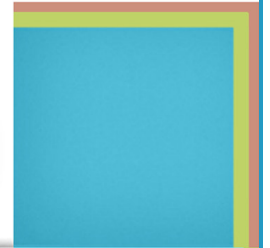
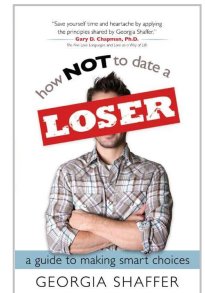




Georgia Shaffer



How to Help Singles Avoid Relational Blind-spots



Have you ever been riding with a friend when you suddenly realize if they continue to back up they are going to hit another car—a car they haven't even noticed? When driving, we've been taught we have blind spots. We have learned that in order to ensure our safety it's critical we turn our heads to the left before making a lane change.

Just like those *visual* blind spots we experience when driving, we all have relational blind spots, which are things we can't see or traits we discount in others. And, these relational blind spots can cause intelligent singles to make some unwise choices in dating situations.

So, as leaders, how can we help singles avoid some of those dating disasters? Let's look at the analogy of visual blind spots for more insights:

Educate Singles about Their Relational Blind Spots

Just like a car driver needs to double check his mirrors, single adults need reminders that even though they *think* they can see who someone really is, the reality is they will probably miss or ignore certain qualities in someone who attracts them.

As one single man asked me after a painful break-up, "How did I miss the fact that she was so controlling? Why didn't I see that sooner?" It's common for singles to concentrate on a few traits that they find attractive, such as looks or career. By failing to take a deeper look, however, they miss seeing the whole person with all their strengths and weaknesses.

Empower Singles to Steer Clear of Potential Danger

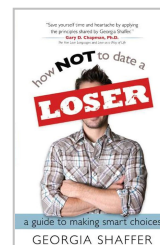
If you were a passenger riding in a car, you probably wouldn't allow the driver to back into another car without warning, "There's a car behind you!" Sure, the driver may choose to ignore you. But, at least you know you warned them of the potential danger.

Likewise, you may hesitate to talk to singles about what you notice in their relationships for fear they'll distance themselves or leave your ministry. However, when you notice the obvious that a single man or woman can't see, express your concerns with confidence. Their best interest is to protect their hearts from unnecessary trauma and pain.

Yes, some singles might tune out the suggestions of their family or closest friends. But, many will often listen to the perspectives of a pastor, counselor, or coach. They might even say, "Yeah, my sister said the same thing about him" or "My mother has been telling me that for weeks, I just thought she was being overprotective."

The single adults in your group may initially resist your suggestions. But, over time, they may be able to see the truth because you took the risk to share what you'd observed. As leaders, we can't help singles avoid all unsafe relationships. Yet, we can educate and empower them to find the healthy individuals they really want.

Note: This article was adapted from:
How Not to Date a Loser:
A Guide to Making Smart Choices.



Georgia Shaffer is a licensed psychologist, life coach, and the author of *How Not to Date a Loser: A Guide to Making Smart Choices*. She writes and speaks frequently on the subjects of relationships, dating, grief, and rebuilding after loss. Georgia has over 15 years experience helping people identify: "What needs to grow? What needs to go?" For more information, visit: www.GeorgiaShaffer.com