



CONSCIOUS LIFE CHOICES

Change Your Choices, Change Your Life

The Rule of Three for Conscious Living How to Meet New Friends

Three is a magic number.

Fairy tales like Goldilocks and the Three Bears, The Three Wise Men, The Three Musketeers, The Three Stooges, The Three Little Pigs, the Lion, the Scarecrow, and the Tin Man from the *Wizard of Oz*, and The Three Blind Mice probably bring a smile to your face.

Three is a magical number. It takes three occurrences for the human brain to recognize a pattern. That is why so many quotes have three ideas like: “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”, “Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit,” “Faith, Hope, and Charity,” – the rule of three makes things stick.

In relationships, three is a charm.

The Rule of Three for Conscious Living says, “When meeting someone you find attractive, it takes at least three contacts to determine mutual interest and comfort to proceed further.”

In the real world of meeting new people or in dating, the most anxiety-producing situations occur when you notice someone you find attractive and you would like to get to know them better.

How do you maximize the “connection” you perceive while minimizing the risk that you have misjudged or that you will lose the current opportunity/opening you have to connect?

The Rule of Three works wonders for initiating Conscious Relationships of all kinds.

Try the Rule of Three for Conscious Relating and Dating

An Example

Contact # 1

Let's say you are attracted to the teller at the bank. You could flirt, deliver your best pick-up line, and ask what time he or she gets off from work, but you anticipate (correctly) that a person with any class would be uncomfortable with that approach.



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What you do for all initial contacts:

- Smile while making eye contact
- Introduce yourself so you can ask their name
- Make small talk, i.e., pay a compliment, be friendly as you would be with anyone in any setting.

Contact # 1 works best as a light, subtle approach. The purpose of this first contact is to walk away having left a positive impression.

Contact # 2

Return to the bank within 24-48 hours. You are on a first name basis with your new contact so you can start with some small talk and add a little personal sharing about something important to you (related to your values, i.e., a requirement in a relationship). For example, talk about your work and perhaps something that happened at work that day, what you do for fun, children, etc., as you would with anyone with whom you might expect to have an in-depth easy conversation. Note the person's reaction - positive, negative, or neutral. Having revealed something specific about yourself, you then ask him/her about the topic you just brought up, e.g. "How have things been going at the bank for you today?" or "Do you have kids?"

You are seeking to do three things at this step:

- Discover whether you have anything in common, i.e., do some of your important requirements mesh?
- Confirm your attraction and interest after discovering something real about this person.
- Leave another positive impression, this time based upon something real about you.

Contact # 3

Return to bank within 24-48 hours.

- Imagine that you are meeting an old friend.
- Talk a bit further about what you have in common.
- Toward the end of your transaction say, "I really enjoy talking with you, and it seems like we have a lot in common. Would you be *interested and available* to meet for coffee sometime?"



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Notice the above is a clear statement about you, and asks about their *interest* and *availability*. Asking in this way is typically construed as friendly, non-threatening, and respectful. You are giving him/her lots of room to decline easily and gracefully.

Most people approached in this way find themselves feeling flattered and positive; don't worry about the people who take you the wrong way, they simply screen themselves out. You are being authentic, benign, and innocently friendly.

It is very helpful for you and for them that you are not attached to the outcome - they can accept your invitation or not, and you will both be fine either way.

Alternative # 1

If asking this directly is not your preference, offer your business card and say, "I really enjoy talking with you, and it seems that we have a lot in common. Here's my card. I would love for you to call or e-mail if you are interested and available to meet for coffee sometime."

Alternative # 2

You can repeat Contact # 2 as many times as you like to build more comfort and learn more about each other before you decide to try # 3.

The Rule of Three for Conscious Relating and Dating can be applied to any social setting, such as a party. In other settings use intervals of 15-30 minutes instead of hours or days. Also use it in public settings like a grocery store!

The level of shared information might be much less in a public setting, but it works very well. Public settings are great places for practicing social and dating skills. If your interest is not reciprocated, it is not a big deal. After all, you'll probably never see that person again so you have nothing to lose. Set your goal on getting lots of practice. The more you practice any skill, the more proficient you become.

Conclusion

Remember that three is a magic number. It takes at least three contacts to determine mutual interest and comfort before you and the other person decide fully to proceed in relating. The "rule of three" may occur in a short or long period of time, but by recognizing its importance you gain an edge of awareness that can serve you well in reassuring and reducing your anxiety when you find someone you imagine you would like to get to know better.

Try this rule out at the grocery store, the coffee shop, and even on the telephone with strangers. You never know where and how your next valuable and meaningful



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friendship/relationship will enter your life. And when you use this rule of three and find it valuable, please let me know. I love hearing your success stories!

About the Author

Eleanor Haspel-Portner, Ph.D., a licensed clinical psychologist and master coach since 1973 (License #: Psy5297), is an expert in interdisciplinary practice. She prefers to partner with her clients using multidimensional skills that guide them toward self-awareness and thus, toward self-realization. Eleanor is a member of numerous professional organizations, including: the American Psychological Association, the Southern California Society for Clinical Hypnosis (Board Member & Faculty), Diplomate and Certified Relationship Specialist of the American Psychotherapy Association, Relationship Coaching Institute, International Coach Federation, Professional Coach and Mentor Association, and the Reiki Alliance. Eleanor is an extensively published author.

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