

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

Frankie: Introduction

Welcome and thank you for joining our monthly Conscious Dating Tele-seminar. This seminar series is designed to help you find the love of your life and the life that you love. Please mark your calendar and be sure to join us on the first Thursday of each month and we will knock your socks off with outstanding one-of-kind programs you won't want to miss.

I'm Frankie Doiron, President of Conscious Relationship Network. My job is to creatively apply all the resources in our organization to help you have successful relationships. For example, on the third Thursday of each month David Steel and I will conduct a free monthly Conscious Dating Tele-clinic to provide you real-time coaching and relationship advice. For more information visit www.consciousdatingteleclinic.com. We are absolutely serious about our commitment to helping you have fulfilling relationships, and we're excited you're here with us this evening.

Tonight our Tele-Seminar is called **Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away**.

We are fortunate to have 4 very qualified RCI Coaches who will share their professional and personal insights about long distance dating. I'll let each of them introduce themselves and share a little of their personal experiences.

In this program you discover-

- The 8 biggest challenges to Long Distance dating;
- Tips and insights to overcoming those challenges;
- How Conscious Dating can help you conquer the scarcity mentality;
- And much more!

We know that one of your highest goals is to find your Life Partner. Our mission and commitment in this program is to help you achieve this goal and we will pull out all the stops tonight to do so.

We'll be recording this tele-seminar, so if you would like to receive the audio file and a complete written transcript visit www.consciousdatingaudio.com.

Tonight's seminar will be approximately 1 hour in length and includes a Question & Answer period at the end of the program, so please make note of questions you may have as they come up during the seminar. We are prepared to extend the call duration in order to answer all your questions. To eliminate any background noise which could affect the quality of sound on the call, we'll be muting all callers. When we have finished delivering our content we'll open the lines again for questions and comments.

It's important to deliver a balanced program to you tonight and that means being clear we are not advocating long distance relationships over traditional face to face relationships.

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

Indeed, being a Conscious Dater means you are aware of the opportunities around you in your local geographical area. It also means you don't buy into the scarcity mentality, which would lead you to seek a partner from further a field – like 1200 miles away!

Long distance relationships are not for everyone and many don't work. But some people, including myself have had very successful experiences and have found our life partner that way.

Tonight our panel will address the major challenges facing long distance lovers and provide tips and suggestions on how to overcome those obstacles.

I'm going to ask my guests to take a few minutes each to make their own introduction and share their personal experience with long distance relationships.

Randy, would you please begin...

Randy...Bio & experience (3 Minutes maximum)

Lois... Bio & experience (3 Minutes maximum)

Melvin... Bio & experience (3 Minutes maximum)

Janice... Bio & experience (3 Minutes maximum)

Frankie:

Thank you everyone for sharing your background and experiences.

Let's get right into the top 8 challenges facing long distance lovers.

Randy, what are your two favourite challenges?

Randy (7 minutes 2 Challenges)

Challenge #1: They picture the relationship in conventional terms (i.e. they think one or the other must move so they can live together).

If your desires, beliefs, and expectations are to live together and be exclusive (I almost included "marriage"), then it may be more difficult in a long distance relationship even if both people want it.

I almost included "marriage," but then struck it out, because although marriage often means "live together and be exclusive," it doesn't necessarily mean that.

The reality of long distance relationships is that it is difficult to live together and may be so for a long time, and expectations can lead to disappointment (usually do).

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

It's worse, of course, if one person wants to live together and the other doesn't (or it's not as important).

Couples living in the same town can (and often do) have these same problems, but the problems are exacerbated by the distance.

Exclusivity is similar. Even if both want an exclusive relationship, deprivation and temptation are larger forces when the distance (and time) are long, and deviations can occur. This can cause guilt followed by emotional distance followed by insecurity in the other partner, even if there is no revelation about the aberration. And if only one wants exclusivity, this can lead to conflict, especially when there is so much opportunity.

Frankie: Randy, what are the solutions or tips to overcoming this challenge?

Randy: Be clear in your own mind about what you want.

Be prepared to change what you thought you wanted into what you really want (long distance relationships can be a testing ground for what you *really* want).

Talk with your partner about what you each want, but don't get entrenched too soon while you are still testing (and maybe changing).

Consider alternative "design your own" relationship styles.

Negotiate "how much time" you really need and consider whether this requires living together or moving to the same city.

Consider a "don't ask don't tell" philosophy with regard to exclusivity. But take reasonable safety precautions.

Don't be in any rush to make important decision. Enjoy the moment.

Frankie: Terrific insights Randy...Conscious Dating is about making choices that meet your specific situation and requirements. Thank you for showing us a view outside of the box.

What is the next Challenge?

Randy: Challenge #2: They cut themselves off from other (more local) opportunities to meet people based on fantasy instead of reality.

Whether their relationships are long distance or local, people need a period of non-exclusive dating to find someone who truly meets their needs. The fantasy of a long distance relationship may cause one or the other or both to become exclusive before they should, i.e. while they should be dating a variety of people.

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

To find a life partner, one needs to meet a lot of people, to screen and test, and to find out if they are a good match. This takes time, and usually doesn't happen with the first person you go out with (or even the tenth...).

Because of the cost of long distance relationships, and the high fantasy, it could be enticing to abandon meeting other people.

Frankie: And the solution is?

Randy: To bring the fantasy down to reality, it is important to meet your long distance partner soon, often, and for extended periods of time.

To find the best match for you, it is important to continue to date others (local or long distance) until one or another of these relationships (plural) is secure. This typically takes time (6 months to 2 years).

Frankie: Thank you Randy. Janice would you like to take the next two challenges?

Janice (7 minutes 2 Challenges)

Challenge #3: Missing each other's physical presence.

When you're attracted to or dating someone long distance, it's pretty much inevitable that you're going to miss each other's physical presence in your daily lives. This can lead to feeling disconnected, and the challenge therefore becomes how to keep an intimate connection going even from a distance. The risk though, is creating too much of a "virtual intimacy," that doesn't match the real or "actual" level of intimacy.

This can happen in a couple of different ways. If you've only met "virtually," like on an online dating website, or before a blind date (when you usually talk on the phone beforehand), the desire to feel connected can lead singles to spend too much time sharing intimate details about themselves over email or by phone. This creates what I call a "pseudo-intimacy," which is not a real or actual intimacy because it doesn't take into account the intangible aspect of chemistry that only happens when you're in someone's physical presence.

So if you've met someone online or over the phone, and you think there's potential for a relationship, then it's understandable that you'll feel disconnected from this person until you've met in person.

The more common problem that singles dating long distance experience however, is when they've already met in person, have experienced chemistry, and agreed to pursue the relationship across the distance. Feeling disconnected is then normal and understandable, so the challenge is how to maintain the contact and the intimacy until you can see each other again.

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

Frankie: That is a tough one Janice...what are your recommendations?

Janice: I have a few suggestions, based not only on my own personal experience, but with coaching others in long distance relationships. (So I guess you could say these are "tried and true techniques.")

For singles who have never met, instead of having hour-long chats or extended emails to close the gap, you need to make every effort to meet in person in order to feel a more real connection. Being careful to gather information via email or phone is essential, but it doesn't necessarily require endless virtual contact before meeting.

For singles who have met, sending quick emails or text messages letting the other person know that you're thinking about them is appropriate, but only to the level each of you are comfortable with. This is just as true for couples who live and work in the same city. But people have different tolerances for being interrupted while going about their daily lives, so this is something you have to figure out together

But whether or not you're in periodic "virtual" contact, I suggest that you make a schedule of your "phone dates." This is the time when you've planned to give each other your full attention so you can discuss the events and experiences of your day. If you both have webcams, great! By sharing aspects of your lives on a regular basis by phone, you are able to better focus on the message and the person, while not getting distracted by the environment, like if you were meeting in person at a restaurant or bar. That is, unless, there is very loud construction around you, or screaming and yelling children.

Intimacy is increased as you each relate stories about your day, and the feelings that they bring up. These disclosures may feel risky, but being on the phone can actually help to decrease the sense of risk-taking. That also means you need to do some degree of self-monitoring while talking on the phone; you know, don't let go of ALL of your inhibitions. Avoid phone sex – it only makes you more frustrated.

An important tip on phone dates is that you attempt to use the time on the phone productively. While you are, understandably, missing one another and feeling disconnected, I suggest that rather than just mope and complain about how you can't be together, agree on a book or magazine article that you both want to read and discuss it. Continue to ask questions about the kind of relationship and life you each want, and get to know one another in substantial, productive ways.

Frankie: Great advice Janice and a lot of common sense. What is Challenge 4?

Janice: Challenge # 4: While it can be difficult to recognize "red flags" even when dating someone nearby, it's true that recognizing red flags can be especially challenging while dating long distance. But it's not impossible.

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

A “red flag” is something that your dating partner might say or do that warns you of a problem area in the relationship or specifically, in the other person. Rather than go into a lot of detail about defining a red flag, I’m going to present a real-life example from my coaching practice.

Jerry was visiting NYC last January from Florida and attended a singles event where he met Michelle. He was a 40 year old divorced father sharing custody of his children with his ex-wife. He was very motivated to re-marry, and because he wanted to date in as an efficient and conscious a manner as possible, he hired me as his coach.

After their first meeting, when Jerry was in Florida, he and Michelle would speak on the phone and email one another. He would travel to NYC every other weekend, staying at either friends’ homes in NYC, or with family members in New Jersey. He and Michelle would then get together 2 or 3 times over the course of the weekend.

They quickly determined that they had the same relationship goal, which was marriage and children. Jerry felt certain pretty quickly that Michelle met his relationship requirements and needs, and felt they were compatible on many levels. But Michelle was 32 years old and never married, and so Jerry knew he would have to be patient to allow their relationship to blossom. But Jerry was open about expressing his feeling to Michelle early on, but he was realistic in knowing that it might take her awhile to develop, and then share, hers with him.

Jerry and I monitored the development of their relationship in his weekly coaching sessions, emphasizing pretty early on on identifying any red flags he encountered. We had agreed on looking out for red flags since he knew he initially had deeper feelings for Michelle than she did for him. So he wanted to be sure that he could be a conscious in his decision-making (use his head), rather than just be led by his heart.

The first red flag he encountered was when he wanted to be in an exclusive relationship with Michelle, yet Michelle hesitated. Jerry had decided he himself would not date anyone else, and he had simply assumed that she also was not dating anyone else. But because of the distance, and knowing how he felt about her, I encouraged him to share this ask Michelle sooner rather than later. He did, but it took about 6 weeks for Michelle to agree not to go out with other men, and Jerry no longer saw this red flag.

Another red flag that Jerry saw was Michelle’s apparent lack of warmth when they were around children. Not only did Jerry already have children, but he wanted more, and while Michelle said she wanted children too, he was concerned about how she interacted with the various children they met when they went out together (like their nieces and nephews or children of friends). Jerry and I discussed if how Michelle behaved around children was going to meet his relationship needs and requirements. Again, I encouraged Jerry to bring this up with Michelle, and to be conscious about this aspect of their relationship’s future, and he did so over the phone.

Michelle saw this more as a reflection of their “different styles” of relating to others, especially children. But more importantly, she revealed that because of the long distance, the infrequency of their dates and the time they spent together, she felt like she was under a microscope when they

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

visited others, and this made her feel pressured. As they continued to date and socialize more over time, he saw how she made greater efforts to engage with others, not just children, and so this was no longer a red flag for Jerry.

A few other “red flags” were identified during the course of Jerry & Michelle’s long distance courtship which were discussed during our coaching work together. Like the two I just described, they were viewed from the context of knowing that they were living 1500 miles apart and unable to address and resolve many of them face-to-face. It’s possible that they appeared as red flags BECAUSE of the distance, and turned out not to be of any concern when they were together.

Frankie: Janice those are great examples of how to screen and test potential partners. So what is the solution for this challenge?

Janice: Recognizing red flags while dating is a challenge even when you live in the same neighborhood. But often because of the constraints of distance, coupled with the desire to make the relationship work, many red flags aren’t noticed until it’s too late. Therefore the “solution” to this challenge is to be particularly observant of the words and behaviors that concern you when dating someone long distance, and to raise these concerns sooner than later. Jerry benefited from having a coach to work with who could legitimize his observations and help him find tactful ways to raise his concerns. As coaches, all of us on this panel tonight want you to know that we’re available to help you to navigate your relationships, whether they’re over long distances or not, and attain a gratifying and fulfilling life partner relationship.

Frankie: Thank you Janice for sharing your insights. Now I will turn it over to Melvin for challenges 5 and 6.

Melvin (7 minutes 2 Challenges)

Challenge #5: Making a decision to move and live together before they have spent enough time together (long distance can extend the infatuation period).

A long-distance couple deciding to live together is like buying a pair of shoes without first trying them on, they may fit, but they can also be uncomfortable. Moving in together can be a fatal mistake; it’s an intensified form of a mini- marriage.

Frankie: It is indeed Melvin, so what’s the solution?

Melvin: Before moving in, the couple should consider themselves in the pre-commitment or pre-marital stage.

They should examine what it takes to create and maintain a successful relationship. They should hire a relationship coach to determine their individual visions, values, and requirements for their relationship...this is critical. When you are in love or infatuation it’s hard to be objective and balance the heart with the head. Requirements if not met will cause someone to leave the

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

relationship. Requirements are for the relationship, not to be confused as your personal, deal breaker's list.

They also need to uncover their unique emotional and functional needs, and wants. Unmet or undistinguished needs will trigger issues, which may or may not be solvable, but they will not destroy the relationship. Emotional needs are necessary to make you feel loved and the functional needs are necessary to make the relationship function, like who pays the bills or does the house work. Wants are the extra credit desires, like a 60" television in white, with surround sound for the Super Bowl party.

Testing the relationship, asking hard questions, meeting relatives and friends will provide both parties with important and intimate details. Both parties should know in detail, each others financial status and plans for the future. Are there plans for a wedding, or family and by when?

Distance adds to the fantasy and fairy tale belief that extraordinary weekends, hot sex and mini vacations can be sustained and even increased when a couple decides to live together.

Expectations are extreme and filled with unrealistic beliefs, filled with unrealistic goals, loss of freedom, unanticipated changes in routines, financial challenges, friends, and individuality. Before anyone decides to relocate I would recommend an extensive testing plan, which could be supported by a relationship coach or an objective person who can be ask the hard and difficult questions concerning the potential of a successful relationship.

Frankie: Sound tips Melvin. Thank you. What is Challenge #6?

Melvin: Challenge # 6: Expecting exclusivity when neither party can control it or observe it, or promise it when they don't intend it.

Sometimes a long distance relationship is a cover for someone's inability to make a commitment. The freedom to go and do whatever you want, when your partner is hundreds or thousands of miles away is more available with distance. I belief complete trust is critical and if there is any doubt what so ever, leave the relationship.

Here is where a coach can help again. Some important exercises to do with a coach are family history, relationship patterns, fear vs. fantasy, 10 new laws of love and others. These exercises should stir the pot enough to provide some clues as to whether your partner can be trusted.

If you can't trust someone to be exclusive, it doesn't matter how far or how close they are, the relationship is doomed.

Frankie: Exclusivity and trust go hand in hand. Thanks for the advice Melvin

Lois it's time for the last 2 challenges.

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

Lois: (7 minutes 2 Challenges)

Challenge # 7: Not understanding the interplay of infatuation, true chemistry, and emotional maturing, and the distance makes it more difficult to get all this onto a realistic footing.

This is a very rich multi-faceted issue that really speaks not only to burgeoning relationships, but especially to the inherent challenges of long-distance ones. I have a running joke with my clients, when they make such a big deal about not being able to meet anyone where there's chemistry. Yet when I ask them what chemistry is, they can never define it. They'll say something like, "Excitement." I'll usually say, "You mean like having sweaty palms and a racing heart." Yeah, sort of like that. To which I say, "Sometimes sweaty palms and a racing heart, is not always a sign of chemistry, sometimes it's food poisoning." We laugh, but they get the point. We give so much power to "feeling" a certain way when we meet someone, we name it "chemistry" and then, we snap to yes/no decisions pretty quickly if that's present or missing. I call that "just add water chemistry." It's tenuous at best, and rarely sustainable. And unfortunately, very prevalent in long-distant relationships.

I'm not talking about the desire to have rapport, where you enjoy each other's humor, mind, and by the way, they're not too bad to look at either. That's a healthy desire. Where long-distance gets tricky, is you don't have the nuance of non-verbal communication to accurately read the relationship. They can be quite whirlwind. Condensed pockets of in-person intimacy may not give you the information, that day-in-day-out getting to know the mundane as well as stellar moments in another's life can.

Frankie: This is very treacherous ground Lois...what's the solution to this challenge?

Lois: The first thing I'd suggest is to realize right off the bat that some of the relationship puzzle pieces are missing in this equation. How do you deal with that? Go slow. Don't make any major decisions until you really log in the hours, weeks or months. Pay attention to the red flags that dance by your phone or e-mails or truncated visits.

Know your "soft spots" and know them well. If you're like me, someone who has "fallen in love" with many a man who played the English language like a Stravinsky violin, be careful of prolonged phone conversations, that can be very misleading and all too intoxicating.

Be real with what you want in your life. How does this situation support and not support that? Ask vision oriented questions, "If you had a magic genie, who granted you your perfect life, what would it look like in 5 years. If you won lotto, what would change in your life? What wouldn't change? Questions like these are very helpful in finding out where your partner's priorities and values are.

Go on with your regular non-relationship life, and see this as the icing, not the batter of the cake. I've seen so many clients who were in a stuck place in their professional life, use a whirlwind long-distant relationship as a distraction, to avoid looking at the bigger picture of their lives.

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

And of course, whenever possible, spend as much prolonged in-person time with them as possible. You don't know the person until you know the person. End of story.

Frankie: Thanks Lois...like I always say...love isn't a race. It pays off to take it slow and steady. What is our 8th and final Challenge?

Lois: Challenge #8: Thinking they are in love based on only email and telephone contact, and then either are very disappointed or persist in the fantasy when they meet.

I call this "virtual relationship syndrome," and I find it not only prevalent in long-distance relationships but internet relationships as well. We're in such a high-tech period, that people have entire relationships without ever spending any one-on-one time with each other. It fosters a level of fantasy, that for the most part eliminates the richness of non-verbal communication. I ask clients how long they've been "dating" this person only to find out they've had 4 hour conversations, and enough e-mails to fill a notebook, but have only met twice. In some cases, not at all. With only phone and e-mail to base a "relationship" on, you can have a hey day with fantasies and assumptions.

Frankie: What's the solution for this challenge, Lois?

Lois: First step, meet in-person as soon as you can. You will get more information in one in-person meeting than several days, weeks or even months on e-mail or phone. When you do speak, I'd suggest to be very intentional about what you speak about. First get clear with yourself what you're looking for. First in your life, and then in a partnership. Be honest about your lifestyle. If you just want something casual, then perhaps it's a good fit for now. If however, you are looking for "luscious life partnership," use these phone e-mail sessions to really get to know the other person, not just flirt and banter back and forth. Nothing builds more fantasy than juicy content with no context. Listen intently on their life styles, choices and values. Listen to how they talk about their family, friends and co-workers. Are they good listeners? It may not sound very glamorous or romantic, but it will save you from falling into the fantasy pit. What do their days look like?

How do they react when you suggest an in-person meeting? That will tell you a lot. If they make a lot of excuses to why that can't happen, PAY ATTENTION!!! They may be only interested in virtual relationships. Relationship success resides in "the space between the words," not the words themselves.

Frankie: Conclusion

What a fabulous job coaches! Thank you for your insights into an arena that is fraught with pitfalls. Before we open it up to questions I'd like to remind everyone that you can get a written transcript and audio recording of this seminar, by going to www.consciousdatingaudio.com It's only \$9.95 and you will get immediate access to the replay line.

Conscious Dating at a Distance: What to Do When You Are Attracted to Someone 1200 Miles Away

Also, if you are serious about finding your soul mate and want to kick start the process, join our 4-week 'Conscious Dating Relationship Success Training for Singles' Tele-program beginning Tuesday, February 20th. We have a free information call on February 7th at 8:30 pm Eastern time. To register for this free call go www.consciousdating.com/ready.htm

UnMute (*5) and Open to Questions

We will now take the lines off mute and open up the call to questions

Frankie Wrap –up:

Thank you for participating and we look forward to seeing you at our next free Tele-seminar on March 1st where our topic will be '**Conscious Dating for Boomers: Finding Love Over 50**'.

Be sure to join us in two weeks on February 15th at 6:30 PM Pacific, 9:30 PM Eastern for our Conscious Dating Tele-clinic for live coaching and advice. Just register at www.consciousdatingteleclinic.com It's free!