

RIGHT FROM THE START

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY INSTITUTES

LOOKING YOUR BEST-- IN PROFILE

Make your first opportunity to meet your spouse count!

Many people have asked me why it is taking so long for them to find a partner. I've browsed some of the matching sites lately, and had every reaction from laughter to tears to some of the profiles. For instance, I encountered a photo of a young man wearing a clown mask, a laughing fellow with his rear end stuck out next to a sign that said –ASSE, and one in which the whole family was making silly faces for the camera. One person gave the three things he could not live without as "'coffee, coffee, and oh, did I say 'coffee'?"

The funny pictures and witty comments certainly show that the applicant isn't a boring person, and that is just fine. But it is fine for later, when the applicant is already in conversation with someone, and not for the first introduction, when they have not even met.

If I were on Facebook or some other social site, I would probably find these entries to be amusing. But this was not Facebook. It was a Matching site, and these were people that were looking for the

person to complement them, to help them to form the starting-point for the future of their lineage.

What should someone put on a profile, and what should one avoid? Obviously, one wants to grab the attention of the right person, to get that person and his/her family to say, "Okay, you look interesting. Now, what more have you got to show me?" One does not want the family to pass him/her by, saying "Nope—nope—nope—merely because of a tactical error.

I tell people to think of the website on which they are about to display their best qualities as a job application. Would one show up for an interview in clown face? Would one come in ripped jeans, bunny slippers or shorty-shorts? No. For most jobs, one dresses in good clothes, selects a neutral, non-distracting background, looks straight into the camera and plans out collateral photos that will show him/her in the best light. What do I mean by this? I will never forget the woman that thought her best

THANKS FOR READING!

We were overwhelmed by the response that our flagship newsletter received in all quarters. Many people contacted us with very positive suggestions for making it work for their families and friends.

Thank you for your support with this venture. We'll probably play around with fonts and photos a bit until we get the appearance right. For the time being, we just want to get these helpful ideas across to you—and hear yours as well.

Sandra Lowen

photo was one in which she wrapped her arms around her best girlfriend's shoulders. She wanted to show herself to be friendly and loving. But one man's family wanted to know who the **other** girl was. This poor applicant actually did not think the photo through, and her buddy wound up getting the guy's attention.

People seem to love being in a crowd in their photos. Looking at these 'group' photos, it is hard to know who the actual applicant is, especially as in the one in which all six people are wearing sunglasses. A common trick, too, is for women that are a bit heavier than they would like to be to attempt to disguise their surpluses behind babies, puppies and other people or objects. But hiding things tends to bring more attention to them; one can't hold that baby forever! Most of us, particularly women, look in the mirror and moan about what isn't right. Until we get it perfect, though, we need to become comfortable with who we are, at which point our own ease will put others more at ease with our appearance. If one is not comfortable with one's size, it is better that one work on shedding some of the extra pounds through a sensible exercise and diet program.

Some people think that including pictures of True Parents on their profiles make them appear more holy or traditional.

My advice is that people not include True Family photos unless they actually appear in the photos with the True Family members.

As well, some people do what I call 'photo glut'. That is, they empty the family album and put on as many pictures as the site will accommodate. Sometimes, because they don't actually appear in the photos of Grandma and Uncle Lee, someone perusing the file would have no idea who the pictures are of. Selecting a few photos—one of the candidate looking directly into the camera, one of the candidate with his/her parents and/or siblings (with the candidate in front, please!) and a third one showing the candidate's full body are sufficient.

I would avoid pets, unless Fido is coming along as part of the Blessing deal. In his photo, one guy was literally covered with cats! Achoo!

WHAT DID YOU MEAN BY THAT??

Look over your words carefully. Proofread your words, to make certain you are saying what you mean to. If you are not applying in your first language and there is someone on hand that can help you, have that person read what you have written. And make certain you mean what you say. I've read people's unwitting comments that were put-downs of their families, their friends, or,

worse, themselves. Words are, indeed, swords. Saying "I don't get along well with my mom and dad" will not resonate well with most families, even though the applicant makes the comment to be truthful. And the website is not the place for one's confession: "After I gave up my drug habit—" even as a joke, is just plain scary. Remember who you are writing for: parents and matching supporters as well as the spouse him/herself.

NOT JUST ON MATCH SITES!

One other word of warning: people don't just scan the official sites for who you are and what you are about. Just as many companies do, they check the social sites of prospective mates as well. I've spoken to parents and candidates that rejected someone that had a sterling oms, bcc or bf account—but had revealed 'way too much about him/herself on Facebook. Yes, people will look at your Facebook stuff! Cyberspace has allowed us all to become semi-professional sleuths. If you said it or 'selfie'd it or let somebody else take a picture of it and post it, it is there, and somebody's family will hold you accountable for it.

Ringtones and account names are also important. Having 'Highway to Hell' as your phone ringtone will not make a candidate's family respond more positively to you. Nor will having an E-mail address such as

'hotandfunky'.com. Again, those things may seem funny to those that are not planning to turn the axis of the world. But the Blessing is not funny business.

MY PROFILE, MY ATTITUDE:

Becoming a viable candidate requires one to grow up fast. Too many people feel that, because they were Phi Beta Kappa in college, or because they broke a thousand dollars a day fundraising in a hard area, or because they have achieved some incredible recognition from this central figure or that one, they are 'naturally' qualified to become candidates. However, there are more skills and talents to becoming a mature matching candidate than these 'First Blessing' qualifications afford one. Sure, "oh, everybody loves me, They know I love to kid around," one person said. But when your spouse is in the Transition Phase of childbirth, or facing unemployment, or dealing with an unexpected family problem or

illness, one needs more than coffee, even Starbucks coffee, with those little sprinkles of cinnamon on top.

When one tackles the profile questions, one should think, "What would I want the person I am looking for to say?" Maybe "Coffee, coffee, and oh, did I say, "coffee'?" is not the response I would want to read when I am looking for my potential match's answer to 'three things I cannot live without', so I won't leave that in when I revise my profile".

The profile is the place that one tries to see things from the spouse's family as well as from God's point of view. If his/her family is looking at the profile, what will they think? If you were handing this profile over to a potential boss of the biggest company you could possibly ever want to be hired by, how would they respond?

So how **does** one let personality shine through, if not utilizing that amazing picture of

falling off a cliff or the special one of choking one's siblings? How does one avoid looking so straight-laced and unapproachable that anyone with an ounce of sense and taste wants to run for the hills and swear eternal celibacy, if **this** is the alternative?

I take a page from the U.S. Passport Office: stare straight into the camera and smile slightly (closed-mouthed seems to produce a less crazed-looking photo). Stand between your parents for the second shot and consider taking a third photo if you have nine other siblings, their spouses and your nephews and nieces to get into the photo.

Above all, **be sensitive**. Ultimately you will be able to send your matching partner plenty of photos of you poking your butt out in front of a door, and if everything goes wonderfully, you will share many cups of 'coffee, coffee and more 'coffee'. Just give it time.

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RIGHT FROM THE START is a newsletter developed for Matching Candidates and their families that are working with Sandra Lowen. Its purpose is to give additional and collateral information regarding the Matching and Blessing. It is not an official or certified organ of the Blessed Family Ministry or any of its supporting organizations. For further information, contact sandralowen003@gmail.com.