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Personal Brand. & Freelancing  
Jessica Lopez

## **To All The Boys I Ever Talked To**

**While Lara Jean struggled to pick between two boys, I learned how to get a date with one.**

Dating apps are the “new normal” for meeting people and, for some, finding the “one.” I should know since I’ve been one of the various apps for a couple of years now. I remember talking to this guy for over four months. During Christmas, the New Year's Countdown, I spoke to him, and the most dreaded holiday for single people - Valentine's Day. Most of the time, I was waiting for a reply and carrying on the conversation. Then, I decided it was up to me to ask him out for a date. Ultimately, he rejected it. Me screaming into my pillow later that night wouldn't even describe how upset I was. I wasn't even upset with him. More so, I was extremely mad at myself. I wasted so much time just talking with this person and not getting a physical date with them. But thanks to him, I started to really ask myself, why am I spending so much time talking to guys but not going on dates with them in person?

At first, I thought I was having trouble going on dates because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Then it hit me as I was lying in bed talking to another potential match. I'm not getting dates because I'm spending too much talking and not enough doing (not what you're thinking of). So that's when I decided to hit up an old Hinge match and speak to a dating expert to get my answers. Have I hit rock bottom? Maybe. Did I get my answers, though? Yes.

For those who don't know what the talking stage is, say you match with a person on your average dating app. You hit it off, but then you get stuck in that cycle of just messaging each other, and it doesn't go further. Being stuck in the talking stage makes it harder to decide where you want to go with your relationship with this person. The talking stage will always exist when you're getting to know someone, and it can't be avoided when you're using all these different dating apps. “It has to be a tool in your toolbox. If you're not using online dating, you are missing out on meeting people. So you have to use it, but that being said, it's only one tool in the toolbox,” said Lee-Anne Galloway, a certified science-based dating expert and love coach in Toronto.

Luckily, I know that I'm not alone. Well, I'm still alone, relationship-wise. But I'm not still asking my matches their favourite colour while hoping this one will lead to an offline meeting. Hyunwook Kwon is a Hinge dating app user and is one of my former matches. Kwon is one of my old matches that spared me from getting ghosted, and we mutually decided that we

weren't for each other. Yet, we are still single and have been on a few dates with different people since then.

It's "hard to be compelled to take a risk, much less take a risk in going on dates with a stranger," Kwon says. "There's no risk staying single."

Another reason online dating makes it harder to meet people is that it's "just another task to add online dating to your list of responsibilities," Kwon said.

Now that I've talked to Galloway about the science behind dating, there's a lot to reconsider why I'm not booking dates with my matches. Turns out it's not them. It's me. Some of the advice I learned from Galloway is that I need to observe my pattern. In the most simple terms, a pattern is a formula for how you approach dating. This includes how you form relationships with your matches, how and why you keep being in the same situation, and how you interact with all your partners.

My pattern is that I form relationships with matches by communicating with them continuously throughout the day. Even though I kept conversations going with them, we never went on a date. Lastly, the way I interact with potential partners is always the same - constant messaging and waiting for them to make the first move, which takes months.

Another reason I learned about why I'm not getting dates from Galloway is that I need to ask myself the question as to why things are not progressing and then set a realistic timeline with this person. Some of the reasons why neither party are not making the first move to go on a date are out of fear, and that's why it's essential to send a timeline.

My chat with Galloway also taught me to be more strategic when talking online. You can't know someone from messaging each other daily. That's why there needs to be a physical date so you can get to know them more. One needs to ask the right questions. Consider your top three qualities in a partner. If they can match those, that's good enough information to set up the first date.

Galloway said, "When you meet someone online, it's like reading a book, so now you're seeing the character in your head, and you're like, oh, and now you're seeing the story right as you talk to them."

That was a significant eye-opener. When someone develops feelings for someone, they may or not be guilty of visualizing a future. We have to be aware and realistic. It's easy to fall into the idea of them as a partner. I am guilty of imagining bringing a date home to meet the

parents. Now the only future I should be thinking about with them is we manage to get a second date.

Speaking to a former Hinge match and a dating expert did not just widen my eyes but also gave me a severe reality check. The hard part is applying all of this advice to my real life. Now I will no longer talk with guys like they're on a free month trial to speak to me and not go out on a date. I will also ask the right questions, and if they check out two out of three of my most essential qualities in a person, I'll initiate the first move. Last but definitely not least, I need to stop rationalizing a prolonged talking stage just because we talk daily. Will following this advice guarantee me a date? There's only one way to find out, and we know what that way is. Wish me luck.

Source List:

**Lee-Anne Galloway - Love Coach and Dating Expert**

Interview Date and Time: February 21st, 2022, at 8:15pm

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**Hyunwook Kim - Hinge User**

Interview Date and Time: February 18th, 2022, at 11:30am

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