



No matter what age, seekers of love need to get 'out there'

Thursday, July 15, 2010 | by judith gottesman

People often ask me what's the difference between dating for young people and dating for older people. Much to their surprise, I always answer, "Not much".

I have clients ranging from their 20s to their 90s. (Yes, I have a 90-year-old client — he's quite a catch and still drives!)

Whether in their 20s, 40s, 60s or even 80s, people are people. They seek love and companionship. And they're most likely to find it with people who share similar interests, intellect, lifestyle, values and goals. That doesn't change with age.

Most prefer someone financially secure and healthy, though how that's defined varies, and certainly both health and financial status can change in an instant at any age. Perhaps older people are more concerned about finding a healthy partner, and some are more concerned about money, as they reach or are past retirement and possibly have more time to enjoy the benefits of a relationship.

If someone chooses to be sexually active in a relationship, the same need for "safer sex" practices apply, as sexually transmitted diseases don't discriminate or pass over anyone based on age. Some of my older clients are less likely to use Internet dating sites, but even that isn't the rule, especially in a computer-savvy place like the Bay Area.

I'd say the main difference in dating for seniors is in the amount of dating and relationship experience one has. Some have never married and have been single 60 years with enormous dating experience. Others are newly divorced or widowed and haven't been on a date in more than 40 or 50 years.

Dating can be nerve-racking at any age, and it takes the same effort and perseverance that looking for a job does.

When I was a geriatric social worker, I had a 68-year-old client, a widow who felt lonely and isolated. She told me she wanted to meet a man, but she admitted she wasn't doing much to make it happen. She knew she had to get out there and try, since he wasn't going to just come knocking at her apartment door. My thoughts exactly!

So whether you're new to dating or an old pro (no pun intended), it's essential to have a positive attitude and get "out there." You never know how or when, or where, you're destined to meet your match.

The important thing is to have faith, be open to make the most of the opportunities that present themselves, and enjoy your life in the meantime. You never know — love might find you in the process.

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