

Family; It's who we are!



1. Traditions:
Vacations

Holidays / Birthdays

Extended Family

Meals

2. Conflict Resolution:

3. Communication:

4. Money:

5. Family Roles:



...love is BLIND

Scientists have now found evidence to support the old adage that *love is blind*. Through brain-imaging studies, researchers at the University College London found that “feelings of love lead to a suppression of activity in the areas of the brain controlling analytical thinking.” It seems that once we get close to a person, there is a reduction in the activity used in the brain. Romantic love suppresses neural activity associated with one’s ability to be a good judge of a partner. In addition, massive releases of oxytocin, dopamine and other hormones and neuropeptides in the brain create euphoric feelings that further cloud analytic judgments, masking those repeating offenses that should be obvious warning signals of problems to come.

Science Proves That Love is Blind. BBC News Report on article from NeuroImage. June 14, 2004.



...the 90-day PROBATION PERIOD

Whether you are fifteen or fifty, growing to know someone intimately requires certain amounts of time. Some of you have been in a relationship where you shared everything imaginable, trusted this person with your life, felt completely in sync, and even talked about marriage only to have a rude awakening around the *third month*. This is the “magic number” —90 days. It is not until around three months that deep-seated patterns *start* to become evident. In a study conducted by researchers who have been studying dating relationships for over twenty years, it was found that about half of all dating attraction is significantly altered by some newly found characteristic within a three-month period; significant enough to cause a breakup of half of all relationships. Therefore, many initially hidden patterns seem to become evident within the first 90 days. By definition, a pattern is a behavior that repeats in a sequence of time. Without time, there is no such thing as a pattern. Therefore, if you are always living in the moment you are seriously disadvantaged when it comes to understanding what a dating partner is really like. The 90-day probation period states that “it takes three months for many subtle but serious patterns to *begin* to surface.”

Fletcher, G.J.O., Simpson, J.A., & Thomas, G. (2000). Ideals, perceptions and evaluations in early relationship development. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 79, 933-940.

...good things happen to THOSE WHO CAN WAIT

A landmark study on the conscience was conducted back in the 1960's by Walter Mischel at the Bing Preschool on the campus of Stanford University. He gave four-year olds a choice of having one marshmallow now, or waiting until he came back into the room a few minutes later and then getting a second marshmallow. The focus of this study was to measure a child's delay of gratification and the ability to control his/her impulses.

Some of the children who chose to wait stared at the marshmallow with their chins in their hands. Others laid their heads down next to the marshmallow and never took their eyes off of it. And then there were some who couldn't get enough of sniffing the marshmallow to ease the stress of waiting. In contrast, some of the children lacked impulse control and had the marshmallow in their mouth before the instructions were even completed.

The most fascinating results came from the follow-up studies on these same children (which are still continuing to this day and even include their marriages and their children). Fifteen, twenty, and even thirty years later, those who exercised self-control consistently scored higher on just about every test administered than those who immediately ate the marshmallow. The "waiters" were more assertive, competent, hard working, cooperative and successful at coping than those who were impulsive. The "instant gratifiers" tended to achieve poorer grades and turned out to be more stubborn, indecisive, and stressed.

Mischel, Walter. (1967). Waiting for rewards and punishments: Effects of time and probability on choice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 5(1) 24-31.

...touch produces a

BIOLOGICAL BOND

Your brain will automatically drug you when you become infatuated with someone! This is why you cannot stop thinking about someone to whom you are attracted. Biologists have isolated a chemical in the body that seems to be highly related to the bonds you form. Oxytocin is a neuro-peptide (sometimes called the "love hormone") most originally associated with pregnancy and breast-feeding. A mother's brain is flooded with oxytocin while giving birth. It also is activated during the times a mother is breast feeding her infant. It has been found to act as a human "super glue," helping a mother bond with her infant.

Now what has caused great interest to biologists is that it also is greatly increased during the act of physical intimacy in men and women, but more so with women (3x the normal amount in males and 9x or more in females). In addition, there are other chemicals (neurotransmitters) that are related to euphoria and addiction that are released during the act of physical intimacy.

However, what has also been found is that the production of oxytocin is reduced by anxious and unstable relationships. In addition, having physical relations with multiple partners seems to also reduce the production of this hormone. The result is that after multiple partners there is a lowered bonding biological ability.

People who have unstable romantic relationships and/or physical relations with numerous different partners seem to diminish the power of oxytocin to maintain a permanent bond with a partner. The receptors become accustomed to a certain level of endorphins just as with a drug addiction. With diminished oxytocin, the person involved will then experience a "withdrawal" and will want to move on to a "new and more exciting" challenge—that is, a physical relationship with a new partner.

Social scientists have discovered that what you do before marriage can have a profound effect on your future marriage (as well as other areas of your life).

1. In a study of men and women, sooner physical relations in a relationship led to higher rates of cohabitation and significantly lower rates of the satisfaction of physical intimacy and the overall relationship in marriage.
2. In a study of husbands, the higher the number of intimate partners before marriage, the higher the risk of cheating in marriage. Conversely, lower numbers of intimate partners are associated with lower risks of cheating.
3. In a study of wives, the higher the number of intimate partners before marriage, the higher the risks of divorce. Wives who had no intimate partners before marriage had 3x lower divorce rates than those who had just one premarital intimate partner.
4. The earlier a couple had physical relations in their relationship the lower they rated certain qualities of their relationship in marriage. It seems the longer they waited to have physical relations, the more they tended to work on other important qualities in their relationship (know, trust, rely, commit). "In this study, it is clear that the longer a couple waited to become physically involved the better their physical intimacy, communication, relationship satisfaction, and perceived relationship stability was in marriage, even when controlling for a variety of other variables such as the number of intimate partners, education, religiosity, and relationship length."

*SEE PAGE 71 FOR REFERENCES

ACTIVITY #18

15 Realities about Dating

Review the 15 realities about dating below. After each reality, respond to the following questions: *Do you agree with this reality? Why or why not? Give some examples of ways you have seen this dating reality in your life or the lives of your friends.*

- 1 Just because you date someone doesn't mean you will marry him or her.
- 2 The type of person you find attractive will probably change as you get older and more mature.
- 3 Dating will affect your future.
- 4 Not everyone is doing it.
- 5 Dating is hard (but so are relationships).
- 6 There is more to life than dating.
- 7 Dating is fun.
- 8 You don't need to date to be complete.

CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE



ACTIVITY #18 **15 Realities about Dating** CONTINUED

9 Guys and girls are different.

10 Dating involves time.

11 You shouldn't have to change who you are to be in a relationship, and you shouldn't go into a relationship thinking you can change someone else.

12 Your parents might know a thing or two about dating.

13 You deserve respect.

14 Relationships cannot make you happy.

15 Your dating life prepares you for a future married life.



Follow it up:

Of these dating realities, which do you think are most important for teens to hear? Why?