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סינגלס singles

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Match



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Be a matchmaker

It's not their problem, it's all of ours!

Rabbi Ari Sytner

I recently officiated a marriage between a wonderful couple that was brought together on the Jewish dating site Frumster.com. Following the chuppah, I was filling out the shul's marriage records when I came across a line for "Matchmaker's name and address." I must admit that I laughed as I began filling out the matchmaker's address with the letters www.

With today's incredible online technology, dating is more accessible than ever before to Jewish singles around the world, and it often works. A major drawback to online dating, however, is that it puts the responsibility solely in the hands of the individual to search for their own mate.

Previously, the Jewish community played an important role in suggesting matches to singles. Today, however, the community can easily sit back and absolve themselves of their responsibilities, while the singles are left to fend for themselves.

Quick to talk, slow to act

The reality is that many people meet singles at a wedding and callously blurt out, "May you be next," or we may comment, "I know the perfect person for you," only to never actually follow through with it. Despite how well intentioned these comments are, they may be a great source of pain and frustration to the one who is still going home alone to an empty apartment.

Many of us are unaware of just how insensitive it may be to inflate someone's hopes, and then leave those hopes dangling in the air. Unfortunately, we are quick to talk, but slow to act.

Thousands of times each day the question is asked, "Can you can think of someone for so and so?" Often we respond by scanning our mental database for the three or four people that immediately come to mind, and usually, it goes no farther than that fleeting conversation. Nothing changes, no phone numbers are exchanged and no introductions are made.

The question is: how do we translate these well intentioned conversations, thoughts and comments into actions that can actually make a difference? I believe that the first step is for us all to realize that the issue of Jewish singles is not 'their problem' to deal with, but all of ours.

The very mitzvah of Ahavat Yisrael, to unconditionally love every Jew, reminds us that it is incumbent upon every single one of us, single or married, to care enough to actually take action and do something about it. The more people that step up and take responsibility, the quicker we can all affect a change that will literally impact generations to come.

Make the list

If you are like me, you are ready to make that commitment to help, but just do not feel that you are in a position to play shadchan, matchmaker. Therefore, I would like to suggest the following method.

Take a few minutes and write up a list of every person that you know that is not yet married. Keep this list with you at all times, in your palm pilot or wallet. Each time you meet someone new, or remember another name of an old friend or classmate that is single, add them to the list. You will be surprised at just how many people are on your list (which is all the more reason to try and do something about it).

Then, the next time the question is posed to you about "a match for so and so," instead of it just remaining a casual fleeting conversation, you will be in a position to get down to business. Pull out your list and review the dozens of names that you have collected and explore the possibilities.

You just never know when your involvement may lead to an introduction, a date, or even marriage. It is God's job to plan out the matches, but it is our responsibility to be the intermediaries to execute God's plan.



There is another important dimension to keeping this list with you at all times. As long as you have names on your list, you will be more inclined to have them in mind during your daily prayers. Imagine the impact that it can have, if suddenly tens of thousands of us began to pray every single day for others around us to find their bashert, their soul mate. We must never underestimate the power of our prayer.

This is the time of year to change the world with our prayers and our actions. Let us make a commitment this year to invest a few minutes each week to care for the singles around us, and keep them in our thoughts and prayers. The more we can do, the more they will know that despite their loneliness, they are truly never alone.

Please share this valuable method with your shul, your friends and neighbors. If our heartfelt efforts and prayers can bring about even one more match, then it is all worth it.

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