

Free Tips

10 Tips for Healthy Dating



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An excerpt from the book *Boundaries in Dating*
by John Townsend and Henry Cloud

1. If you find that you are not really friends with someone you have a "crush" on, let that be a warning signal that something is wrong.
2. Do not think that someone who has no character is going to develop it just because you want him or her to grow.
3. If being attracted to the wrong person is a pattern, do not blame it on external reasons, but take responsibility for being the one who has a problem and work on finding its cause.
4. Make yourself face the hard questions about the person you are with. With the help of friends, be honest about whether or not you really "like" the person as well as have "chemistry" with him or her. Romantic feelings can be very deceptive, and even pathological. They are not "true love."
5. Reserve your dating life for people actively involved in the growth process. Those who are taking ownership of their deficits are less likely to develop dependencies on the strengths of others.
6. Set boundaries on your tendencies to rescue each other from your character deficits. If you are the connector, don't do all the relational work for your date. If you are the assertive one, don't enable your date by doing all the confronting. Encourage, but don't rescue.

7. Make a distinction between attraction to a person based on your deficits, or someone's attraction to you based on their deficits, and attraction to a person's uniqueness and differentness.
8. Make sure your dating relationship involves both love and truth. Challenge each other to grow. If your relationship is one of total comfort, you may be contributing to each other's spiritual laziness.
9. Be in the growth process yourself. Growth attracts growth. You will find yourself more drawn to others for healthy reasons, and less attracted to others because of what you don't possess.
10. Normalize and identify each of your character deficits. Such issues as detachment, irresponsibility, over responsibility, perfectionism, authority conflicts, and the like, should be topics that you both can talk about personally, about yourself and each other. Be agents of growth, healing, and change for each other, specifically in these issues.

