

Love and Bollywood

Introduction to “Desi Style Dating”

By: Pari

Love ... the most exciting and confusing phenomenon of life. Love is something we learn along with our first few words and perhaps in a variety of languages and variations. As we grow up, it permeates every aspect of our life and becomes confusing to define. It's the word that becomes sacred and precious, the object of a lifelong search, and the source of all confusion. Love is anything but simple and beyond definitive. Books, movies, friends, and family all provide insight and opinions on what love is but the fundamental question continues to linger: What is love and how do you get it?

If ever there was a flashing sign of bright neon lights defining what love is, it would be the cinematic world of “Bollywood”. Growing up around it, our concept of love can be heavily influenced by Bollywood, though we seldom admit it. People always say they understand that Bollywood movies are not reality, yet the top grossing movies at the box office are far-fetched, unrealistic love stories we think of fondly and remember forever. From the dreamy dance sequences to the fantastic music and captivating lines, it is the world of love; defined, staged, and presented to the dreamers. Could Bollywood movies be the example we are setting ourselves to in defining what love is and how to get it?

In the 90's, only one movie predominated all of Bollywood: DDLJ. It was the hit flick that will forever be re-run on Dish TV, be used in witty comments at the occasional party, and the classic soundtrack played at every wedding reception. Yet it is intriguing to investigate what idea of love is conveyed by DDLJ? Are the singles out there looking for their “Raj”, an annoying stranger on a train who continues to follow them around, eventually falling in love with them? Well it is



quite exciting in theory, and gives new meaning to the term “beautiful stranger”. Continuing on in the DDLJ storyline, we find that “Raj” is a young man who fails college, pursues an engaged girl, and goes to her home only to break up her arranged wedding. Is this what singles aspire for? In this day and age, most single people are looking for a successful significant, pursue other bachelors (hopefully), and aren't really looking to break up a wedding (especially when the vast majority of first generation young adults are not being forced into an arranged marriage like

“Simran”). Thus, “Raj's” romantic gesture to break up the wedding and fit in with the family is not only impractical today but reprehensible. Yet, we continue to use the movie as a symbol of love; peculiar. Sometimes the movie we look to as a symbol of love, like DDLJ, does not display love in its purest form, but does not necessarily apply to life today, and definitely should not dictate how we define or find love.

In contrast, recent cinema has been scripting stories of people trying to find love, not on their first try, but after many tries, and, many people. Bollywood is embracing (in unrealistic, baby steps mind you), a controversial world for Desi's: Dating. For example, in a modern version of DDLJ, closer to life, and more practical, is “Bachna Ae Haseeno”(BAH). The movie's main character is a modern day “Raj” (ironically, of course): young, smart, handsome and athletic. He is the guy's guy and a girl's dream. His easygoing nature takes him on a road looking “not for” marriage but “fun”, girl after girl, breaking each girl's heart as she falls in love with him, until he finds the love of his

life, the young woman isn't just another chase or another number in the black book but “The One”. She also happens to be the one girl that won't marry him. Rejected, Raj begins to untangle his bizarre world of dating, realizing that what was “fun” and non-committal for him, broke the hearts of the girls he was with. Thus, he seeks the forgiveness of all his exes, and after getting it, he gets the loves of his life in the predictable happy-ending. While the movie is not the perfect version of the real-world dating, it does give a snap shot into the idea of what dating is, its emotional risks, benefits, consequences, and the constant that keeps it alive: love.

Dating - the word that is hushed in public and heard with all ears in our culture. No longer is it just a promiscuous reason to meet and greet people but it is an avenue for the single adults of our society to find love and a life-long relationship. Whether your idea of finding love is rooted in DDLJ or BAH, you believe in arranged marriages or trying to meet people to find the “right one”, dating can equate to a quest or a journey to make what you have grown up hoping for, a personal reality. Especially for Desis, dating is a taboo subject that has been seldom talked about, and largely left undefined. However, it no longer continues to be,

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Are you a friend “GOOD” friend?

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Results

If your score is 30 or above you're a good friend: You are a good friend because you genuinely care for other people. You will go out of your way for a friend, and you are always there in your friends' time of need. "You are a good friend when you support people in their happiness, success, abundance, life purpose, love and overall authentic goals," says Dawn T. Clare, a life/relationship coach, and president of a company, SPISE BLISS that sells products and services, which expedite bliss, love, wealth and well-being.

If you've scored 20 to 29 you may be on your way to becoming a good friend- but you're not quite there yet. "You're what I call a 'mid-grade friend' when you expect your good deed to be repaid at some later date," explains says Joshua Estrin, a life coach, and author of *Shut Up! And Listen to Yourself* (Angel Mind Publishing, 2006). "This is when you think to yourself 'I'm here for you and I know I can count on you to be there for me,' A real friend is there for you simply because you need them. In addition, you can consider yourself a "sometimes" friend because you're only there when it's

convenient for you. "You may initially show concern when you are down, and need a friend, but shortly after he/she describes what's going on, you'll turn your support into a play for attention," says Annie Fox, author of several books, including *Real Friends vs. The Other Kind* (Free Spirit Publishing, Inc., 2009), an educator and online advisor (www.anniefox.com).

If your score is 19 or below you're not a good friend. "You're not a good friend when you put your needs ahead of your friends, often manipulating to make it appear as though you have your friend's best interest in mind," says Ian Coburn, author of *God is a Woman: Dating Disasters* (Firefly Glow Publishing, 2007). You're also not a good friend if you are critical, and judgmental of their efforts. "A person who isn't a good friend criticizes you, and what you do in public. This person betrays your trust by telling a secret you shared with them," says Dr. Terri Orbuch, aka The Love Doctor, psychologist, Oakland University professor, and research professor at the University of Michigan. If this sounds familiar, you may need to work harder on your friendship skills if you desire to retain the friends you have.



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rather, it is revolutionizing cinema, television, music, and literature.

It is only through communication, knowledge, and understanding that the concept of dating can depart from its derogative social connotation (not to mention its dreamy connection with love) to a simple and realistic definition: finding companionship. There is no benefit to gain from hushing this forbidden subject. It is a practical reality of society today (whether we like it or not). Understanding what the single person wants is the question that is hard to answer and easier to avoid. Perhaps the most important aspect to it, however, is to avoid hoping for a cinematic world of love and measure your own values, morals, and aspirations to figure out the medium through which you want to find companionship and ultimately, love. Literature, cinema, and even editorials such as these can only give advice, insight, and example of what love and dating can be. It is each person's job to assess for themselves based on what you value (morals,

parental/elderly advice, religion, etc.): 1) what you want (love? companionship? friendship?) and, 2) how you want to get it (online dating? Meeting people and dating? Arranged marriage?)

Love changes its definition, person to person, book to book, movie to movie, yet one definition matters the most: your own. In finding love, South Asian society today is resorting to "dating". However, this change provokes exploration of the hardest questions in the Desi community including: What is dating? How do you reconcile it with traditional notions of arranged marriage? Distinguish it from mere friendship? ... Questions left unanswered because these are the answers sought from you, the reader.

All comments on this article are duly appreciated. Honest responses to the above article are appreciated and anonymity will be maintained for all responses. Please direct all dating questions via email to: datingguru@citymasala.com



Health 10 Golden Rules to Manage Weight and Stay Young Forever

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you fit for your entire life. Exercise and workout will not only keep you healthy, increase longevity but will also give you mental peace because "A healthy body has a healthy mind". Any anaerobic exercise like stationary cycling, walking, jogging, swimming, yoga etc. four times a week yields good results. If possible, go for a brisk walk of 10 to 15 minute at lunch or in the evening to boost your metabolism even more. Don't forget to tone your muscles with weight training three days per week.

8) Mediation and deep breathing- Meditation helps develop a stronger body and mind connection. This connection is vital for feeling younger and healthier. Breathing is one of the important and the oldest weapon to fight toxicity in the body. Breathing is an effective way to remove toxins as well as to cleanse and purify the body. When we exhale, we take out carbon dioxide and the toxins which

are deadly poisonous for the body. The body has a great tendency and capacity for oxygen. If our body lacks oxygen, we feel tired and have headaches. A few deep breaths not only relieves us from the anxiety and ease digestion but also helps with waking up and going to sleep.

9) Stop smoking and drinking alcohol- Smoking and alcohol consumption have negative effects on your body. Alcohol depresses your metabolism and stimulates your appetite and thus affects your eating habits.

10) Live with a positive attitude-

The way to a healthy life begins with a healthy mind. How we think determines everything in our life. We should choose the habits that make us feel younger and live longer with a healthy body and mind.

