

Virtual versus real world relationships

You most likely tend to have a computer as your primary companion. The world comes by on a rectangular dream scape powered by a couple of thousands of tiny pixels you are drawn into, thinking it is all harmless, a game, and you feel totally untouchable and safe. But that may be just the easy physical part. For now.

You invent one or more identities, and chat with someone who does that too. You have one or more intentions. And that other someone has those too. But the intentions may not be the same or compatible. You may be fantasizing about a peaceful beach walk, hand in hand, with flowers on your head, soft kisses and warmth in your soul. The other someone may be fantasizing about having sex with a minor, somewhere strapped in a dungeon, even though it may not be apparent in the chat. There are many ways to use words and hide meanings.

You may have fun together with your friends sitting next to you, telling what you should type next. At the other side of the modem an unknown person may have fun with software to try tracing your location. And the day after, you may be honored with a real stalker around the place where you live, or a bunch of e-mails or forum postings that drive you crazy. Or some messages on your screen.

The game of the unknown other may not be the same as yours. You may fall in love with that wonderful profile on the internet who has stolen your heart completely. Not realizing that this person seems too good to be true. You may be tempted to meet for real, even giving your real name and address. If you do so, it usually will turn out to be a grand disaster. You will not believe what I say, but ask yourself, how on Earth can you be so sure about that other person purely based on a few keystrokes in the chat room? You cannot. No one can. Reality is completely different from virtuality.

There is nothing wrong with chatting, for as long as the sole purpose between the two of you remains chatting and nothing else. It works fine with the two of you if you already know each other in real life.

Otherwise, the virtual world is not the real world. It is a world on its own. In that world the bits and bytes that move between the modems represent fantasies, usually about what you want to see in another about yourself. Go figure.

You most likely have a checklist, like 'This is my type, these are the items where should be scored, such as the height, weight, color of the eyes and hair, likes of music and food, personality characteristics, sense of humor, sincerity.' and the list goes on, right? These are all things about yourself that you would love to see reflected into another's soul, right? These things concern the real world. Yet you seek them in the virtual world, on dating sites, social networks, net communities and the like. What's the meaning of red hair on the internet?

And during the chat there is no way to know to what extent the incoming words exactly match the real things. Even with a web-cam and some software the 'Live display & voice' can be manipulated. You will not know the difference.

If you are chatting and you want to make a date, behold, it is not like web shopping. In a web shop, things

are properly described, accompanied by pictures, company information, reviews, etc. In a dating-site it is supposed to be as neat, but it is not! Most profiles seem to be populated with a super being from planet Krypton. But reality is a whole different story.

More often than not, a dating profile carries a photo picture of 18 years back, sometimes with the annotation "add a few years to it and that will be me today".

Cyber dating has been in existence for a century at least. In the old times, people put ads in a newspaper, exchange a couple of love letters, meet for real, and get happy ever after. That form of dating had a high score of success. In those days there was no color TV, no internet, telephone was scarce, typewriters too expensive, and photos were in black and white. So the primary means of telecommunications was writing on paper, by hand, using a pen dipped into ink. One spelling error, or a smudge, means tearing the sheet of paper and starting all over again. So to write a good love letter could take a full day! So the level of effort and time spent played an important role in paper cyber dating half a century ago. Dating was a sincere undertaking, done by sincere people whose true goals were having a lasting relationship.

Today, a chat message, an e-mail or a cyber scrap is made within minutes, if not less. Spell checkers clean-up your prose and you don't need to walk to the post-office to buy a stamp. Such love message has often little value, as far as the real effort and dedication behind it is concerned. More than often text is copied/pasted into love mails. It is lazy luv. It has nothing to do with love. It is mere cyber snack.

We live in a quick and dirty mode. Everything has to go fast. Everything has to go easy. And we are spoiled in that regard. But high speed does not necessarily mean that your intentions arrive safely at the destination. This is true for any kind of traffic. Also dating traffic.

We live in a world where the complete absence of computers is unthinkable. We live in a world where computers are part of our daily reality. We live in a world where data is perceived as real as the entity represented by the data. So as soon as you love the data, the meta information, then you think you love the real thing represented by this information. Data is not love. Data is not a person (I am not referring to that sci-fi movie).

For example, you chat and e-mail with an unknown person. You see some nice pictures, a profile that matches your checklist, and your heart starts pounding. But you have not met this person for real. Yet you believe you love this person, you long for this person, or worse, you want to have sex or get married with this person. But in fact, you love this person's data, created by that person or by a dating system, mixed with your own imagination! In other words, it is not real.

There are people sleeping with laptop and web-cam attached to it, to watch each other masturbating. And that's the way they love each other. They love the fact that it is not physically real anyway and therefore it is 'safe'. They live in fantasy. A lot of people pay for webcam-sex, just to find out later that all they did was DIY.

Remember, the only thing the virtual world and the real world have truly in common is your time. You spend a day in the virtual world, but that day is subtracted from the remaining real world time. And vice versa of course.

You sleep 8 hours per day. Do college 6 hours per day. Eat, wash, shop, sport, etc. total 2 hours per day. Study 2 hours per day (which is not enough), talk to your family 2 hours per day, that totals up to 20 hours per day of real world necessities. So there are 4 hours left for 'private enjoyment'.

Now, are you going to 'enjoy' some data or taking part of the real world? The choice is yours. Four hours. I can hear you say '2 hours on the web, 2 hours on the street'. That's fine. But never think that 2 hours cyber equals 2 hours real. I repeat: 2 Hours fantasy does not equal 2 hours reality. It is only the real world that truly makes you grow and develop into a person valuable to yourself and to others. Not your fantasy.

So, if half of your remaining time is spent in the virtual world, then you should accept half results in the real world, and nothing better than that. The virtual world is not life itself. It is only a means of communication. Nothing more. It is not a means of love. It is not a means of raising a family. It is not a means of truth. The internet is inundated with lies and false data. And that data is by and large sheer fantasy.

Has your heart been broken by finding out that the other unknown person was having a cyber love affair with another? Even though you never met that person for real? Yet your real time is spent on feeling bad the other 2 hours or more in addition. There is no such thing as virtual time. It is your time. From the moment you power-up your computer till its shutdown. Time is always real and subtracted from the rest of your life.

Suppose you see someone hugging and kissing a desktop computer, crying tears onto the keyboard. You most likely find that silly, right? Yet may you do exactly that. Think about it.

Cyber lovers tend to argue that chat.love goes straight from heart to heart, not hindered by physical resistances. That is totally fine, but that is the virtual world. Even though it does feel like in the real world, simply because you feel it, the essence is in the virtual world. Unless you are a true 100% telepathic spiritual being.

In a real world relationship you exchange a wealth of expressions, through the five senses. When you laugh, it gets heard. When you cry, tears fall down and can be kissed away. When you make love, well, you can guess what happens, it is truly felt. When you blush, your face turns red. When you hold hands, you hold real warm hands. You know, the real stuff.

In a cyber relationship you exchange a wealth of expressions, through smilies, words, beeps, pics, etcetera. When you laugh, you click a smiley or type an abbreviation such as ROFL, LMAO, LOL. When you cry, you click a smiley or type “*cry*”. When you make cyber love, you type “ahh ohh”. When you blush, you click another smiley or type “*blush*”. When you hold hands, you type “*hold hands*”. Pretty neat. But you know what, this is not real life.

So it all boils down to my basic advice:

If you have a cyber relationship, treat it as a cyber relationship, not as a real world relationship.

Keep those things as they exactly are at all times.

That's the long and the short of it.

Yes you can use chat as a means to meet for a real date. If you do so, do it as fast and as safely as possible. The longer you share love in the virtual world, the further you drift away from reality. After all, only reality will tell if you meet the right person. Never forget: The virtual world gets broken down the moment the real world is entered. Always. So all you learned about each other in the virtual world you can forget about as soon as you are together in the real world, where the population of super beings and wonderful profiles is far less in number. In the real world a smile is no longer a symbol, a hug is no longer a word, and the keyboard is useless on the couch or in bed.

You can use the internet to initiate contacts. Then meet for real without too much delay, which may sound strange, but the longer you live in virtuality, the lesser you experience reality. And if the other one does not go for meeting IRL, then disconnect instead of trying to fill the gap between the virtual and the real, unless you wish to keep it virtual indefinitely. Remember, a relationship is a whole reality by itself. So if you both agree to a virtual relationship, then keep it that way and accept all the implications.

You should know one more thing: The chat.net is a virtual street. Many profiles walk by and you never know whom you'd be meeting next. This is exactly the case with real streets. So why not just going out for a real walk? The fun is that this is real, you get some sunshine and fresh air, and it keeps you from getting RSI. I agree that on the street it may not be safe either, but what kind of life experience would you prefer: A computer screen or life itself?

Caution: Do not trust anyone on the net.chat. No exceptions, unless you have already met that one for real and have already established absolute mutual trust many times over IRL. If you date someone for the first time, through the net.chat, make sure you meet at a place where you are fully protected, for example near friends, family, police, etc. Introduce your date to them! Yes, step up to a cop, telling you are having this first date. The police officer may react superficially, but will surely remember. Do not go to an isolated place, ever, before you and your relatives are fully confident about your date! Use your friends wisely in this regard. Make sure there is someone to aid you if you get into trouble!

If your first date partner keeps on insisting on being alone the two of you, let this be an alarm for you. Just reply by proposing to go to a public place, saying that you you feel happier that way. Do realize that at the first date you are on your own. And all the cyber crap of the world can do nothing for you. This is real.

And remember: As soon as you get warm feelings for a cyber profile, please do analyze yourself to figure out what exactly turns you on. If you are honest to yourself, you may be surprised. If you are so much in love with a cyber profile that your life gets turned upside down, go seek a therapist. I am dead serious about this!

Last but not least: Anyone living only his or her life just on a square foot TFT is not living true life any greater than that...

So help you <http://www>.