



# Your Dating Workbook

Maybe you are dating or thinking of dating, or perhaps your mother or your daughter is. Here are some ways of thinking about this. Think bluntly, indulgently. Nobody is watching.

- **Definition.** An Austrian friend once asked me, “What is dating? I don’t think we do that here.” Every culture and every person has a unique definition. What is yours?

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- **Etiquette**, including sexual etiquette.

How do you find people to date?

Who makes the first move?

If asked, where would you suggest going on a first date? At what point would you invite him/her to your home?

What form of sex takes place at what point in the relationship? How do you plan to keep sex safe?

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- **Goal.** Why do you want to date? Take some time to elaborate. Your dates might fit in any of the following categories.

**Fun Partner.** A one-time or occasional meeting to watch a sporting event or maybe you got some free tickets to the opera. It’s not exactly dating, but relationships can sometimes develop.

**Companion.** A more regular presence, such as someone who shares your pleasure eating at fabulous restaurants, a bridge partner, or a regular hiking buddy.

**Friend with Benefits** (sex without commitment)? What are your requirements and what are your terms? What is your availability? Include safe sex guidelines.

**Committed relationship or marriage.** What are your criteria for a partner? Non-negotiable requirements? Areas you don’t care about?

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- **History.** Review your dating or marital history. What were your greatest weaknesses/strengths as a date or partner? Do you want more of the same kind of person you have been involved with before, or something different? Did your choices of partner also bring you closer to your friends and family? Whose advice has been helpful?

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- **Keep a Journal.** Write down your developing thoughts and experiences, and go back and review what you have written every few months.

- **Keep a Budget.** How much time and money are you spending on dating?

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- **Pros and Cons:** This may take off some of the romantic edge, but can help keep your feet on the ground. Consider what qualities might be listed when evaluating yourself. Maybe you want to compare one person with another, or create a list of your own priorities. Here is my list:

<i>Requirements</i>	<i>Deal Breakers</i>
Sane	Addicted
Solvent	Mentally ill
Kind	Practical joker