



Venessa: Welcome to The LoveWrite Unplugged podcast. Today on our show we have Kevin Carr, author, speaker, and television host personality. Kevin provides a fresh perspective on dating, with a roadmap to navigate singledom, while creating the ideal relationship.

And we are live; welcome Kevin. How are you?

Kevin: I am good, how are you? Thanks for having me.

Venessa: Oh, I'm doing fantastic. Thanks so much for being on The LoveWrite Unplugged. I'm just gonna jump right into what I want to talk about.

Kevin: Okay.

Venessa: So, your [TED Talk on "Dating is Dead"](#) was phenomenal.

Kevin: Thank you so much.

Venessa: Literally, it was phenomenal, and I'm not just saying it to be saying it but you really touched on a lot of issues around dating. Just the whole idea that people don't really know what dating is. What made you choose to talk about that particular topic on your [TED Talk](#)?

Kevin: Well I knew, when I got the invite to give the [TED Talk](#), I knew obviously this is the field that I'm in, so, I knew it would be on dating, on relationships, on meeting and engaging. As I really just began to think of the state of where we are culturally in terms of dating, and singles, and relationships, it just really hit me that the way we date has changed. That's why the talk is titled the way it is. ["Dating is Dead"](#), because the way we go about dating or have went about dating I would say, 10 years ago, even 5 years ago, isn't relevant anymore.

So, I really wanted to explore where dating has come from, where it is now, and how do we still, because although it's changed a bit, our desires are still kind of the same. I really wanted to explore how do we still get what we're looking for in the midst of a changing cultural landscape.

Venessa: Right; absolutely. One of the things you touched on is the fact that people don't really know what dating is. Why do you think that is?

Kevin: Well I think, my belief is that because it has evolved, life in general has evolved, but in terms of dating, we're still kind of in that purgatory right. I think I talk about this in the talk where we aren't sure how we go about dating. As a man, do I meet you at your house, and pick you up? Do we go out to dinner? Or, now we take Ubers. We might meet at Starbucks. It's just like, what does it look like.

I think the answer is fluid. It can look different ways, I just think the nature of dating, in terms of actual, going through the process of developing meaningful connections, is still the same. It just looks a little different. Sometimes, it might be some texting here and there. It might be some Skyping. We might meet in what previously would be unconventional ways. In terms of (...) I think we have all this, we're kind of at this crossroads where many, especially when you talk about the differences in generations. You're talking about with the technological advancements, and how some of us (...) I'm a millennial, but I'm an older millennial. I remember getting 911 pages. I still remember having to actually write a girl's number down on a piece of paper.

Venessa: Right; exactly.

Kevin: So, you take that generation. Then you take the generation that has never experienced that, and all they know is interacting through tech. Then you take a generation older than me, that experienced a totally different thing. It's like, we're just at a place where nobody, it's just hard to identify, well what does it look like. What does it mean when I say, "I'm dating"?

Venessa: Right. No, you're absolutely right, and it's so funny you said that you're an older millennial. Well, I'm generation X so when I think about it, I can remember being a teenager, and hanging on the telephone. There was no call waiting. Literally we didn't get the internet until I was in graduate school. Just the whole idea of now we have this proliferation of websites, and dating apps, it's really interesting, and it can be challenging, just all the way around.

My question to you is, how do you navigate all of these choices. How can people figure out, okay, how do I get from point A to point B, to develop a meaningful connection?

Kevin: Yeah, and what you said is key, because we're at a place where now we have an abundance of options. I think in many ways, that gives us less of a choice because we tend to think more. We want more options, more choices, more websites, more apps, and sometimes, that really binds us to an extent, because it makes it harder to choose. So, my biggest advice is to, one just to focus on genuine interactions and connections. Two, I'm not saying you have to jump out and be on every dating app, and website, and all this, but just be open to new experiences, new ways of meeting people. I think there's a way that we can take advantage of where we are.

I think a lot of websites, and social media (...) The world is a smaller place. I've done business with people that I've never met in person, right.

Venessa: Right.

Kevin: I think that in itself is a great thing, and it does allow us the opportunity to engage and meet people that otherwise we might not have been able to. I just think it's important to (...) In talking about the dating process, before we start engaging, I think it's important for the individual to really develop a strong sense of self awareness.

Venessa: Yes, absolutely.

Kevin: I think it's a way that we can explore these options. There's a way that we can be open, without losing ourselves, but that starts with us, kind of being able to identify what is it that I want. What is it that I'm looking for? What works for me?

Venessa: Right, yeah it's funny that you said, just the whole idea of having a strong sense of self. In the work that I do, as a therapist, and as a relationship strategist, I really focus on focusing on yourself, and developing that self love. I have a lot of people that come to me, say that they are burnt out from just all of the options they have. They are frustrated, from all of the options, and they no longer feel like they can be in the dating scene. What do you tell those individuals? What do you tell them?

Kevin: I think those conversations are rampant. People are frustrated for many reasons, like what you mentioned. Others are frustrated because they aren't having the success that they envisioned. One, I tell people, if you're really feeling that way, then it's okay to take a break.

Venessa: Yes, absolutely.

Kevin: It's okay to be alone for a season, and not engage. Then kind of come back when you're ready. I think, too, I tell people, I think a lot of that frustration, comes from (...) I think a lot of the times we press so much. What I mean is, whether we want to get married, or want a relationship, we look at our friends, and our family, and our society, and it tells us that we have to be at this place, at this time, and so when we're engaging, it's almost like we're engaging with people not from a clean slate, because we're pressing. I hope this is it. I hope this is the one.

After a while, that disappointment started to add up, and it does bring about certain frustrations. I think that if we would put less of the focus on the end result, and more of the focus on the process of just engaging with people, we'd be surprised about how quickly we would find what we're looking for. Then also, how much more enjoyable we would find the process to be.

Venessa: No, you're absolutely right. Are we a commitment phobic society?

Kevin: That's a good question. I don't believe so. I think that while yes, and we can talk about millennials a little bit, I think that while yes, I can see from my generation specifically, we're waiting longer to get married than previous generations. I think some of that does have to do with people are living longer. We aren't coming out of high school, and working for General Electric for the rest of our lives. Careers are a little more fluid. I think that plays a [inaudible 00:09:16]. I think that generally we still do want commitment. We still want a genuine interaction.

The funny thing is, even when we say we don't want commitment, we want commitment. We can't escape. We aren't hard wired to be alone.

Venessa: Absolutely.

Kevin: We are hardwired to interact, to be attached to each other. I know there is ... Culturally, there's kind of a place we are where it's just, I want to be free. I want to be free of attachment, but I think that ultimately isn't a natural place for us to be.

Venessa: No, you're absolutely right about that. It makes me wonder about intentionality. I mean, you talked about millennials specifically that want to be committed. How important is it for us to be intentional about our dating life.

Kevin: If you're asking me, I tell people intentionality is everything because if you think about every, just about every other area of our lives we are intentional. When it comes down to what we wear today, what we wear to work, what we wear on a date. The type of job we take. The schools that we go to. We really think about those things, but when it comes to dating, all we think about is I'm attracted to this person, we kind of get along, and that's cool. But when it comes to really building something significant, and substantial, and that's lasting, we really have to be, excuse me, go into it, being intentional from the door. Knowing what our values are ... And it goes back to what we talked about, about self awareness. Knowing what are the things that make me tick, and just going about it intentionally, in attaching yourself to people, instead of creating unnecessary attachments.

Venessa: No, you're absolutely right, and I am surprised at the number of people who are not clear about what it is that they're really looking for in a mate. The idea of being intentional, they don't understand that if they have certain values, that they shouldn't settle on those things. What do you tell a person who has kind of been in the dating world for a while, and they're ready to settle down? They don't seem to be meeting the right people. What do you tell them?

Kevin: One, I tell people, anybody looking to meet anybody of like mind, I tell people to stay active. Stay active in the things that you love, and the things that you enjoy, and the things that make you happy.

Venessa: Absolutely.

Kevin: What I noticed was is that ... I'm an avid exercise person, so I workout a lot. It's so funny, I was running the other day, and sometimes when you're running, you kind of know another runner. As you're running by, you give each other a head nod. You might give someone a courtesy of moving over a little bit so they don't have to break their stride, that another person wouldn't know to do, just because that's not what they're interested in.

So, what I mean is that, socially, as you are active and engaged in the things that make you happy, you tend to come across like-minded people. You tend to find people that you already have a common ground with, and that's really a boost starting off, to finding somebody that shares your values. I just tell people, "Listen, stay active. Don't lose, or put down the art of being social." Again, I'm not saying it's not challenging to find what we're looking for but ... And this could just be because I'm an optimist by nature, but I'm one that believes what we're trying to create is unique.

Venessa: Exactly.

Kevin: It's gonna be challenging to build that.

Venessa: No, I completely agree with you there. It's not gonna be easy, but I believe that in the end, it is worth it.

Kevin: Yeah.

Venessa: I appreciate what you're saying about staying active. I tell people all the time, I'm like, "Do the things that you love to do, and ultimately you're gonna meet who you want to meet, and the person for you."

Kevin: Absolutely.

Venessa: I appreciate you saying that. I want to go back to something you said earlier, when you were talking about, when we talked about all of the choices that are out there, the dating apps etc. How do you filter out the noise when it comes to the number of choices you have, so that you can get to a place, where you make a genuine connection?

Kevin: Are you talking about in terms of websites and apps?

Venessa: Yes.

Kevin: Or just in general?

Venessa: No, websites and apps.

Kevin: Well, I don't think everything works for everybody. I think it's finding ... It's gonna take a little bit of exploring, trying to find a website that works with you. Take your time. Do a little research to figure out, okay, this is my dynamic. Maybe I'm a Christian. There are apps for everything. Or, this is my age range. Again, it goes back to being intentional. It does take doing a little due diligence of, what type of site would work for me. If you're 40 and up, Tinder might not be your thing.

Venessa: Right, exactly.

Kevin: You might can find a match on [Match.com](#) or [eHarmony](#). Then I tell people, "Don't necessarily jump into it right away; try a free trial, and explore it to see how you feel about it, and then if you feel like it works for you, dive into it." That's not the only thing that you do, but it does increase your chances of finding what you're looking for because you almost are able to be in two places at once.

Venessa: Exactly, and that's actually one of the things that I talk about a lot when I meet people, and people say, "Hey, I'm just really skeptical about going online." I'm like, "One in three people meet their mate online. It's just another way to meet people. Be open."

Kevin: Yeah, I have family that have been married 10 years, and they met on [eHarmony](#). I know a lot of people who have met that way. I mean listen, you go on Amazon and buy a TV, and you (haven't) seen it in the store; so listen, why pigeonhole yourself?

Venessa: Right. That's hilarious, but you're right. You're absolutely right. Actually it's so funny you said that, because I had someone say to me just last night, she said, "I'm not gonna meet my man on Amazon Prime, so I should probably get out there."

Kevin: There you go.

Venessa: Which I thought was just totally hilarious. So, I have two case studies for you.

Kevin: Okay.

Venessa: And I want you to provide your advice as a man, so the man's perspective.

Kevin: Okay.

Venessa: The first is. What are your thoughts on a woman who feels like a man should buy her this huge engagement ring?

Kevin: Well listen, if he can afford it, then hey. I say, who am I to tell you to dumb down your desires for what you really want, but what I would just say ... Know why you want what you want. If that's your taste, and you love this type of ring, or this type of diamond, and you really want that, and it's not irresponsible for him to make that purchase, then great. But, if it's a situation where you're doing it only for superficial reasons, if you're doing it so you can show the ring off, if you're doing it so society can say, "Oh, look at her ring," then I would caution against that. Ask that person, take a deep breath and ask yourself, why do I want this particular ring? Would this be the best purchase for me right? I'll say this, a lot of times, we do all of these things, and we prepare so much for an actual wedding, but we don't prepare for the marriage.

Venessa: Absolutely.

Kevin: And then we.

Venessa: There it is.

Kevin: We wonder why our marriages don't last, and our relationships don't last. So, I would just ask why. Why do you want this ring?

Venessa: Right, okay. Good advice, I love it, and I concur. All right, second scenario, or case study. What is the difference between dating exclusively and being in a relationship?

Kevin: There is no difference. If you're exclusive, that's your relationship.

Venessa: Okay, very good.

Kevin: And I think ... And I know people have a hard time with that, right, I think, and more so women than men.

Venessa: Really?

Kevin: Now listen, look ... Let me tell you something, if he's your man, and y'all have not had that conversation about being exclusive, you are not the only one. You need to know that.

Venessa: Right.

Kevin: This is the thing, when you're dating ... My definition for dating is this, dating to me is a dual process. The first part is trying to find somebody that you feel like deserves your exclusive attention.

Venessa: Absolutely.

Kevin: That's a corporate part. That's meeting, and that's engaging. That doesn't mean you're gonna have the same level of interaction with everybody, but it does mean your options are open until they aren't.

Venessa: Right.

Kevin: Because what are you trying to do? You're trying to find the absolute best fit for your life.

Venessa: Exactly.

Kevin: And so, it takes some case study, and then comes the place of okay, I think this is the person that I can build something with, and that's what we're talking about, exclusivity and a relationship. But anybody that comes to me and tells me, "Oh we're dating exclusively." So, you mean you're in a relationship?

Venessa: Right

Kevin: Because that's what that is.

Venessa: That's the definition. Okay.

Kevin: Yeah.

Venessa: And, it's actually funny that you said that there's a difference between men and women, because I actually, I have a male who I asked this very question to; he told me he was dating a woman exclusively. I said, "Oh, you're in a relationship? This is fantastic." He was like, "Nah, we're not." I was like, "Okay."

Kevin: Yeah well, good luck with that one.

Venessa: Right, I was like, "We have a little bit more work to do in this area. That is clear."

Kevin: Yeah and people ... But I think some of that goes to where we are culturally, because we live in a space where, as a large part, many people in our society, we want instant gratification.

Venessa: Exactly.

Kevin: So people think, "Oh I'm dating multiple people, that means I'm having sex with everybody". No, ain't nobody mentioned nothing about sex.

Venessa: Right.

Kevin: It just means you are meeting people. You're going out. You're experiencing people. I tell people, when you go look for a job, it does not matter how great your first interview was. Guess what they gonna do tomorrow? Interview somebody else.

Venessa: Absolutely.

Kevin: And then they gonna bring you back for another interview, maybe with three other people.

Venessa: Right.

Kevin: Then they might bring you back again. Why? Because they're trying to find the best fit for their position, for their culture, and it takes you being able to kind of go through the process of doing that.

Venessa: Right, no, that's exactly it. You're so right about that. All right, I've got two more questions for you, as we round it out. Are you single, or no?

Kevin: I am.

Venessa: Okay, all right ladies. He's single. Okay, what are your top five things that attract you to a woman?

Kevin: Faith, so I'm a believer. I love a woman that has a relationship with God. Ambition, I love that. I love a person who takes care of their body, whether that's yoga, or Pilates, or lifting weights. I just appreciate the routine of working out. I love that in person. I love a giver, and I'm a fun guy I would like to say. So, somebody that I can, I don't want to be too serious. I don't want to talk around talking like Morgan Freeman all day.

Venessa: Right, that's important, totally important. Okay, look, fantastic. Look, I love it. I love your top five. Then, parting question, where can people find you if they want to follow you or they want to work with you?

Kevin: Yes, I am on Instagram and Twitter under the same name. It's @kev_carr and that's C-A-R-R. Also, they can find me, my website, two websites. First website is kevinscarr.com so it's just my name. If you need to contact me, you can email me, the rest will be up on my Instagram. Also, another website, I started a service for black women, called Black Love Academy. Basically what we do is create a platform to provide content from different experts such as yourself, or myself, or anybody else, and really to deliver that content to black women. That website is blacklovedaily.com.

Venessa: Okay, fantastic. I forgot to even ask you about that. I remember you posted that. So definitely check that out.

Kevin: Yeah, I partnered with a friend of mine, Brian Gerrard, who created an app called Bae.

Venessa: Yeah.

Kevin: Which is basically a dating app for black millennials, and so we partnered up because we recognized is while, obviously love is for everyone, we do recognize that the challenges that our community faces.

Venessa: Absolutely.

Kevin: Particularly black women. So, we created a platform. We're still kind of working the kinks out, but they can log on, join, get more information at blacklovedaily.com. It's really, we wanted to create a safe space, because you know this, we are in an age where everybody has some sort of opinion. There's a lot of opinions being given from experts, and I'm saying that with quotations, specifically black men telling black women what they're going wrong. I think that is obnoxious, so that is what it's not. We are a relationship resource.

Venessa: No Steve Harvey, no Steve Harvey okay.

Kevin: Nah, but I like Family Feud though.

Venessa: Okay, there's a place.

Kevin: I do watch Family Feud.

Venessa: There's a place for Steve Harvey and his advice, but ...

Kevin: Absolutely.

Venessa: But definitely not that. Okay, got it, perfect.

Kevin: Nah.

Venessa: All right, well fantastic. Look, well thanks for being on the show today Kevin.

Kevin: I appreciate it, thanks for having me.

Venessa: We greatly appreciate it, and we are going to be reaching out to you again soon. Again, you can check us out on iTunes or iHeart Radio. We'll be dropping this on a Tuesday. Typically, every Tuesday we drop the new podcast. So you can hear what Kevin is talking about, and the rest of our guests, and we will definitely be in touch soon. So thank you.

Kevin: Sweet, thank you, I appreciate it. You welcome.

Venessa: All right. Thanks for listening to The LoveWrite Unplugged podcast, and as always, you can catch us on iTunes or iHeart Radio, or check us out on thelovewrite.com. Thanks for listening.