

Dear Esther June 2021

Dear Carrie,

I was surprised and delighted to see my name come up in your Kvetch in the City column last month. I was on the couch reading last month's column and reacted with laughter and a big smile on my face. My 11-year-old granddaughter was close by and quickly inquired about the cause of my joy. I explained your column the best I could and asked her the question, "Do you think Carrie writing a monthly column will be a hard thing for the person she dates?" After placing her finger to her chin and looking up for a minute, she replied "No, as long as she doesn't say anything bad about the person."

While I recognize that your questions were just thoughts made public and not necessarily a formal request for advice, the Bubbe in me cannot resist giving you some feedback. Most of your questions can be applied to any dating situation and worth talking about. Thank you for bringing them up.

Let's get back to basics for a minute, it is never a good idea to speak negatively about another person, period. Now, let's get real for a minute, bad things happen to all of us, and it can be helpful to vent when it is appropriate to do so. But it is how and who you vent to that can define your relationship. You should negotiate the boundaries of your dating relationships up front with clear expectations on your comfort level of sharing information with others and how that will be done. As a columnist, this is critical to avoid possible embarrassment or hurt feelings if they, or a friend of the person you are dating, reads your column and acquires knowledge that wasn't meant to be shared. You may be asking why do I need permission to share my experiences? A healthy relationship is built upon a foundation of trust. Trust that your partner has your best interest at heart, always has your back and trust that both of you feel the same way about each other. One way to build that trust is to have open communication about what you share.

You also bring up a potentially sticky situation of dating within the Jewish community while writing a column. Although you might not attract the shy, introverted type of person, you will likely attract people who have your similar level of openness. The right person might find this exciting and enjoy reading your column about your shared experiences. Perhaps you will disclose some of your dating mishaps as well as theirs (with permission) in future columns and it could be a fun experience for both of you.

I also wouldn't worry about whether you remind someone of their Jewish mother or whether they will mind your kvetching. When someone falls in love with you, they fall in love with you and the entire package. Kvetching is your past time (and now your profession), and I am confident they will know that upfront. However, dating a non-Jewish person will take some education and training on your part. It's great that you already recognize that. They indeed will need to understand what kvetching is and is not, a list of the 20 most common Yiddish words and desensitizing to the communication style of a New Yorker.

Having a column may actually increase your dating pool within the Jewish community because you made it clear in last month's paper that you are ready to date in person again. In a sense your net has been cast wider with the column and I hope your net catches many fish for you to consider. I would suggest leaving your contact information at the bottom of your column so that interested parties can contact you (Haha). Open your door to inquiries!

While I don't have a single brother to set you up with, I am your neighbor columnist and I have your back. So let me put a call out there to all single middle-aged men who might be interested in dating Carrie Mills. Contact her directly or contact me and I will put you in touch. Before you panic, Carrie, I have some free time and can help you go through the many inquiries you should be getting soon. Now this is what I call fun!



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