

All the Single Ladies: Is Online Dating Worth the Time and Money?

by [RANEE ALISON SPINA](#)

We long for someone to run errands with on Saturdays and a warm naked body next to us on Sunday mornings, but do we actually put any effort into finding that special someone? Or, do we believe that he will simply show up one day because *that's the way it is supposed to happen?*

Starting in their late thirties, women tend to believe a little too much in fate. Years go by as they hang out at home in their flannel pants busying themselves with work and intimacy-avoiding activities. These women rarely date, and when they do, they expect a homerun on every first pitch. They lose their dating skills and withdraw to the comfort provided by their cat or dog.

As the glow leaves their faces and routine gives them a sense of life, most women are eventually asked the question of the 21st century, *“Are you doing online dating?”*

There are women who are too scared to try it, others who do not want to put in the time, and still others who think “it is just not natural.”

Technology invades every aspect of our life, so it is no surprise that cupid went dot com over 15 years ago. Have you experienced, or are you considering a dopamine arrow from cyberspace's bow?

The tease begins with a “FREE Communication Weekend” meant to pull at lonely heartstrings and zipped-up wallets. With more people unemployed and staying home, the

teasers have more single people thinking about a companion.

Here's what this relationship researcher and other single women have to say about spending their precious money and time on finding love via the internet.

There are so many dating sites, but the more members a site has, the better your chances are of finding someone of interest. I chose Chemistry.com and eHarmony.com for my own experience with internet yentas. If Chemistry.com is supposed to be the “more upscale” choice, shouldn't the profiles reflect an upscale attitude? Below represents a sampling of the men I was matched with; you decide if it is upscale. (Capital letters and incorrect spelling taken directly from site):

“I LIKE A WOMAN THAT'S INDEPENDENT,
AND MAKES HER OWN DOCTOR'S
APPOINTMENTS.”

“I DON'T DO ANIMALS.”

“I wanted to get a tattoo on my back -- a man
with butterfly wings.”

“I never know what to put in here to catch
anyones attention.”

“I can say, I do have a great sence of humor.”

Oi vey! Good thing I found a discount code before I signed up! Amazing how many men were clueless on how to write an alluring profile. Do they not have any sisters, friends, cousins, etc. that could assist them in improving their chances? *Don't they know how cliché it sounds to say, “Let's enjoy a glass of cabernet while soaking in the hot tub?”*

Of course we need to mention photos too. What's up with the sunglasses? Do you think you look cool? I just think you are trying to hide something. But what? Marty Feldman eyes?

Believe it or not, there were even photos of men with a woman's hand on their shoulder. The woman had been cropped out of the picture, but the wedding-ring was still sparking on her hand! Take a new picture or find someone who knows Photoshop!

There was one matched profile that really did grab my attention. "Chivalry is not dead; I believe in holding doors for others, standing when a lady leaves the table..." I wrote this guy to ask him if he truly does that or if he wrote it because he thinks it's what women want to hear. He said he could actually give me references to prove he does walk the talk. When I asked this gentleman about his experience with Chemistry.com, he said the communication from women helped build his self-confidence after a hurtful divorce.

Chemistry.com did have creative ideas for inspiring people to communicate, but the site page design was not exactly user-friendly (which translates to more time online).

After 3 months of "upscale," I moved onto what is considered the "Christian Dating Site." eHarmony commercials boast "Every match based on deep compatibility." What a crock. **You may need to look beyond the automatic matches; the sites simply connect individuals through common interests.**

Also be sure to pay close attention to what men write. "I'm in the 'final' stages of my divorce and, yes, I am emotionally available (I'll explain why, if we talk). I had a 20-year faithful first marriage. I know what it takes to have a successful long-term relationship. Keeping it simple is my focus now. I am not looking for a serious relationship."

What this guy means is, "I am looking to fool around with a lot of different women (heck I've been having sex with the same woman for 20

years) but I cannot write that because then you won't sleep with me."

I was surprised at how many divorced Christian men who claimed that their children were their first priority, couldn't find a way to stay with the mother of those children. Maybe the mother was putting the children first too, therefore the couple forgot about each other? Now they're looking elsewhere for a little attention? Beware ladies of the recently divorced men who "gave everything to their ex-wife but got nothing in return." Those men have nothing left to give you. **Look for the men who have had some healthy alone time to heal.**

Anyone that is looking to avoid a frustrating divorce will want to avoid eHarmony's mandatory cancellation survey. It is time-consuming and annoying.

Despite the experience one needs to maneuver these dating sites successfully, excitement does take hold as you anxiously wait to hear from a "match."

Someone who has been part of the online dating scene for the past decade is Lena, age 30, who lives in Los Angeles and works for a television station. She has never said "I Do," has no kids, but wants to have children if she gets married. This self-professed workaholic rarely takes vacation time and her downtime is spent enjoying a good book and a glass of wine.

Feeling awkward in social situations prompted Lena to join Match.com at age 19, "I was excited about my first date, but he canceled because he liked someone else he went out with first. That early lesson taught me not to get hooked during the internet or phone communication phase."

"Southern California is not the best place for finding a significant other. I continue to use online dating as a tool to meet men. I tried

JDate.com and now I'm on the international site LavaPlace.com”

Lena had **4 great tips** for women about to embark on their first go-around:

- 1) Have no expectations.
- 2) Be patient and proceed slowly.
- 3) Enjoy the process of meeting people,
and
- 4) Most importantly, don't fall into the trap of thinking you're in love after 2 weeks and sit by the phone waiting for him to call!

Maybe some of you are thinking that Lena has it easy for she is still under 40. I found that no matter what their age, women go through the same rollercoaster emotions when looking for a new love.

Nancy, age 53, is a Phoenix native who now lives in San Diego. She is divorced with no children and works in the healthcare industry.

“I tried *It's Just Lunch* (didn't fulfill contract promises), bought some relationship books, and even did the Home Depot thing! I lasted 5 minutes pretending I was looking for bath fixtures!”

Clients and friends told her to try online dating. She checked out Matchmaker.com, eHarmony, and Match which she feels is a meat market but has the largest pool of men.

Her advice to newbies:

- 1) Men are visual, be sure to upload good pics!
- 2) Be accurate on your profile. You need to also include what you are NOT looking for!
- 3) Have a good “opening” (keep it light, not too serious) and
- 4) Check out your “competition.” Realize that this will be a part time job!

Many women I spoke to stay away from “serial winkers” on Match and keep an eye out for those men claiming to be single but are not yet divorced or even separated.

I believe women need to be more confident about “winking” or showing a man that there is interest. Rejection is taken too personal when most of the time it has nothing to do with you.

So single ladies, is online dating worth your time? I vote... Yes! Just be sure to look for Discount Codes and heed the advice above. **Set yourself up for success in both life and love!**