* What You Need to Know About Online Dating
* **Kris Swiatocho, Cliff Young**

***EDITOR'S NOTE:***[***He Said-She Said***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/) *is a biweekly advice column for singles featuring a question from a Crosswalk.com reader with responses from a male and female point of view. If you've got a question about anything related to singleness or living the single life, please submit it to* ***hesaid-shesaid@crosswalk.com*** *(selected questions will be posted anonymously).*

**QUESTION:**

*I am 69 and signed up for Christian Mingle.  I was married 35 years and he died 8 years ago, and I have had a few men locally interested but they weren't right for me.  I am not feeling comfortable with what I am doing or what I am to discern as maybe a red flag other than the obvious. I think my lack of experience has gotten my focus off of the real issues, but actually what is the real issue other than a man who loves Jesus with all his heart.*

*For instance, I have one gentleman who is interested but seems too focused on what he calls "chemistry." I am confused to say the least.  And what about talking to several men at once.  Does that make me deceitful?  I feel like I'm cheating. Maybe I was supposed to only get to know one man at a time, make a decision and move on to the next?*

**HE SAID:**

Online dating has become a serious mainstay as a viable alternative to finding a mate at any age.  With the hectic and often scattered lives many of us lead, online dating is a way to explore larger circles and discover those we would never otherwise meet.  I applaud you for your efforts to delve into this realm.

As a caution though, many use online dating not as a noble alternative to finding their spouse but rather a place to satisfy their mortal cravings.  The World Wide Web has become not only a place where we can connect with people, information and ideas quickly, but also a place where “wolves” can hide behind the cloak of a username and fabricated profile in sheep’s clothing.

**SEE ALSO:** [**What Does It Mean to Guard Your Heart?**](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/what-does-it-mean-to-guard-your-heart.html)

I have seen my elderly and widowed mother be an enticement to male suitors who want a capable and desirable caretaker along with intimate female companionship. The advances would be even more intensified had she posted her profile on an online dating site.

The bottom line is to not allow yourself be pushed into something you discern as wrong or that makes you feel uncomfortable.

As for your gentleman friend seeking “chemistry,” I would inquire as to what kind of chemistry he is referring to.  I have had great spiritual, emotional and intellectual chemistry with friends of the opposite sex, which has resulted in amazing plutonic relationships over the years.  Chances are though he is probably seeking chemistry of the physical nature which in and of itself is not wrong if it just means pure attraction.

Get to know these guys as much as you can through e-mail, phone calls and *Skype* or *iChat* conversations (which are a great way to “meet” those you’re interested in).  The beauty of online dating is that you can communicate with several suitors at the same time until you find the one you would like to pursue or allow to be pursued by more seriously.

**SEE ALSO:** [**How to Respond to Unrequited Love**](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/how-to-respond-to-unrequited-love.html)

As wonderful as communicating from a distance can be, you will only be able to go so far in getting to know someone through these conversations.  At some point down the line you will want (need) to meet this person face to face.  When you do, make sure you are prayed up and prayed for.

Blessings on your adventure!

**SHE SAID:**

Thanks for your honesty including fears and apprehensions regarding online dating. Anyone can meet anyone anyplace. It’s never where we meet someone but our motives when we do meet them. While I see you have pure motives in wanting to find someone to spend the rest of your life with, you are right in your concerns with the process.

Online dating, while successful for a few, is overall a failure for most (despite what the dating services advertise). I know this because being in full-time singles ministry I do my own surveys. From people posting old photos to lying about their age, to even lying about being a follower of Christ—I have heard it all. It’s hard enough to meet someone in your own church/ministry and build a relationship versus someone you have never met. So what do you do? Here are 10 tips you may find helpful:

**SEE ALSO:** [**How Long Should You Wait to Tell Someone You Like Them?**](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/how-long-should-you-wait-to-tell-someone-you-like-them.html)

1. Pray that God would connect you to men who really want to get to know you as a person first. While most singles will say I want to build a friendship, go slow; their flesh can quickly get ahead of their mind. Anyone that God is bringing to you is worth the extra time in building a friendship. Now some men may joke and say they are too old to wait too long. Then I say good-bye. You will never regret building a friendship—a friendship that can be in your life forever. Even if that friendship doesn't lead to something romantic.

2. Spend the extra time getting to know them by emailing, talking on the phone, learning about their past, etc. Some may say it’s OK to friend them on Facebook, etc. That is up to you. For me I would want to know as much as I could before meeting them in person. There is a lot of info you can find out about someone without “friending” them. Spend the extra time learning as much as you can before taking the next step.

3. I would discourage dating/getting to know anyone too far away. You simply cannot verify anything about them. How far is too far? That is up to you. For me, anything farther than 2 hours would be too far. I would drive 2 hours to have dinner with someone and then drive home.

4. I would ask about their church/ministry, how they serve, who their pastor is, etc. Again, I am trying to verify who they are in the Lord as well. If they are a mature Christian, they are going to be involved in their church. There may be evidence on their Facebook page that shows them serving. If it’s serious, I would even ask for their pastors contact information. Also be willing to do this same in reverse.

**SEE ALSO:** [**Should the Guy Always Take the Lead in the Relationship?**](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/should-the-guy-always-take-the-lead-in-the-relationship.html)

5. Be honest with any man you are talking too by letting him know you are getting to know several men online and that you are not dating anyone yet. But if and when you do decided to date someone, you will need to let them know.

6. As you pray, and as the Lord leads then you can take the next step. This could be “friending” them on Facebook, meeting with them during the day, skyping, etc. This next step should not make you feel uncomfortable. I also love group events. You could invite them to a church singles event. This way others could meet him as well.

7. Practice wisdom. Do not get ahead of God. Communicate your desire for a mate, and allow the Lord to direct you both. If you meet any man who doesn’t want to take the time to get to know you in the Lord, then he is not the right one. Ask him to be praying about your friendship as well.

As with all relationships, whether they are someone you go to church with, someone who lives in another state, 25 or 85, you have to trust the Lord through each step. While many go on [**Christian dating**](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/) sites to date and eventually get married, there are many predators on these sites who are simply looking for a tender heart (and bank account) to take advantage of. They use all kinds of flowery language to pull you in. They know you are lonely, so be smart. Let your friends know what you are doing so they can also be praying for you and trusting God.

**SEE ALSO:** [**How Long Should You Wait Before You Date Someone Who is Divorced?**](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/how-long-should-you-wait-before-you-date-someone-who-is-divorced.html)

“*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight*.” -[**Proverbs 3:5-6**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=pr+3:5-6)

***HE is …******Cliff Young****, a Crosswalk.com contributing writer and a veteran single of many decades. He has traveled the world in search of fresh experiences, serving opportunities, and the perfect woman (for him) and has found that his investments in God, career and youth ministry have paid off in priceless dividends.*

***SHE is ...******Kris Swiatocho****, the President and Director of* [***TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries***](http://thesinglesnetwork.org/) *and* [***FromHisHands.com Ministries.***](http://fromhishands.com/) *Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 25 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is also the author of* [***four books***](http://www.thesinglesnetwork.org/store.html)*.*

***DISCLAIMER****: We are not trained psychologists or licensed professionals. We're just average folk who understand what it's like to live the solo life in the twenty-first century. We believe that the* [***Bible***](http://www.biblestudytools.com/) *is our go-to guide for answers to all of life's questions, and it's where we'll go for guidance when responding to your questions. Also, it's important to note that we write our answers separately.*

***GOT A QUESTION?*** *If you've got a question about anything related to singleness or living the single life, please submit it to hesaid-shesaid@crosswalk.com (selected questions will be posted anonymously). While we are unable to answer every inquiry, we do hope that this column will be an encouragement to you. Click here to visit the He Said-She Said* [***archives***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/)*.*