

*Love Life Tips & Advice by Diana Kirschner, Ph.D.*

## **Do You Have Dating Dawdlitis?**

*Four steps will get you off the couch and on your way to the love you want!*

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You'll do anything other than looking for a partner online -- watch TV reruns, clean the bathroom, complain about your dating troubles, or even call your mother. You freeze up and question yourself repeatedly when it's time to meet someone for coffee, make the next call, date, or move on to the first kiss.

Sound familiar? It's all too common, whether you're new to dating or a seasoned but burnt-out veteran. When you find it hard or even impossible to date, even though you're lonely and hungry for a romantic connection, you have what I call **Dating Dawdlitis** (DD).

Actually most singles have at least a touch of DD. We get tongue tied and run the other way instead of saying hello to the cute guy on the train or the hot girl who works in the office. When we need to find a profile photo, we see nothing but pimples, warts and just how big our nose really is. We write and rewrite our emails to prospective dates, trying to be more clever, more real, and more funny, more whatever -- that mysterious quality that makes us irresistible. And when we're on a date with an attractive partner, we get awkward or quiet or start babbling gibberish.

There's another form of DD, we have pulled back because "nobody's good enough." We've dated a string of nerds and losers and that's enough, thank you very much. What

we don't look at is how our own superiority masks a certain insecurity, a secret belief that, "There's something really wrong with me."

When DD is full-blown, we may be paralyzed to the point where we can't or don't even try to jump into the pool of possible dating partners. And even if we do manage to date, negative thoughts lurk in our minds like boogey men, ruining any chance of we have of simply being ourselves or having a good time.

DD is what stands between you and love, between you and those cozy nights of afterglow cuddling. But here's the good news: You can beat Dating Dawdlitis. All you need to do is get off the couch and take these four steps that will build your self-confidence and courage.

**Your First Step** -- Understand you're not alone. Most, if not all singles, have been through some form of DD. It's OK to feel anxious, scared, intimidated, weird, or awkward. In fact, it's OK to feel whatever you're feeling.

**Your Second Step** -- Understand that falling flat on your face is part of the romantic process. You're supposed to make mistakes. That's how you learn. You learn to walk by falling down. You learn to date by writing idiotic emails, sticking your foot in your mouth, and making clumsy, silly and just plain wrong moves. It's OK. It's just part of the process. Besides, the right person will find those not-cool things endearing and adorable! Take a moment, close your eyes, and visualize being your not-cool self and someone who is the One chuckling, smiling, and really digging it.

**Your Third Step** -- Understand you need to train yourself to take action. Almost any action!! Email five hotties that are "out of your league." Send that email response you've

edited three times. Open your mouth and say something, anything, to any cutie around. And I do mean anything at all. Anything is infinitely better than nothing. And once you practice jumping in, you'll be surprised at the possibilities that open up for you.

**Your Fourth Step** -- Understand it is normal to get 'knocked out'. Putting yourself out there in the dating world is a form of interpersonal training that is similar to learning to box. You are supposed to get knocked out until you meet the right opponent. Then you might trade some blows, but the whole thing is very exciting and you spend a great deal of time clutching and holding each other close.

Similarly, when you are training to be in a loving relationship, expect to get rebuffed or "rejected." It happens. When it does, you are that much closer to meeting your match. So give yourself a reward for succeeding. Because even though it didn't work out with the last person, the bottom line is that you are moving yourself forward. You sent that email, made that call, went on that date. You put yourself out there and that's what counts. Get a Caramel Macchiato, go shoe shopping, or call to your best buddy who moved to Katmandu. After you do, hang out with friends who love you for who you are. Also, recall your visualization of the One being fascinated, amused, and loving you from Step Two.

As you take these steps, train and reward yourself with mini-celebrations you will build a whole new habit pattern of playing full-out in the dating arena. In fact, you will be well on your way to being with that one person who absolutely enjoys all the different cool and not-so-cool facets of you. And your Dating Dawdlitis will be a thing of the past.

You can learn much more about this topic and how to create love that is just right for you in my new book, *Love in 90 Days: The Essential Guide to Finding Your Own True Love*. Pre-order it now from Amazon.com at a 20-25% discount.

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