

dating and friendship

Q1: Tell us about your partner.

Patrick: My partner is Mexican, and she's 38 and she works in finance.

Sam: My wife is called Molly, and she has kind of long brown hair, big blue eyes and she's obviously very beautiful. And she's very funny and very kind of charismatic.

Maitrayee: He's really tall and he's got a nice, lovely long nose, which I love. I love interesting and odd noses.

Q2: How did you meet him/her?

Sam: We first met because we were studying the same course at university.

Maitrayee: On a dating site, so we met on *OK Cupid*.

Patrick: We met in a bar.

Q3: What was your first date?

Patrick: The first date was actually to a wine bar and we had a bottle of wine and shared a cheeseboard.

Sam: So on our proper first date I was obviously very nervous, and, you know, I tried to dress up smart and look good and everything and it was great, actually. We went for a walk along the river Thames.

Maitrayee: So, I have a dating spot, it makes me feel in control so I just invite everyone down to one café which is near my old university. So it's an area I'm really familiar with.

Q4: What do you like about your partner?

Maitrayee: I guess he's somebody that I share a lot of values with. So, I realised very early on that he has a group of friends and it's very important for him, family's very important for him. And although we are so different, you know, these things really, kind of, tie us together. Honestly, we are very different, we have completely different hobbies and we have completely different food cultures, we enjoy completely different things.

Patrick: Dee is very friendly, kind, generous, intelligent, funny. She's a fantastic cook as well, which is always important. And she's beautiful.

Q5: Why do you think you are happy together?

Patrick: I think we're happy together because we've got similar personalities and we kind of complement each other very well. And she's very patient, which is important, I think. Yeah, and we just get on, we like similar things.

Sam: I don't know, I think we do have similar interests, so we both like similar films so we can watch lots of films together. We also both really like travelling, so that's something that we used to be really excited about. And I guess we have kind of similar goals, in that we both want to have a big family and go and live in the countryside and that kind of thing. So, I think a lot of that, it just helps.

Q6: What do you think is the best way to find a partner?

Sam: Well, I've been with Molly for, I think, sort of 14 or 15 years and I think a lot has changed about how people meet people in that time. And from what I kind of know of the modern dating world, with, you know,

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dating apps and that kind of thing, I'm sort of quite glad that I don't have to go through that because it sounds like a really difficult thing to do.

Patrick: I think that depends very much on your personality, but it might be something like going to a club or joining like a book club or athletics club or something where you've got an interest in there and finding people with similar interests. I don't think work's a good place, really, because often if you work together and have a relationship it can also be quite precarious.

Maitrayee: Well, I think putting myself – like not giving up, I guess that was quite my thing. I guess I always kept looking. So, yes, I was married and then, you know, it didn't work out and then I had another partner and that didn't work out. And, but, as soon as I break up I know a lot of people take some time, but I just went, you know, I just, like, went out!

Q7: What do you think about internet dating?

Patrick: I think it's perfectly acceptable and I think it's become more and more acceptable over the last, sort of, decade or so.

Maitrayee: It's great to, kind of, get you out of your comfort zone. So, if you, kind of, feel a bit sort of stuck in your dating life and you're not meeting anyone you're connecting with, it's a good way to sort of get out there and meet a lot of different people.

Q8: Can you describe your best friend?

Erica: Right, well, my best friend is a lovely girl. In terms of appearance she's quite small and slim, she's got long, dark, black hair.

Patrick: My best friend is, so, she's the same age as me and she is, she's very funny, very friendly.

Q9: How did you meet him/her?

Patrick: We met at university. She shared a house with an old girlfriend of mine and we've been friends ever since.

Erica: I met her at school, actually. We've been friends since we were at secondary school together. So, we met in music class.

Q10: What do you like about him/her?

Erica: I like her because, as I said, she's very caring but we also have a lot of, we have the same kind of viewpoints in life. In particular, we care about the same social issues, we have the same sort of political viewpoints. As well as, of course, we've been friends now for a very long time so we have the same background in common, we went to the same school, we know an awful lot about each other's lives. And, we've been there for each other, I think, particularly when we've had, sort of, traumas in our lives!

Patrick: I like the fact that she's very passionate about the things she likes. So, she's a big, big film fan and she loves food and cooking as well. And, she's really into her exercise and running as well, as am I. And, yeah, she's great company, and a very good organizer.