

Attraction

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I grew up reading novels about arranged marriages without love and was very grateful that in these days we can marry whoever we are attracted. Unfortunately, as it turned out I was attracted to men who were narcissistic, sometimes abusive, and always unavailable. Still I continued to believe that a relationship had to begin with instantaneous attraction no matter how much trouble this got me in.

Eventually, I gave up on love and decided to be single. Then one day I met Frank. He was average looking but a lot of fun. I loved that we were so compatible. I decided, since I was lonely, that he would make a friend.

I was friends with Frank for about six months when I found myself in a car with him driving in the countryside. We were happy and laughing. Suddenly I found myself looking over at him and wondering if this was really what attraction was all about. I smiled at him and said nothing.

That night I thought about Frank a lot and my heart skipped a beat. I suddenly realized I was attracted to him.

The next weekend we were supposed to go to a movie and he was late. I started to worry and peer out the window. I said to myself: "If I did not know any better I would think I was falling in love."

Frank and I went out that night and I told him how I was feeling. He said, "I feel the same way. Do you want to date and see how things go." I laughed and agreed to give it a try. Today, I am happily married and finally "living happily ever after."

If you too are too dependent on attraction for choosing a partner you should know the following:

Attraction is mysterious. Just why do we become attracted to "certain" people? Part of the answer lies in our history. We are attracted to our first love which is usually the parent of the opposite sex. We are also attracted to people who remind us of others (real people, movie stars, magazine models, etc.) who stimulated us while we were growing up. But this is all we know about attraction, so we call it "chemistry" because the attraction stimulates certain chemicals that make us "high." But let's not allow the mystery of all this to worry us.

The most important thing we need to know about attraction is that it can be both a wonderful thing and a trap. If you are attracted to people capable of a healthy, fulfilling relationship then attraction is a good thing which leads to better things. If you are attracted to, say, people who have BPD traits, then attraction is not a good thing. I know I was always attracted to "wounded" men because my father was an alcoholic. This was not good. It got me into a lot of trouble. So if you are attracted to the wrong personality type (for whatever reason) what do you do about it?

Well you understand what is happening to you and then you avoid the people that get you into trouble.

Does this mean you have to give up attraction? No! You just need to train yourself to be attracted to the right type, like training yourself to eat right. You buy the right food and you eat it. You find a wonderful, healthy person and you let him or her grow on you. It is a little known fact that chemistry is not always instantaneous. It can happen at any time. This does not mean you must hang in there with someone who bores you to death, it just means you might give the right people a little more time. Then if there is no chemistry you move on. But you never go backwards. Once you identify the “wrong type” you never try to make it happen with that type of person. This is our insistent inner child trying to win back some lost love who was never available.