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February 08, 2006

## Speed Dating: Does it work?

Ever been on a first date when you *know* in the first 15 minutes that this is the wrong person for you? Of course you have. So, can you find the right person in 15, 6-minute dates instead?

That's "speed dating" -- an organized event in which a bunch of single people each pay a fee to go serial dating for a few hours and then later jot down who they liked. The info is passed on to the host of the event (in this case the folks at **cupid.com**) who then try to make a match via email.

Curious to see what singles get out of this no-fuss-no-muss dating ritual, I decided to chaperone a few people on some of their dates at an event held Wednesday at the [Blu Martini](#), a cozy little ultra lounge on the north side.

Unfortunately, most of people I talked to didn't want to be quoted, fearing they'd be chastised in the morning by co-workers and referred to as "The 40 Year Old Virgin."



But then I found Tevin Ames, a 25-year-old Crawfordsville resident who described himself as a simple country boy and didn't mind telling me his story.

Tevin admitted he treks to Indy frequently looking for love because the dating pool in his hometown is . . . a bit shallow. That, and "the girls in Indy are more stylish," he added.

He found a cutie named Billi who liked country music and has two cats, but he also found another one named Lisa. Turns out the two are sisters and live together!

Then there was Roger Fisher, a clinical social worker who is an experienced speed dater. The 33-year-old Southsider has matched on eight different occasions, one of which turned into a two-month relationship.

That ended and he was back at it Wednesday night.

Why?

"It's somewhat cheaper," he said.

Good point. Fisher said he can go to the bars in Broad Ripple, drop \$40 and not talk to a single girl all night. But in the world of speed dating, you see, the ladies *have* to talk to you.

As I eavesdropped on conversations I heard a lot of the same scripted questions -- what movies do you like, what music do you listen to, what do you do for fun -- but then I noticed an older, married gentleman holding up the wall merely observing the chatter.

This turned out to be Mark Norman, 48, a consultant with Dale Carnegie Training. I asked for his take speed dating and he said people don't ask the right questions. Suitors need to ask open-ended questions, he said, in order to truly get the most out of their six minutes.

OK, so what questions? Here's Mark's top three:

1. What was the most challenging thing you ever had to overcome and how did you do it?
2. What is your proudest achievement?
3. If you were at a family reunion and a niece or nephew asked you for advice in leading a successful life, what would you say?

Impressive, though it sounds a bit like a job interview.

My first three questions -- or "filters" -- have always been: have you been married, do you have any kids and are your parents still married.

But you might want to try Mark's questions the next time you go speed dating in Indy. In fact, ask your current girlfriend or boyfriend. They are things you should know about your significant other. I'm going to try them out on mine.

## Comments

Comment from [Kramer](#) on February 9, 2006 08:55 AM

Speed dating worked for me. First time was somewhat successful--I went out with a girl a couple of times.

The second speed dating party was more successful. I met the woman of my dreams. She worked second shift--I worked first. She lived in Westfield--I lived in Decatur township. Both of us enjoy an occasional night out at a bar, but neither one us would want to meet someone at a bar.

We got married last October, after 18 months of dating.

Comment from [Clinton](#) on February 10, 2006 06:19 PM

I see different guys interviewed here, but not a single girl. I thought reporting was suppose to show both sides of the story.

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