like, and how that can be like kind of screen people like did you ever kind of consciously like notice that or?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, you know, and I think maybe that's another thing. I don't know if other people told you the same but I think that's what Hinge is good at. They're very they, they curate like people like for you. Really well, which I don't understand what the algorithms are. It's like kind of freaky, but also I think it's like, recently, my friend was telling me she's like, on her for you, like recommended for her page has been like, my ex. I'm like all her all my friends exes and like they keep showing up. And it's like, maybe, but for some reason also, maybe it's like, you started noticing that so you only noticed that, but they show you people that you might know.

**Interviewer:** That's super interesting. If you weren't in a relationship, now, would you be on the apps?

**Interviewee:** Maybe

**Interviewer:** Talked me through that maybe.

**Interviewee:** Um, I think it also just depends on like, how busy you are in life. Like, I think when I was when I first got on hinge like a lot of people do after breakups, or, like, use it as a way to just be like, okay, like, you need to place yourself back into society. And they're like, this is just like, a general feel for things, but. And I also, just, like, had more time back then, when I was at my job. But now I'm like, I feel like, I feel really focused on my career, like certain, like, other aspects of my life that I'm not thinking so much about, like. Like, I'm not actively trying to make those connections. If I wasn't in a relationship, yeah. Um, that. I don't think I think about it too much. So I would still have it, I would still have the house because I don't think it like I do get curious. Sometimes, but it's, I for sure, like, would not be very active on it. And sometime it like depends on the place of life. You're in, like what you're focusing on, ya know.

**Interviewer:** That totally makes sense. I feel like your experience like would you characterize it overall is like pretty positive. Yes. Did any part of it ever feel negative to you?

**Interviewee:** I think it was overall good. Because I think I was picky about the people I was meeting in real life. So I wouldn't have whereas I feel like some other people have an approach where it's like, they're going to they don't want to waste time like talking to somebody online. Yeah, they would go on the date first and decide, but most of the time, I had certain like, marks where I felt like, they feel like they could be somebody I would be friends with in the real world. So I would go on this date. So it's like so grounded, but so I don't get any negative experience.

**Interviewer:** That's so awesome. That's so good to hear. And I feel like it's like a perspective that I haven't really gotten yet so it's awesome.