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Online Relationships - The Art Of Misperception

By Alisa Chagnon

Is “real” love possible to attain via computer? There are many factors that come into play when two people fall in love. Some cannot be described in a definitive way; such as chemical attraction. Other factors are qualities that we find in another person that compliment our desires of a “perfect” mate. Honesty, integrity, loyalty, caring, a fun loving personality and good morals are just a few of these qualities. Many woman and men alike, have “fallen in love” over the internet. They have done so, without the possibility of truly seeing any of these qualities in the other person. So before we put our hearts on the line, we must ask ourselves; is it truly possible to love someone via computer?

The majority of people who believe they have discovered true love without actually meeting the other person, have done so by implementing a type of instant messenger or video conferencing. We will focus on this element, as the element of a webcam can be misleading. When two people find each other and begin to chat online, one of two things happens. Either they do not feel a connection or they do. If a connection is felt, this can quickly escalate into chatting every day. They believe they have discovered the excitement that one feels when meeting someone new. However, they have not really met, have they?

It is a fact that many people are lonely. This is not new to us, many single people are busy with work, single moms are busy with their children and it can be very daunting and difficult to find a meaningful relationship in the “real” world. With personal computers in the majority of every household, many people turn to this internet environment when they are lonely and wish for someone to talk to.

It is important to realize that the world inside a computer is not, and never can be, the real world. When craving acceptance, love, caring, attention and a relationship, one can easily be led astray into the art of misperception. Often, this misperception is not done on purpose. Both people involved in the online relationship do not even realize this is happening.

The truth of the matter is this: the key elements of a true and loving relationship cannot materialize through a computer. You may wish for them, daydream of them and tell yourself they exist, but they do not. Starting with physical and chemical attraction: a person may feel they are attracted to the image on a webcam but this in no way is the actual person that exists. Anyone who owns a webcam surely understands that it is very easy to show yourself in a good light via cam. If you feel that you are completely attracted to the other person, ask yourself this: Do you entirely show your true self on your cam? Webcams are an image of you, a moving image and very far from what you are perceived as in person. If you are attracted to someone

via cam, ask yourself, have you stood close to him or her and taken in the presence of his or her body? Do you love the fragrance of their cologne/ perfume? Do you love the feel of their kisses? When they hug you, is it done strongly or softly? Do you love those hugs? When you touch their hair, do you admire the feel of it? The smell of it? The answer, of course is no. You have no idea what this person is like in person nor how you feel physically and emotionally when touching them.

Qualities such as honesty, loyalty, integrity, caring and general overall mood are extremely important to a strong and loving relationship. If a person possesses these qualities, it can then free you to respect the person and set a ground for trust and a feeling of safety. Someone who is in love online, may debate that they have seen these qualities already. To this, I ask; Are you there in the house when they get home from work and see what they do with all of their spare time? Are you witness to their work ethics? Do you sit around a table with their family and see the loving interaction? Have you gotten in an argument and have seen if the other person stays to talk or walks out the door in anger? Have you stood by them when they hear some unpleasant news and are witness to how they react? Have you greeted them at the end of a long day, a day that tested their nerves, and then received a hug? Did you cook and then burn dinner and they told you it does not matter, they love you for trying? Did you forget to run an important errand that you promised you would, and they told you not to worry? The list is endless. The conclusion is that there is no possible way to know of how this person will interact in a relationship without physically being with them.

Love can be confusing. Craving a relationship or marriage can send people in a blindness that prevents them from understanding the misperception that occurs online. Again, this misperception does not need be by intention. The mere fact that there is no actual "in person" interface is what causes this misperception to arise in the first place. A person can be intrigued, in lust, in "like", or in a false reality of love when online with another. Only in spending quality time face-to-face, will the true colors of the other surface. It is at that time, that one should decide if they are in love.

Written by Alisa Chagnon, webmaster of <http://www.lovebulletin.com> . Love Bulletin is a free and complete women's online magazine. Updated daily and weekly, packed with strong and sound advice regarding romance, relationships, love, dating and breakups. Articles, guidelines and checklists. Readers can change content in featured sections such as "Fill-in-the-Blanks" and daily Q&A.

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