




Forever????

Lately my mind has had a swirl of things just going round and round. Some of it is work related (and the lack thereof). Some are tornadoes of writings that have yet to land. Then there are friends. No my friends don't live in my head. Most of them live in my computer. 😊 But they each have their own set of issues. The song "What's Forever For" has also been in my head for a while now. Mostly as it pertains to my friends and their issues.

Being involved in a virtual world I have seen so many things that I couldn't believe actually go on. When I entered this world I considered myself an open minded person who accepted people for who they are and not for the differences we had. Boy was I wrong. As I met people who were different from me I realized just how prejudiced I actually was. Getting to know these people helped me to overcome this. While I do not embrace and accept certain lifestyles for myself, I have learned that I cannot dislike a person just because they embrace and practice those lifestyles. People are people. Our differences should not keep us from seeking out what we have in common and thereby bringing about peace in the world. But more on that issue later.

If there is one thing in the virtual world that mirrors the real world that I have the most trouble with, it is relationships. Now some would say that I have no business talking about this topic. I have never married and have only been in love once in my life. No, I am not currently in a relationship in either world. I do have standards I have set for myself. And while I have never married, I do respect the marriage vows very much.

It is so easy to be taken in by someone of the opposite sex. Did you catch that? I did not say men, males, boys, etc. I said opposite sex. Women are just as guilty as men. When I was in college I dated a guy for several months. We were both non-traditional students and were attracted to each other from day one of the class




we were in together. It wasn't for a few months that I learned he was married. By this time, I had already begun to develop feelings for him. I learned then to be more careful about who I dated.

In the virtual world statistics show that the average romantic relationship lasts about 2 weeks. In real time that is about 3 or 4 months. I see people get married and have a relationship declaring lasting love to this other person and then it ends in a few weeks. One or the other, sometimes both, is completely devastated and says they cannot go on (like real life). Then two days later they are partnered with someone else and declaring that same undying love for this new person. I know some who are in a different relationship every week. I feel like I need a scorecard to keep up. I can't understand how people can be "in love" with so many people in such a short time. Is it really possible to turn love on and off like a spigot? In the real world we look on the outside what a person looks like and then determine whether or not we can love them. In the virtual world you have a little pixilated Barbie/Ken doll wanna-be. So there isn't really any true physical attraction.

The other issue now ~~ marriage vows. There are so many in this world who have been married more times than I can count. Once again, how can you profess undying love to one person and then in a year or two leave that person and profess undying love to another? I know those where both persons are in the virtual world and they are not partnered with each other, but have separate partners with other people. I have been approached by men to enter into romantic relationships with them and they are married or in committed relationships in real life already. I turned one man down and he said it was okay since his wife could not see his computer screen. This blew my mind. What difference does it make whether your spouse can see the screen or not? You are still married, you made vows to this person. Does that not mean anything anymore?

I have seen real life marriages break up because of virtual and on line relationships starting. Some people use the excuse that it just happened. I look at it this way, if you don't allow yourself to be in the situation to where things can "just happen" then they won't happen. When I am faced with a situation of spending time with



men and they are married I look at it this way... What if this were my husband, would I want him spending time with another woman? My answer is always no. I cannot allow myself to participate in a relationship that could cause issues in a marriage. I do not tell my friends that it is wrong for them to be in these other relationships, I still accept my friends for the people they are. But for myself, I cannot now or ever allow myself to get involved with someone (virtual or real) that will take that other person away from the one they have made a commitment to. Just because we do not have any real life contact, there are still feelings involved and people will get hurt and therefore, for me, it is wrong.

Are my morals and ideals old fashioned and out-dated? Perhaps. But it is what is best for me and all I can do is be me. I will not allow myself to get into a situation that may cause issues and hurts to another person. I will also not tell others how they should or should not live their lives. I can still be your friend and you mine as long as we respect each others differences and embrace that which we have in common. I just watch and wonder ~~ "if love never lasts forever, what's forever for?"

November 25, 2007

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