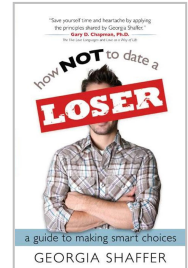




Georgia Shaffer



How NOT to Date a Loser Relationship Profile



This Relationship Profile is designed to increase awareness of your personal style of relating to God and others. The more clarity you have about yourself and the person you want to spend time with, the less likely you are to repeat the same mistakes. Creating healthy relationships begins by understanding of the kind of people you've been attracted to in the past.

Dating Inventory

Reflect on your dating history by completing the *Dating Inventory Chart* below. If you have dated, think back on your past dating relationships. Go through your old diaries, address books, Blackberry, or Rolodex. List the names of all the people you've gone out with more than three times. After each name, complete each column of the chart by listing qualities that attracted you (attractive qualities), areas of concern you noted in the beginning, and those negative qualities that showed up as you spent more time with this person.

	Dating Inventory		
Person's Name	Attractive qualities	Areas of concern noted in the beginning	Negative qualities that showed up over time

Pay special attention to the list of negatives. You could get creative and use different colored highlighters to mark any repeated negative traits. While the positives show what you *think* you were looking for, the negatives speak louder. They say, "This is what I find. This is what I keep ending up with." (See Chapter 1 of *How NOT to Date a Loser* for more information)

Deal-Breakers

Find the top five most frequently listed negative traits of those you've dated and recorded in your dating inventory chart above. Write these five traits in the box labeled My Deal Breakers. Although you have been attracted to this type of person in the past, decide that you will not settle for someone like this in the future. By writing down these traits and posting them where you can see them daily, you are more likely to be intentional about those with whom you spend your time and resources.

My Deal-Breakers

I will not continue to date someone who:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Fears That Consume Us

We are often attracted to losers because of our fears. We might, for example, be afraid we will never find anyone to love us, so we settle for someone less than God's best. Fears can unknowingly consume us and feed feelings of desperation. However, when we identify and deal with our relational fears we are less likely to be driven by them. Chapter 2 of *How NOT to Date a Loser* will give you more information on addressing your fears.

Here are some examples of what creates feelings of panic and uneasiness in some singles. What are your main fears and concerns? Are they hindering your ability to make wise choices? Are your fears causing you to get pulled into the traps of others?

What if I ...can't make it on my own? ...die alone? ...get hurt again? ...lose my job? ...grow old alone? ...never have children? ...don't have money to retire? ...hurt someone again? ...never experience sexual intimacy?

Three Fears That Can Influence My Relationships

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Blind Spots

You may have learned when driving a car to be aware of your visual blind spots. It's just as important when dating that we understand our emotional blind spots. Blind spots are either those things we don't see in ourselves or in others or something we discount as not being important when in reality it is quite significant.

Let's look at what obvious things you might have missed in past relationships and write them in the box below. Paying attention to what we ignored or missed in the past can give us clarity in our current or future relationships. Maybe someone you dated was extremely jealous, and you incorrectly assumed it was because they didn't want to lose you. What you may have failed to notice or realize is jealousy is not love, and unreasonable jealousy can be an indicator of a potentially abusive relationship. Chapter 3 in *How NOT to Date a Loser* helps you to identify your blind spots.

Three Blind Spots Ignored or Discounted

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Intimacy Blockers

Intimacy blockers refer to any behaviors, patterns, or habits that inhibit our ability to give and receive love. In order to experience healthy relationships, it's critical that we are aware of what our intimacy blockers. In Chapter 5 of *How NOT to Date a Loser*, we discuss how our less-than-perfect family can impact our ability to connect lovingly with others.

Here is a list of behaviors that can create problems in our ability to relate with others. Find the two that best describe you and write them into the box below. If you get stuck, you may want to ask someone close to you that you trust to help you with this exercise.

- Failing to communicate when something is bothering you
- Giving the silent treatment when upset
- Placating or giving in just to keep the peace
- Numbing pain with work, food, alcohol, sex, drugs, or busyness
- Attempting to control everything
- Refusing to discuss the obvious (the elephant in the room)
- Believing that love is something earned, not given freely
- Believing that love is a feeling that comes and goes
- Unforgiving in current or past relationships
- Disrespecting, being critical, or demeaning others
- Being unwilling to hear the truth when spoken in love
- Refusing to deal with issues that make you angry
- Being unwilling to be yourself or express true feelings for fear of rejection
- Focusing on "what's in it for me" rather than having a spirit of give and take

My Intimacy Blockers

4

1.

2.

The Truth about Yourself

Chapter 6 in *How NOT to Date a Loser* addresses the erroneous beliefs we have about ourselves, God, and others. It's important to delete and replace these thoughts with the truth from God. We want to remind ourselves continually that just because we feel something is true doesn't mean it is true.

Again, it may be helpful to ask those closest to you for help in recognizing the lies and distortions (about God, yourself, and others) with which you especially struggle. After you have identified them, write down the truths of Scripture that counter your incorrect beliefs and remind you of what God says.

Here are a few examples:

- I feel God doesn't want me to be happy, but here's what I choose to believe: "No good thing will he [God] withhold from those who walk along his paths" (Psalm 84:1).
- I feel I don't have enough faith to believe God will help me, but here's what I choose to believe: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me" (Psalm 50:15).

Despite what I think and feel, God says this is true about me:

1.

2.

3.

Stress Relievers

Chapter 7 of *How NOT to Date a Loser* discusses how grieving our losses is critical to making a fresh start in our dating lives. But facing the pain can be overwhelming. Therefore, it's important when grieving that we purposefully carve out time for something that brings us a few moments of relief. Otherwise we tend to use food, sex or busyness to numb our pain.

If you had a whole day to do something that was healthy and enjoyable, what would you do? Would you ride your bike (or motorcycle), hike, play video games, shop, read, sleep, golf, watch TV, visit a spa, take a long hot bath, chill out with friends, rent a DVD or go to the movies, learn something new, entertain a few friends, fish, or travel to the beach?

Create your own list of healthy stress relievers. When those difficult times hit, you will already know what can refresh your soul.

Stress Relief Favorites

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Connecting with God

The Bible states that all loving, intimate relationships flow out of our personal relationship with God. Therefore, it's beneficial to carve out time and space to connect with Him in a way that is meaningful to us. Unless we are purposeful, it won't happen naturally (Connecting to God and making Him our first love is the topic of Chapter 8 in *How NOT to Date a Loser*).

What are some of the ways that you best connect with God? Have you found some of your most intimate times with Him when you're listening to music, sitting on the beach, or taking a walk? Pick your three favorite ways and record them in the first box below.

In the second box, write down what alerts you that you're close to or running on empty. Maybe one sign for you is that you feel especially insecure and needy. Perhaps you get extremely driven and anxious. Or maybe you start looking to others to make you happy.

Recording these indicators will enable you to identify more quickly when you're in trouble and need to be refilled with God's love, joy, and peace.

My Style of Connecting with God

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I'm Neglecting My Relationship with God when. . .

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Social Network

One of the challenges to being single is the mistaken belief that we need to go it alone. God created us to be in relationship with him and with others. We need people with whom to share our lives. A supportive social network is vital to establish and maintain healthy lives. Chapter 9 in *How NOT to Date a Loser* discusses how we do this so we are no longer starving for relationships and become vulnerable to the advances of losers.

Take a few moments to identify the people who make up your current community and those who are your closest friends. Write your answers in the boxes below. Do you have people who will accept you as you are and show you God's grace? Do you have a friend you can call when your life gets messy? Do you have someone who will speak the truth to you in love, someone who will encourage you when you get discouraged? But mostly importantly, are you willing to do this for others?

Evaluate the kinds of relationships you have, and then record them in the boxes below. If no one is including you right now, reach out to those you would like to get to know better. Make the time to invest in the lives of others and build a strong social network. It is vital in establishing and maintaining healthy connections.

My Social Network

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

My Closest Friends

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Deal-Makers

It's critical to be clear on what we want in a special someone so we don't accept less. What kind of person are you seeking? What character qualities are most important to you? What are the core values you hold dear? Do you want someone who is committed to Christ, has integrity, humor and a heart to serve others? Or maybe you prefer someone who is generous, humble, compassionate, flexible and reliable.

You might not find someone who has everything on your list, but at least you'll know what you're shooting for. Chapter 10 in *How NOT to Date a Loser* provides additional information in determining your top five deal-makers. Take the time to do it now before you get overwhelmed by that passionate "in love" feeling!

Top Five Deal-Makers

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Action Plan for the Holidays

Chapter 11 in *How NOT to Date a Loser* discusses the ongoing challenges of the single lifestyle and gives healthy ways to address our needs and longings. For instance, which holidays are especially difficult for you? Planning ahead for these difficult times minimizes the chances you will seek someone or something unhealthy to ease your loneliness. For example, maybe you dread Valentine's Day. What can do you to make this time more enjoyable? Perhaps you could send Valentine's cards to your closest friends and host a dinner for them. Write down the times when you tend to be most vulnerable below with a plan of action.

Two Difficult Holidays and My Action Plan:

- 1.
- 2.

Passions

All too often, as singles, we put our lives on hold, believing that only a significant other, a spouse, or a child will give us a sense of purpose and the joy to live with passion. By waiting for that special person to come along, however, we miss out on living our lives today.

Instead of waiting or trying to get a different life, we need to start right now, right where we are, to live the life we've been given. Chapter 12 in *How NOT to Date a Loser* discusses this issue.

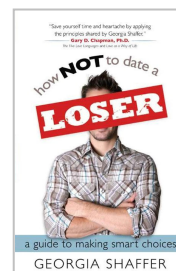
What gets you excited? What are you passionate about? Think about when you were a child. What are the stories you love to tell? What did you love to do? Even if you don't know what you love (I didn't until the age of 40), don't give up. Once you've identified your passions, write them in the box below.

My Passions

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Thanks for taking the time to complete your Relationship Profile. Now that you're finished, put it in a place where you can refer to it often. This information reveals your style of connecting to God and others. And, it describes many of the ways that you are special!

Note: This resource 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