

Paper: Chicago Tribune RedEye Edition (IL)
Title: Are you too nice for your own dating good?
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Date: March 31, 2005

There are no nice guys left? Please. They're all over the place, rejected by women who traded up the puppy dogs for men. And where are all of the good girls? Hello. They're at home, fronted by men who chose to date someone less like their mothers. It's the nice factor at play here, the killer of all romance that could have been. It's not that these singles have anything wrong with them, they're just nice. If you've gotten the "you're too good/too nice for me" speech lately, take charge.

Unfortunately, nice is the label you get when people can't think of anything else to define you. Straighten up the old backbone and figure out if you're too nice for your own dating good.

Proverbial nice guys always finish last because they hold open the door too long and let in their competition. Open the door? Perfection. Now that you're in, DO SOMETHING. Show what else you've got going on.

Dating is all about aligning chemistry, interests, goals, passions. If you just sit around trying to be polite instead of expressing yourself, how will you ever get to know each other?

When you're nice, you don't have to prove it; you simply are. You have natural manners, kind tendencies, enriched communication; you're golden. Should it be impressive that someone doesn't cheat or steal? No, it's an expectation. Nice--like trust--is beautiful, but it should be automatic in the selection of your mate, as it is in you. Once it's established, you're only going to be running with a genuine crowd, and you don't have to try so hard.

Still be gracious and always say "thank you." Absolutely. And then showcase your other facets as well. You don't have to make all declarations that first night. But eventually in the relationship, you'll need to show your true self, so why not start honest?

You're not only in this world to serve. Show the other sides of you. There is a difference between a giver and a pushover. The first is generous; the latter is a servant. It comes down to having boundaries and respect for yourself. And it's that confidence to exert your true self that heightens chemistry and incites the good stuff afterward.

In hopes of meeting their mate, otherwise stimulating and bright individuals often reduce themselves to ever-amenable bores. They'll eat pasta when doing Atkins, pretend the white zin was actually their preference--anything to make nice. These daters drop their essence for what they perceive the other wants from them.

Don't let this happen to you. Reframe. Nice does not have to mean passive or unconditionally agreeable. "No" has a place, and if it's on your date, say it. Differing

opinions don't have to create battlefields. And if they do, fine. Make known what you stand for.

One reader confessed that on dates, she tries her best to remain agreeable, as she's been taught that's the mark of a lady. She said she usually likes to see what her date's interests are before espousing her own, just to make sure they'll match. So the only time to share what's on your mind is if someone else says it first? What? On the flip side, a guy told me that when women are "too nice," he feels pressure to be all "uptight" and hold back who he really is.

Bottom line, men and women alike need to feel they're meeting a complete person. Fraying off your true character proves nothing except that you're willing to hide. It seems less risky because the real you is never involved. But it accomplishes nothing.

So, unless you're dating a dentist, give more than a smile.

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