

How embracing the cringe can help your dating life

May 30 2024, by Gio Dolcecore



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

We can all agree that dating is hard. Getting to know people can feel vulnerable, but at the same time, exciting. We can also agree that feeling rejected can be one of the worst feelings, especially after we put

ourselves out there.

Dating can also expose us to [a lot of cringey things](#), maybe even something we didn't know we'd consider cringey. Think of cringe like something that makes you uncomfortable, or something about someone else that you don't find attractive.

Before dating, most of us consider what we're looking for. Some of us may have a type, or characteristics we want in a partner. Most of us also wonder if we'll be someone's type. Which brings us to wondering if our identities or how we carry ourselves through this world will be poorly judged by others.

We've all found ourselves asking those self-conscious questions at some point: does that person sitting across from me really like me? Do they find me boring? Am I being cringe?

It's understandable to worry about coming across as awkward, or being seen as cringeworthy. But embracing our cringey selves can improve our self-confidence and even our dating lives.

Fear of rejection

Most daters say they [fear being rejected](#), and there is some basis for that fear. Around 60 percent of people say [they've been ghosted](#).

Research shows that bisexual individuals of all genders have a higher rate of feeling excluded from heterosexual and 2SLGBTQIA+ dating pools. Consequently, they are more likely to conceal their identities, [and experience poorer mental health](#).

For instance, [bisexual women](#) are more likely to be [considered straight](#) in the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. Our world is full of stereotypes about

men and masculinity, including that men who have sex with men are always gay ([erasing bisexual identity](#)) and [less desirable to women](#). However masculinity is a [social construct](#) that is socialized through attitudes and behaviors to promote certain cultural values.

Those who are masculine and bisexual are more likely to conceal their sexual preferences fearing [discrimination, external judgment and negative self beliefs](#). Dating as a bisexual can be complicated enough, but if you're also a [racialized person it can add layers of racism, exoticism and tokenism](#) to your experience.

Once we start talking about gender non-conforming identities (non-binary, transgender, etc.) and masculinity, the conversation becomes even more complex. [Trans masculine](#) individuals may adopt [traditional masculinity](#) in order to blend into society.

As you can see, there are a lot of things about being bisexual and masculine and entering the dating pool that can be intimidating. It's difficult knowing there are stereotypes out there about how you identify. This can affect your [self-esteem, motivation, and inspiration](#) to date. But that doesn't mean it has to stop you from putting yourself out there, being vulnerable and going after something you want.

Benefits of going 'cringe mode'

This brings us to activating cringe mode. Imagine not fearing potential rejections from others, and instead becoming optimistic that your authentic self will attract like-minded people. [Cringe mode](#) is about embracing potential awkward or embarrassing situations, and giving yourself permission to jump into romantic opportunities wholeheartedly.

Going cringe-mode can:

- Prevent you from overcompensating. Some of us suffer from being a [people pleaser](#), and this often causes us to care more about others' comfort than our own. At the end of the day, you want to be yourself and have people choose you, not a persona.
- Helps you [reinforce your boundaries](#). We should prioritize our own [mental health](#) and well-being and expect the same from those we end up dating. It also keeps your safety a priority. It can act like a screening system, keeping those who are genuinely interested in us and avoiding those who aren't.
- Encourages you to live outside the closet, which helps [increase visibility and positively impact social norms](#) that taboo bisexuality. Embracing the cringe can help us meet others who elevate our [self-esteem](#) and encourage us to be our authentic selves.

Figuring out 'who I am'

Dating can often teach you more about yourself when it doesn't work out than when it does. As a registered marriage and [family therapist](#), I give folks entering the dating world these tips:

Dating will expose you to new opportunities. People might introduce you to things you would have never experienced before. Dating invites you to try new things and learn more about your own interests, fears and comfort.

Dating can also help you find your voice. You just have to practice speaking up and sharing your likes, dislikes and especially what you're willing to try again versus never again.

Dating can also help you establish your boundaries. It's okay to learn new boundaries about yourself, you don't always have to know beforehand. Dating will help you determine your 'ick' list. It's okay not to like

something and it's also okay to not want something in your life.

Don't be shy to [share your dating experiences with friends](#). Have at least one friend that you can debrief with about your dates. Talking with someone you trust can help you stay accountable to your boundaries. It can also help you recover from rejection, because heartache doesn't heal in isolation.

Don't feel awkward about having the ["what are we" conversation](#) sooner rather than later. This conversation should also include ["who I am,"](#) because your identity should never be hidden.

Dating can be intimidating, but being yourself doesn't have to be. Practicing self-acceptance will help you attract the right people, those who will celebrate you and lift you up. There's nothing worse than feeling like you have to work to win someone's affection. So, before entering the dating world, remind yourself of what you value most about yourself. Then, find the people who are excited to learn more about those valued parts of you.

This article is republished from [The Conversation](#) under a Creative Commons license. Read the [original article](#).

Provided by The Conversation

Citation: How embracing the cringe can help your dating life (2024, May 30) retrieved 26 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-05-embracing-tinge-dating-life.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private

study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.