

'The Dating Manual for Old Marrieds' is a Cognitive Behavioral Engineering Helpdesk

Recently psychotherapists and counselors have been recommending that old married couples go out on 'dates' to rekindle their relationship. The purpose of these dates is to create a sense of excitement when the fire has gone out and stimulate local commerce during the recession. In the pursuit of immense diversification potential and unlimited profits, our R&D team got together over the weekend and outlined a roll play dialogue for an Old Married Couples Dating Training Manual. What was interesting is how this would play out in different regions of the United States. What we found was that old marrieds dating strategies would have to be customized for approximately 75 different demographic regions nationwide, not including Hawaii and Samoa. For instance, envision this old marrieds dating conversation at a chic, very West Coast Silicon Valley breakfast table: "Honey, I want to ask you out on a date," says he. "You need my permission to ask?" says she, "You either want to ask me or you ask me. After all these years you still can't get it right." "Well, do you want to go out on a date?" "I swear to God your seeing that shrink is not doing you any good at all. In case you have forgotten, and God knows I can't, I'm not your girlfriend. Google me and you'll come up with 'wife'; my Google print isn't just pages it's volumes and they all scream 'wife'." "Well the counselor said we were supposed to ask our significant other out on a date and it couldn't be a virtual date. The whole purpose is to create a sense of excitement and rekindle old fires if you know what I mean." "Honey, those fires died when you defragged your hard drive. And just what do you plan to do? Get in our broken down car, drive around the block, ring our doorbell and announce you are ready for our date? Won't the neighbors think you finally fried all your white matter?" "I guess so, but the counselor said I should do it anyway. Working on improving relationships is an important part of my therapy; sort of like a neighborhood Wifi." "Really? Somewhere I missed all the RFPs in all this...it's true I don't check my Blackberry but I'm only in the next room. You used to be considerate enough to at least yell. Is all this that difficult or are we just really that stupid?" "Could be some of both according to my psychotherapist. I have to completely erase my brain's hard drive and install a new operating system. It's going to take about nine years." "Nine years? You've got to be kidding. And you believed her. She doesn't know what she's talking about. I'm around you way too much anyway; when I go somewhere I certainly don't care about going with you." "I love you too, hon. After all these years it still makes my eyes water when I think of how tender we are still with each other." "Sometimes I think I liked you better drunk. All this rehab nonsense has made you into a mush head. You hardly yell at me anymore...I almost feel like you stopped caring." "I talked about it with my therapy team and they all agree I should manage my anger and find my own little mental space where I can go and hide when I feel like going ballistic. Or when I feel I need to be with just me." "May the gods help us...I just wish they would stop filling your head with manure because you're starting to spread it around here." "Sorry, hon. I try to look at it like spam. If I fill my head with enough spam I can overwrite my buggy mental software and drive out all the evil and spiteful glitches that used to dominate my RAM. It's harder for evil to grab me if I'm hip deep in spam." "You fell in, bozo. But all right already, I'll go along with your therapy team and go out on a date with you." "Great. That will make my team very happy. Where should we go?" "Either Costco or Ross's. You said we need to go somewhere exciting." "What time shall I pick you up?" "How about let's go around 10:00". "That's too late for a date." "In the morning, dimwit." "That's too early. I think it's supposed to be 7:30 or 7:45 at night. It's supposed to be like a teenager date." "That's odd because in a certain sense I really do feel like a really stupid teenager right now. So, why don't we just make it 7:38 for good measure?" "Well 7:38 sounds a bit sketchy but maybe they won't mind. They are really busy so maybe they won't notice." "Oh no doubt your team is absorbed with much greater thoughts. This oldster dating rehab therapy would never have occurred to me; you have to give them credit for dreaming this one up. And just what does your shrink say about all this?" "Actually she doesn't say much at all. Mostly she just nods her head and says 'good'. That and 'goodbye, see you next week at the same time." "I was worried she was going to give you drugs." "She said I look like I was already drugged and she didn't think I needed any more." "She's a real sharpie all right. Why don't you just pick me up at 10:30 and we'll be done with it?" "What about 7:38?" "Tell them I already have a date for then although after 40 years of being married to you it seems more like a ball and chain." "I love you too, hon. What should I wear?"

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