

15th April 2011

DATING TIPS ACCORDING TO MY MATE MICHAEL

DEAR DIARY, my friend Michael was married to Cherry for almost 20 years. Unfortunately, Cherry ran off with her hairdressers' husband and left Michael's heart in pieces. It took him about four years to get his life back in order. He really fell apart in the most spectacular way. He even spent six weeks hospitalised and **Sectioned** under the Mental Health Act at one point when his life spun totally out of control. It was a low point when he was found emptying his neighbours' rubbish in the middle of the street at 3am in the morning wearing nothing but a bed-sheet.



Michael has really bounced back and you would hardly think anything dramatic happened to him if you didn't really know him and just met him. He doesn't throw garbage around anymore. He's stopped the heavy drinking and chain smoking. He now cuts his hair and shaves and doesn't look like Black Jesus. He takes regular showers, wears clean clothes, brushes his teeth and now looks his normal handsome self. If he wasn't like a brother to me, I might take a fancy to him but all that fancying stuff seems a little incestuous.

Michael is now 100% confident that he's come away with important lessons learned and he wanted to share some of his wisdom with me. Michael is a champion dater. He doesn't have a girlfriend; he just dates and dates and dates. I suspect he still fears being vulnerable to one woman. He denies this but I don't believe him.

Anyway, Michael decided to disclose some dating info with me because I've got a date at the weekend and I'm absolutely dreading it. So we got together and he gave me some pointers. They're all completely his perspective so obviously, not everything he tells me is the Word According to "Black Jesus", but Michael is a Barrister, a man with a high IQ, a champion Chess Player and a guy with a Degree in Maths, Psychology and English Literature so I think I'll take his words with more than a pinch of salt; maybe a pinch of Cayenne pepper instead.

So, this is what Michael said:

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Never call him first. Let him call you!

Men are the hunters. Let them hunt. If you intervene during the hunt, you're emasculating him from the get-go. You may as well twist his nuts off with a pair of pliers! Or help him lift a heavy object. Or give him directions while he's driving. Or spit on a hanky and wipe dry bogey off his nose.

*You've done your bit once phone numbers have been exchanged. If he doesn't call you, he's not interested. Let me say this again. If he doesn't call you, he's **not** interested. One more time for those who don't understand. **IF HE DOESN'T CALL YOU, YES YOU LADY FRIEND OVER THERE, HE IS NOT INTERESTED.** So resist the temptation to call him first.*



*Men tend to go for what they want immediately. The last thing they want is for some other hunter to get to you before him. If he couldn't care less about leaving you to be found by someone else, he's really not that bothered about making your acquaintance. The silence of no call is the loudest message of all. It says ***I'm not in any hurry to have you in my life.****

If you contact him first, he will humour you. Ego dictates that he humours you. Something good might develop and then again something may not. But you definitely were not on his short-list or his hot list or his #1 list. You simply pencilled yourself in.

It's an awful wait for the initial phone call but wait-you-must. If you can barely resist the urge to call, give his phone number to a friend to hold onto for a while. Do anything but just don't make the first call.

As a man, when I meet a girl I really want to see again, I'll do anything in the world to make that happen. ANYTHING. I'll cancel something important. Forego a night out with the boys. Tell my mother I can't pick her up from the train station on Tuesday. Nothing will get in the way of me getting in touch with you.



Many years ago, I met a girl on a night out and she told me where she worked. She told me the department too. Later on that evening, I went around the party looking for her but she had gone. I called every London based Lunn Poly Travel Agency and asked for Melanie who worked in the

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Caribbean Get-Aways Department. I found her in the end and she fell for me all the more because of my effort.

A little tip about text messages. These are cowardly but ahh... what can I say. Some men are a bit chicken. So if his first phone contact is via text message, let him sweat. Don't text back immediately. Leave it for between 1 and 2 hours.

So let me make this clear. If he wants to get in touch, he will call. If he's either chicken or a player, he'll text. Do you want a chicken or a player or a real man who's interested?

Avoid the Re-Bound Man

Stay clear of the heart-broken man. He's hurt, not thinking straight and his emotions are all over the place. He sees you as a welcome distraction. An ego boost. Something or someone to take his mind off the b*tch who did this to him. Just because he's interested in you, doesn't mean his heart isn't still broken. IT IS! A broken hearted man may look quite reasonable from the outside, but inside he's a complex muddle of pain. Some days, he's enraged and when he's not enraged, he's angry and bitter and he might take it out on you!



Rebound man is dangerous; like a wolf in sheep's clothing. Stay away at all costs. He'll have baggage. He won't be straight-forward. He has unfinished business and it's quite likely that when he feels better, he'll thank-you-very-much and walk into the arms of someone brand new.

Our first date

Don't be too effervescent – bubbling over with the fizziness of YOU! Don't add too much faker or too many accessories like you had a mad half hour running around, grabbing at stuff in Accessorize. Coco Chanel said before you leave the house, take off one accessory! I agree. Looking like an advert for Topshop is fine for a girls night out. Not for dates.

It's not necessary to be early on your first date. Either be on time or a tiny bit late. Being really late is just plain tardy behaviour and for me is a turn off. I don't like to be kept waiting but I also don't mind less than 10 minutes with a good excuse.



No snogging, hand holding, hugging, thigh rubbing or head stroking. It's too early. A peck hello is good enough.

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Most of all, have a good time. Don't treat it like an interview. No pretending to be someone you're not. It's exhausting trying to keep it up. Your personality won't suit everyone but it will suit someone so be yourself.

Don't moan about ANYTHING! Not your mother, your cat, your job, employer or your ex. Ex boyfriends are a No, No, No, No, NO-NO-NO.

You can flirt, but not overtly. Make it fun enough that your mum and dad wouldn't blush with shame if they saw you on a hidden camera.

On the first date, don't get drunk. Make two drinks your maximum. Don't let alcohol impair your judgement.

Don't criticise his anything. His style of dress. The mole on his nose. The gap in his front teeth. His shoes. His country of origin.

If you don't like him, don't kiss him goodbye. If you like him, give him a peck good bye. Go your separate ways. There's no need to go home with him to do anything else on the first evening. No coffee, no Scrabble, no watching DVDs. If a girl came home with me on the first night, I'd let her, but it might make me think does she do with this every guy?

If she cuts the date to go home at a decent time, it just makes me think about when we can do this again. Coming home with me or her allowing me in her home is a bit too eager.

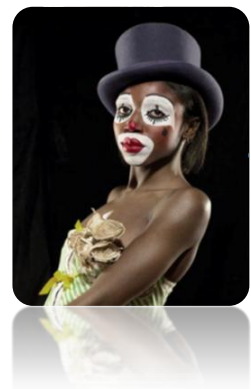
If I take you for a meal, for God's sake... EAT!

I probably won't ask for a second date if you're just going to suck on a lemon and drink sparkling water. Eat! Starters, main & dessert.

We're not going Dutch either. You can offer. That's nice. But I'm paying. You can pay further down the line, if there is a further down the line but I've done the asking so it's only right and proper that I take care of the paying too.

Miscellaneous

- *Put your phone away. Turn it on silent. I don't even want to see it*
- *Put your breasts away. I want to look at your face. If you're breasts are on show, I'm going to look at them. I'm going to become distracted and I'll also see you in a sexual way as opposed to someone I want to get to know*
- *I'd prefer no nail polish to chipped nail polish*



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- *Can I see your face please. Make-up is cool, but clown face isn't*
- *Don't put yourself down – self deprecation isn't attractive*
- *Don't be afraid to admit to one habit, it shows that you're willing to admit that you're not perfect*
- *Keep the swearing to a minimum. Most gentlemen aren't fans of language that can peel paint off walls*
- *No talk of marriage and don't start naming "our" kids or doodling your married signature (my surname) on a napkin*

Just remember ladies, the ultimate bottom line is you deserve a good man. The right man. Mr Right in fact. Don't waste your time on Mr Left.



When Michael finished telling me all the do's and don'ts of a successful encounter, I wanted to cry. There are too many rules, too much to think about and it's making me nervous enough to want to cancel my date this weekend.

But I guess it's important for me to remember that what I've been told are only guidelines.

I said to Michael before we parted company "can I print this info and take it with me so that when I'm on the date, I can refer to it

every now and then"?

Michael gave me a dead arm with a serious knuckle punch. I think that answers the question!

August Mayfield

By the way, I forgot to add, Michael said do the complete opposite of everything he said if you just want to sleep with someone and you're not at all interested in something long term!