

The Seeking[®] position paper

The science of extraordinary relationships

How Seeking.com was engineered for eligible singles
who are ready to find relationships that genuinely matter

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Executive summary

Seeking.com was born from loneliness. Built on science. And transformed by love.

This position paper is for people who already know they want more than “good enough.” People who have built meaningful lives and are looking for relationships worthy of what they’ve built.

Through careful design informed by relationship science, evolutionary psychology, game theory and hard-won personal experience, Seeking® has become the only premium dating platform specifically engineered to help people find relationships that genuinely matter. It does this by bringing together two groups: **eligible singles**—those who have built the capacity to make someone else’s life better—and **selective singles**—those who are highly sought after and as such have earned the right to be selective about who they give their time and attention to.

This paper explains why that design matters, what the research says about meaningful relationships, and how we built a platform around it.

Part I: The problem with modern dating

The dating industry's design flaw

The entire online dating ecosystem is designed to help you find “good enough” relationships.

Conventional dating platforms are built on a common belief: that matching people based on 1) **mutual attraction** and 2) **compatibility** with stated preferences is enough. This approach sets a minimum threshold. For some people, it may be sufficient.

But for people who have invested years building lives of substance—who have developed the capacity to genuinely enrich a partner's life—“good enough” is not enough.



My journey: From loneliness to understanding

Seeking.com was developed out of pain and desire: the pain of loneliness and the desire to fill it with deeply satisfying relationships.

Growing up in Singapore, I was a nerdy and shy teenager. My mother, seeing me in agony, gave me advice that would eventually change millions of lives:

“Stop wasting your time dating. Focus on your studies and achieve success. Once you are successful and can make someone else’s life better, women will want to date you.”



I followed her advice. I poured my heart into my studies, eventually winning third place in the Singapore Mathematics Olympiad and first place in the Physics Olympiad. After graduating with a BS in Electrical Engineering and an MBA from MIT, I was making a good six-figure income and ready to date. Or so I thought.

When I started using dating services in 1995, I experienced the same disappointing dynamics over and over. Hundreds of messages sent, a handful of responses in return. I realized dating platforms built on attraction and compatibility alone are not designed to help someone who is eligible—someone with an extraordinary life and much to offer—find the extraordinary relationships they seek. Rather than lower my expectations, I decided to create a world that meets them.

Part II: The science of attraction and meaningful relationships

What the research tells us

A landmark study by psychologist David Buss examining mate preferences across 37 cultures involving over 10,000 participants found remarkably consistent patterns. Men across all cultures prioritize physical attractiveness, youth, intelligence, and health in potential partners. Women across all cultures value intelligence, emotional stability, ambition, and earning potential.

More recent research from the University of Texas at Austin (2015) confirmed these findings. These studies tell us what draws people together initially. But initial attraction is only the beginning.

The Harvard study: Relationships matter, so what makes them great

The Harvard Study of Adult Development tracked 724 participants for over 85 years. The conclusion was unambiguous: the quality of our relationships is the single most important predictor of long-term happiness and health.

But critically, this quality doesn't emerge by accident. Extraordinary relationships require people with the capacity to sustain them—people who can be emotionally present, genuinely warm, and consistently generous over time.

“Good relationships keep us happier and healthier. Period.”

— Dr. Robert Waldinger

What success and “eligibility” really means

Before going further, a definition. Success, as we use it, does not mean wealth, fame, or status. It means something specific: the ability to make other people’s lives genuinely better. Financial stability can be part of it. Emotional generosity can be part of it. Time, presence, dependability, kindness: all expressions of it.

A successful person is someone who has built enough within themselves that their presence in another person’s life is a net positive. Not occasionally. Consistently. This is what makes someone eligible.

Success is the ability to make other people’s lives genuinely better.
An eligible single is someone who has built it. Everything else follows.



The full picture: Attraction, compatibility, and capacity

When we combine the mate preference research with the relationship quality research, a fuller picture emerges. Attraction and compatibility get people through the door. But relationships that actually change people's lives require a third ingredient: the mutual capacity to make each other's lives genuinely better.

What gets you through the door	The third ingredient
Mutual physical attraction	Financial stability and ambition
Compatibility with preferences	Kindness, loyalty, and emotional support
Shared interests and values	Intelligence and education
Chemistry and spark	Dependability and generosity

Most dating services optimize for the left column. The right column is what separates relationships that enrich both people from relationships that merely pass the time. This was the insight my mother understood instinctively: the capacity to make someone else's life better is what transforms attraction into something extraordinary.

Attraction gets you through the door. The capacity to make each other's lives better is what makes relationships extraordinary.



Part III: What most dating platforms get wrong

The assumption and its consequences

Most dating platforms assume that attraction and compatibility are enough. This assumption is incomplete—and the numbers prove it.

The numbers are stark. According to Statista (2023), 67% of all online dating users in the United States are men—a nearly 2-to-1 imbalance before anyone even opens the app. On the most popular swipe-based platforms, that ratio is even more extreme: independent analyses consistently find that 70–80% of active users are male. Men compensate for the resulting scarcity of attention with sheer volume, swiping right or messaging at three to four times the rate of women. The result is a system where selective singles are buried under an avalanche of low-signal messages, while eligible singles—the ones with the most to offer—are statistically invisible, competing against thousands for a single reply.

This imbalance creates a lose-lose dynamic:

For eligible singles: the sheer volume of competition buries them. Response rates fall below 1%. Their accomplishments, generosity, and character—the things that make them eligible—are invisible in a system designed for volume.

For selective singles: the flood of messages makes it impossible to identify who is genuinely eligible among the noise. The signal gets lost in the static.

Selective singles on mainstream platforms are not just wasting time on the wrong people. They are never even seeing the right ones.

Because these platforms cater to everyone, they structurally disadvantage the highest-caliber individuals—the very people with the most to offer each other.

The cost of “good enough”

Gender imbalance, gamification, and monetization models that prioritize engagement over outcomes have produced widespread discontent. More than half of Gen Z feels burned out from dating apps. Major platforms have lost millions of users and billions in market value. The reason is structural: when a platform maximizes match quantity over match quality, the result is a high volume of connections that go nowhere.

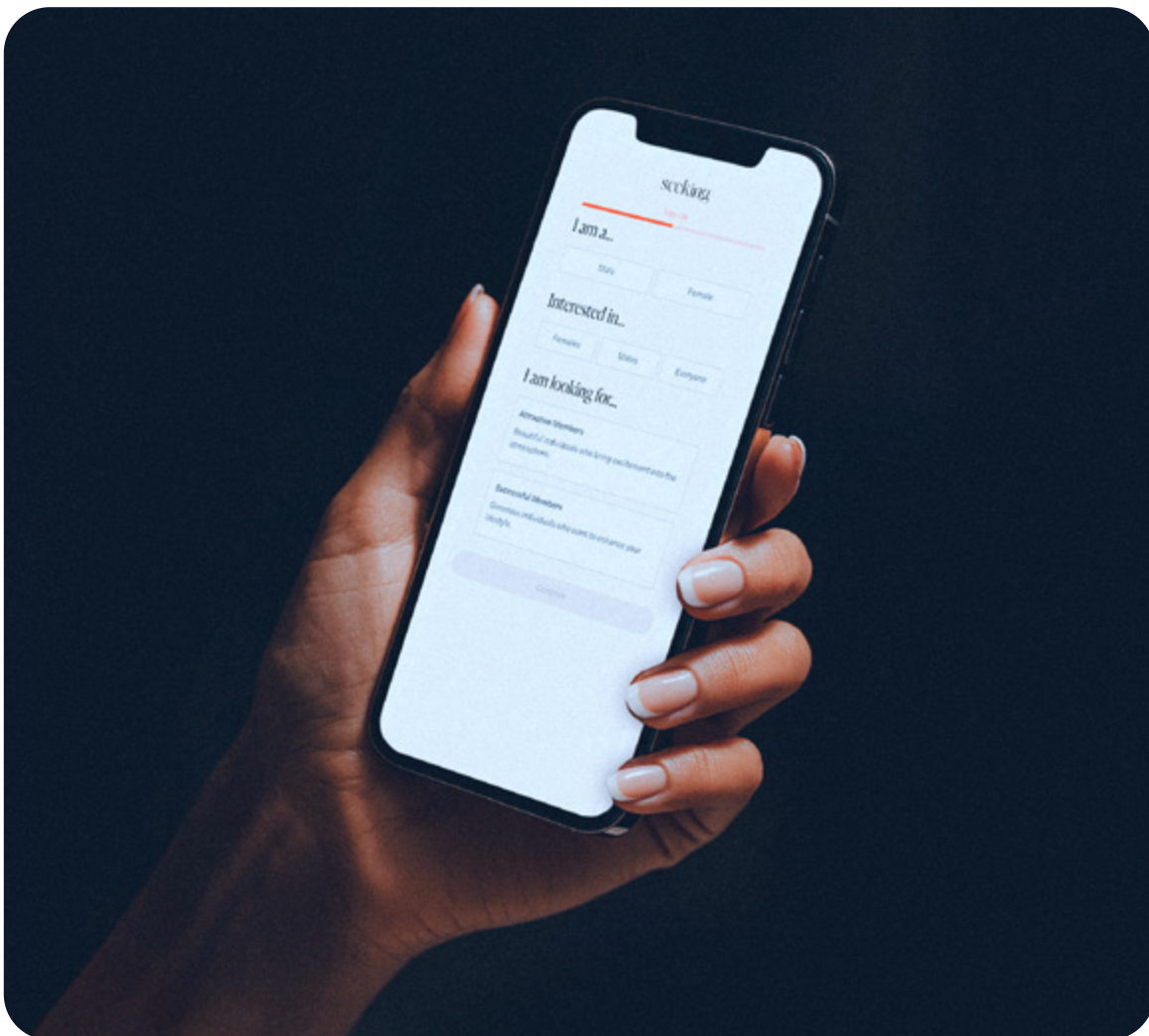
Part IV: How Seeking® was designed differently

Engineering for the third ingredient

In 2006, armed with years of experience in operations research, economics, and game theory, I set out to design a dating platform built on a different assumption: the most meaningful relationships form between people who have the capacity to make each other's lives better.

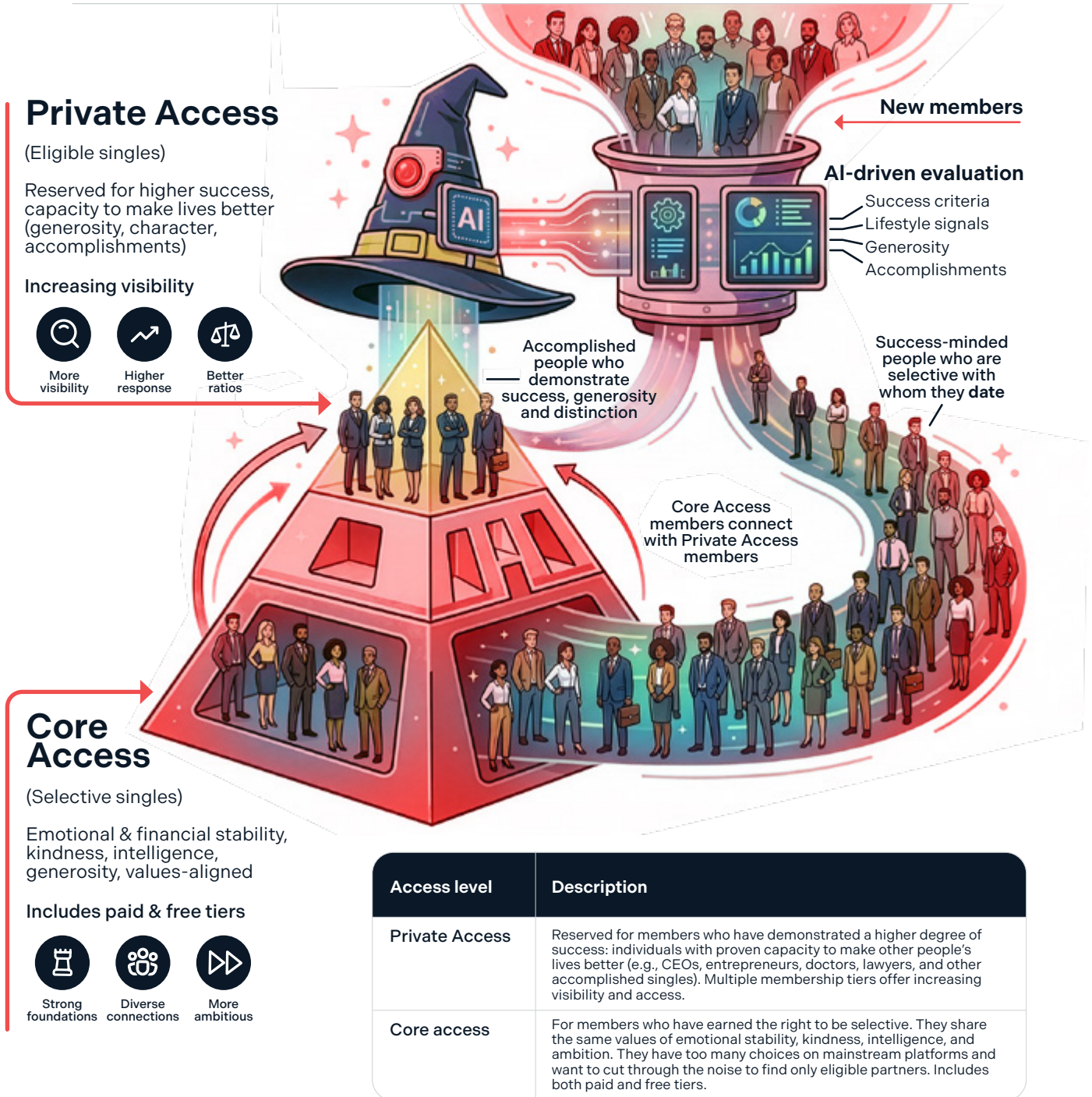
The result was Seeking.com: a curated dating community for people who have built that capacity—what we now call eligible singles.

My mother lived this philosophy. Dating in mid-1960s Singapore, she would not date men who rode motorcycles. She chose my father because he owned a car. The ability to make her life better was signaled through his lifestyle. The principle was simple; its application was practical.



The Seeking® community: Two access groups

To connect people who have built meaningful lives with others who have done the same, Seeking® sorts new members into one of two access levels using a proprietary AI system that evaluates success criteria and lifestyle signals.



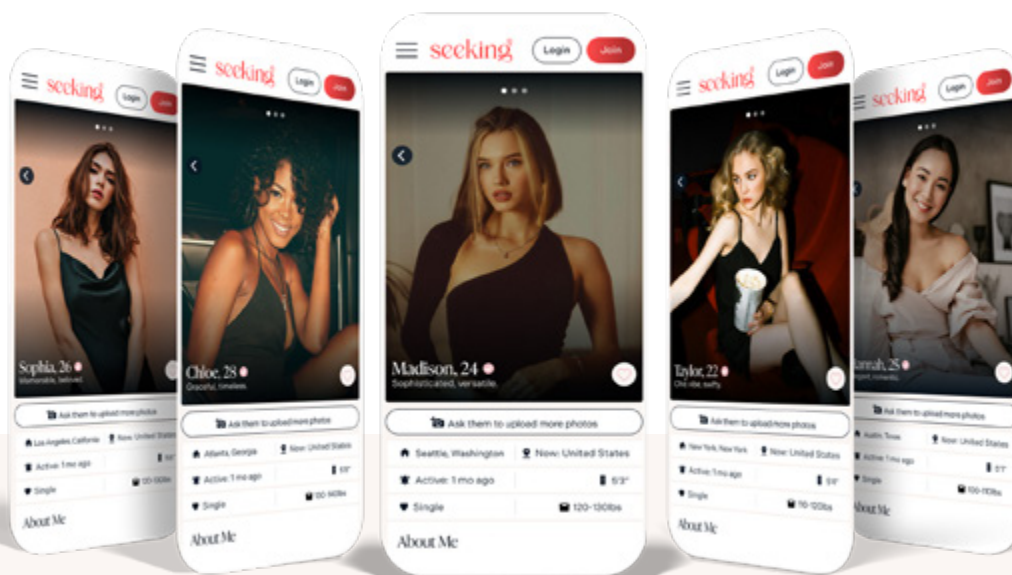
Access level does not depend on gender. There are men and women at each level. What the platform ensures is the caliber of the people you meet.

The design principle is straightforward: the greater your demonstrated capacity to enrich the lives of those around you, the more the platform works in your favor.

The results

	seeking®	Mainstream apps
Gender Ratio Heterosexual (Traditional) Heterosexual (Matriarchal) Gay Lesbian	Core Access : Private Access 4 women : 1 man > 100 men : 1 woman 20 men : 1 man 19 women : 1 woman	Approximately 1 woman : 3 men
Response Rate	> 50% (Private Access)	< 1% (Selective users)

On Seeking®, we have inverted the mainstream dating dynamic. More selective singles join than eligible ones. Our Private Access members receive response rates exceeding 50%—the highest in the dating industry. This is a direct result of how the platform is designed.



What this means for selective singles

For selective singles, dating platforms built on attraction-and-compatibility impose a cost that rarely gets named. The volume of inbound attention on those platforms is not flattering. It is a tax. Every message opened that leads nowhere is time taken from the life you are building.

But the deeper cost is a missed opportunity. When hundreds of messages arrive and most never get opened, the eligible single—the one who actually has something real to offer—is mathematically almost certainly buried in the inbox. Selective singles on mainstream platforms are not just wasting time on the wrong people. They are never even seeing the right ones.

Seeking® eliminates both costs. The community is curated so that every connection has been pre-selected for potential. Our Private Access members invest significantly in their membership—designed to signal their success and eligibility. Every message in your inbox is more likely from someone who is truly worth your time.

What this means for eligible singles

For eligible singles who have built lives of substance, Seeking® delivers what mainstream platforms cannot: visibility. Instead of being buried in a sea of profiles, your accomplishments are recognized and valued. The ratios work in your favor. The response rates reflect your caliber. And the selective singles in this community bring the same substance—they are not here because they need something. They are here because they have something to offer and are looking for someone who matches it.



“Seeking® introduced me to my partner and to the life I now live. It has fundamentally changed my life for the better.”

Female member of Seeking
Feb 20, 2026 User Focus Group



“When it comes to dating, I remain monogamous to Seeking® because of two reasons: the quality of women and the results.”

12-year male member of Seeking
Feb 20, 2026 User Focus Group

Part V: The evolution of Seeking®

Success, mistakes, and transformation

Seeking.com launched in 2006 and quickly became the largest premium dating platform of its kind. It worked so well for successful singles like myself that by 2014, I had become known for a quote I wrote in a CNN Op-Ed: “Love is a concept invented by poor people.”

I thought that, because dating on Seeking® was so easy for someone who had achieved success, “love” must have been a concept invented by poor people to trick others into dating them. I was wrong. Not entirely wrong—our high divorce rate indicates that many promise love and deliver far less. But I was wrong about love itself, and I have publicly apologized. I have since come to understand that unconditional love is real and can give extraordinary meaning to life.

My personal transformation

In late 2020, while using Seeking.com, I received a message from Dana. We spoke on the phone for four hours that evening. By the end of our call, we agreed to our first date three days later. I flew to Orlando to meet her. A month later, I flew Dana to Las Vegas and asked her to be my girlfriend.



We married on June 9, 2022, without a prenup, and we waived our rights to divorce. When you have experienced as many heartbreaks as I have, you know immediately when you have found something worth choosing over everything else.

Dana changed my understanding of love. What I once dismissed, I now recognize as the most important force in human life. I found my extraordinary, and yours may look entirely different. What matters is the caliber of the people involved.



Five approaches to relationships

With a deeper understanding of what makes relationships work, we looked honestly at the patterns across dating platforms, including our own. Five distinct approaches emerged. The last one is who Seeking® is for.



1. Scamming

Outright fraud. People with no intention of forming any relationship, who exist only to deceive and extract. Their presence poisons the experience for everyone else.



2. Transactional

Relationships treated as exchanges, where each person gives only to the degree they receive something specific in return. Many relationships operate this way. Two people close enough to take but distant enough to avoid giving.



3. Scorekeeping

Both people carefully track what they give and get. Introduce real stress and these relationships buckle. You cannot love someone and audit them at the same time.



4. Untested generosity

Neurochemistry and novelty make giving feel effortless early on. But anyone who has dated long enough knows the difference between easy generosity and generosity that requires real choice.



5. Abundance

People operating from this place possess a surplus of time, energy, emotional presence, and resources. Their generosity is not situational—it is structural. This is the approach that produces relationships where both people are genuinely better for having found each other.

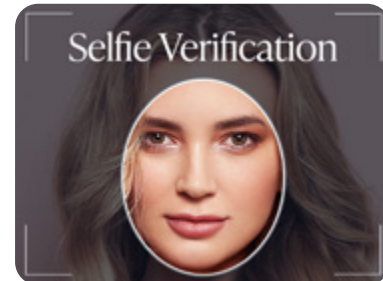
Seeking® was built for people operating from abundance. Every design decision moves the platform closer to a community where eligible and selective singles can find each other.

Enforcing the bar: Our higher standards

Understanding these five approaches gave us a clear roadmap. If Seeking® was going to fulfill its mission, we needed to systematically discourage the approaches that undermine extraordinary relationships.

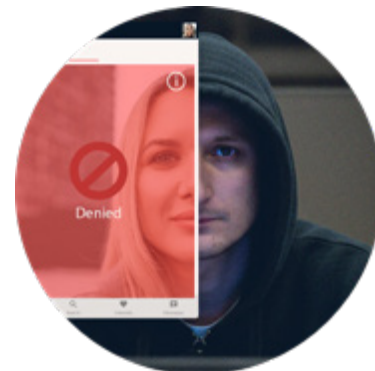
Eliminating scammers

We implemented AI-powered selfie liveness technology. Seeking® became the first dating platform to require 100% of sign-ups to verify with their own faces. Fraudulent joins dropped by over 90%. Member reports fell by over 60%.



Eliminating transactional behavior

In Q1 2026, we launched Stop@Send™— our proprietary AI that identifies transactional language at the point of communication and blocks it before it reaches you. Escorts, pay-per-meet requests, and low-effort solicitations are intercepted in real time.



Next up: Eliminating disrespect

A person who cannot treat a stranger with basic dignity has not yet developed the regard for others that any meaningful connection requires. By the end of 2026, Seeking® will enforce conduct standards that match the caliber of its members.





Part VI: What kind of relationship do you want?

For those who are eligible

You have built a life of substance. You know that attraction fades without depth behind it. You know compatibility alone isn't enough. And you know that the capacity to genuinely make someone else's life better is what separates relationships that merely pass the time from relationships that stand the test of time. You're done searching for someone who gets you. On Seeking®, you're starting there.

Seeking® does not prescribe what extraordinary looks like for you. Some members want a life partner. Some want meaningful connections that fit complex lives. Some need discretion. What unites the community is not a single vision of the ideal relationship. It is the caliber of the people in it.

The type of relationship is your choice.
The quality of person you bring to it is not optional.

For those who are selective

You have too many choices—and that is the problem. Every mainstream platform floods you with attention from people who have nothing real to offer. Your time is finite. Your standards are high. You deserve a platform where every message in your inbox comes from someone who has already proven they are eligible. You're done sorting through noise to find someone worth your time. Here, that work has already been done.

Seeking® was designed for you. Our AI sorts every member. Our technology blocks the noise. And the result is a community where you can be selective without doing the work of filtering through thousands to find the one person worth meeting.

Mom was right all along

My mother's view is simple. People can be categorized by their capacity to add value to others. Her advice was to stop wasting time until I had built the capacity to add significant value. She was right.

Conclusion: Relationships should be extraordinary

Extraordinary relationships exist when the people in them have something meaningful to give. You have built abundance. Now find someone who has built theirs, too.

Seeking® is one of the few platforms that can fundamentally change your life for the better. We welcome all kinds of relationships and do not judge what our members are looking for. What we care about is who they are: eligible singles with the substance, generosity, and stability to make someone else's life genuinely better, and selective singles who have earned the right to choose only from the best.

No other dating platform founder can say they found their soulmate on their own platform. I can.

It happened on Seeking®.

It can happen for you too. The person is out there. The platform is ready. Are you?

Brandon Wade

Founder & Co-CEO, Seeking.com



Appendix: Research and sources

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