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# **Kosher Dating**

**#1**

# **National Marriage and Divorce Rate Trends, www.1.usa.gov/1dMPvI2**

In the United States, there is one divorce approximately every 36 seconds. That's nearly 2,400 divorces per day, 16,800 divorces per week and 876,000 divorces a year.

**#2**

**Wikipedia: Dating**

Any social activity undertaken by, typically, two people with the aim of each assessing the other's suitability as their partner in an intimate relationship or as a spouse. The word refers to the act of meeting and engaging in some mutually agreed upon social activity. Traditional dating activities include entertainment or a meal.

**Questions:**

* **Are you looking for a short- or long-term relationship? What do you look for in that relationship?**
* **When people date these days – do they have the ideal, long-term relationship in mind?**
* **Do you think that the person you are dating is the one you are going to marry?**
* **What are the ideal circumstances in which to find a soulmate?**

**#3**

**Question: How would you define love?**

**Stephen R. Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People**

“My wife and I just don't have the same feelings for each other we used to have. I guess I just don't love her anymore and she doesn't love me. What can I do?"

"The feeling isn't there anymore?" I asked.

"That's right," he reaffirmed. "And we have three children we're really concerned about. What do you suggest?"

"Love her," I replied.

"I told you, the feeling just isn't there anymore."

"Love her."

"You don't understand. The feeling of love just isn't there."

"Then love her. If the feeling isn't there, that's a good reason to love her."

"But how do you love when you don't love?"

"My friend, love is a verb. Love - the feeling - is a fruit of love, the verb. So love her. Serve her. Sacrifice. Listen to her. Empathize. Appreciate. Affirm her. Are you willing to do that?

# **Strive for Truth, Rabbi E. E. Dessler**

# *Love is giving to another ...*

# *...Does loving lead to giving, or does giving lead to loving? Do I love you so I give to you, or the more I give, the more I love? The Jewish answer is: The more you give, the more you love.*

**#4**

Rabbi Yisroel Salanter once saw a student eating fish with obvious enjoyment.

The student noticed the rabbi’s gaze and explained, “I love fish!”

Rabbi Salanter replied, “Are you sure? You don’t love fish! If you loved the fish, you would take it home, build an aquarium for it, and feed it every day. You killed the fish, stick a knife and fork in it, and chew it into tiny pieces - you don’t love fish - you love yourself!”

**Question: What's the difference between love and lust?**

**#5**

**Based on Rambam (Maimonides), Laws of Marriage**

*Premarital relations are forbidden according to Torah.*

**Wikipedia: Premarital Sex**

# Premarital sex is sexual activity practiced by people before they are married. Historically, premarital sex was considered a moral issue which was taboo in many cultures and considered a sin by a number of religions, but since about the 1960s, it has become more widely accepted, especially in Western countries. A 2014 Pew study on global morality found that premarital sex was considered particularly unacceptable in "predominantly Muslim nations", such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Jordan, Pakistan, and Egypt, each having over 90% disapproval, while people in Western European countries were the most accepting, with Spain, Germany, and France expressing less than 10% disapproval.

**Questions:**

# **What do you think about premarital relations?**

# **What is the downside to having premarital relations?**

* **What are some advantages to abstaining from premarital relations?**
* **How would dating look without physical connection?**

# **How do premarital relations affect marital happiness?**

**#6**

**Question: As you read the following article, stop after each point and discuss – what do you think? Do you agree? Have you observed anything similar in real life?**

**Premarital Relations, Aish.com**

**Here's a list of "10 Reasons Not to Have Pre-Marital Relations":**

1) It clouds one's objectivity. Pleasurable physical contact creates a bond: a physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual bond. You're already "committed" without focusing on important issues. Once the physical aspect takes off, you're so drawn in that you'll stay in the relationship even though you don't like the person. It becomes a relationship of convenience, not love. The real danger is in getting comfortable and then getting married.

2) It focuses away from developing communication in the relationship. Imagine that you have a little fight. Should we hug and make up in bed, or learn other non-physical ways of affection? Without the smoke-screen of physical intimacy, there will be a greater need to communicate verbally and emotionally.

3) It cheapens your self-worth. If you give intimacy to just anyone, you cheapen your sense of self. The more selective you are, the more valued you are.

4) It makes you prone to getting hurt. In pre-marital relations, a person is emotionally exposed and vulnerable. When they fail to receive the expected emotional reciprocation in return, the result is hurt. A marital commitment demonstrates that the man sees his wife as whole human being and not as an object of physical desire. Many women get confused about a man's intentions and are hurt when they later find out the truth afterwards. And they regret it.

5) You become cynical about relationships. Repeated hurt makes you stop believing that real commitment is possible. Remember your optimism about the "first one?" Now you will carry the baggage of shattered illusions into marriage.

6) You become desensitized to the special experience. What is the power of a hand-hold? A gentle kiss? We live in a society in which people treat sexuality casually. We have lost the sense of the specialness of intimate behavior by which people express their love. In Jewish consciousness, a married couple expresses the intimacy between them in a whole range of ways: The way they look at each other, the way they speak to each other, the way they behave in front of each other. If you use loving language for casual encounters, then when you want to use it later in marriage, it will ring hollow.

7) You will compare your spouse to others. After many partners, a person has experienced different physical features and activities. They now have a "composite picture" of the ultimate partner. But who will ever be able to match up to that fantasy? It is a primary rule in marriage: Don't ever compare your spouse to someone else (e.g. "My mother cooked it this way"). Since every experience stays in your subconscious, it will be that much harder to forge a total bond with your spouse.

8) The myth of sexual compatibility. Surprisingly, incompatibility is less likely when a couple has no experience to begin with. They each have a "clean slate" and are not comparing their spouse to a past lover. They can grow together in their intimacy, just as they grow together in their emotional and spiritual lives. Any initial "incompatibility" is usually just shyness or lack of familiarity. As the couple gets to know each other better – as trust grows – they become naturally compatible. Marital counselors say they have never seen a couple break up solely on the issue of relations. Problems of intimacy are merely a symptom of other problems.

9) It removes then incentive to commit. When you agree to pre-marital relations, you’ve already given away much of what you have to give. If one side is pressuring the other, by saying, "If you really loved me, you'd be intimate with me" you can respond: "If you really love me, you wouldn't pressure me."

10) You are attached for eternity. The verse in Genesis 39:10 speaks about a sexual relationship, and uses the words, "to sleep with her, to be with her." The Talmud (Sotah 3b) explains that "to sleep with her" refers to the intimate bond created by the experience – and "to be with her" refers to the afterlife. Intimacy creates a deep soul bond, and whether you are together for one night or a few years, you will experience that bond in the eternal spiritual world.

**#7**

**Mark Twain**

No man or woman really knows what perfect love is until they have been married a quarter of a century.

**Mignon McLaughlin**

A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person.

**Question: Most people want a real and lasting relationship, and it is obvious that having a different partner every night won't provide that. To keep it real you would need to date the same person again and again. How do you keep a relationship fresh and exciting on every possible level without experiencing the boredom, distance, and fatigue that partners sometimes develop?**

**#8**

The Torah doesn’t only restrict premarital relations – the Torah also regulates and guides relations within marriage. When a woman begins to menstruate, she and her husband separate from each other physically, and connect only emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually until her period is over and another seven clean days have passed. These laws are called The Laws of *Niddah*, or The Laws of Family Purity.

**Talmud Niddah 31b**

*Why did the Torah make the duration of Nidah (an additional) seven clean days?*

*Because the husband may have become used to her and was tired of her. The Torah decided to make her forbidden for seven days so that she would be desirable to her husband again [after immersing in the "mikveh" (a ritual bath - a pool of clean water constructed according to specific legal specifications)], just as she was on their wedding day.*

**Questions:**

* **What do you think about this law and the reason given?**

**#9**

**Why You Should Take A Break From Sex In Your Relationship, by Laken Howard, Bustle.com**

"Taking a break from [sex] offers the opportunity to reset your relationship, and get to know a person divorced from them principally as a sexual partner," Constance Dunn, communication expert and author of personal self-improvement handbook Practical Glamour, tells Bustle. "To give your relationship legs, propose a [sex] break that lasts approximately two weeks. This is long enough to get to know each other but not so long as to seem like forever."

**Watch YouTube video: “Proud Jewish Woman Shares Tradition of Mikvah On Tyra Banks Show!”**

(Note: We believe these topics should only be discussed in private, but it is a good quick explanation.)

**Question: Would this work if it were not commanded by G-d, if it were not Divine? Would people who are not afraid of the consequences be able to stick to the laws of family purity? (E.g. after a couple gets into a fight and wants to reconcile. Or simply, it may be hard to withstand the temptation of physical closeness, i.e. sleeping in the same bed, kissing and hugging, without desiring more.)**