

Facebook & Marriage: Avoiding Trouble

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By DEENA CENTOFANTI
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Facebook is really the number one way to find old friends, but amid the pokes, pictures and chats, the friendly and sometimes flirtatious social network can also wreak havoc with your relationship.

Thou shall not use Facebook. That's the message from the pastor at a New Jersey church. He believes social networking equals extra material shenanigans.

"It starts out really plutonic. 'Hi, how are you?' 'How you doing?' 'You know, I really used to like you in high school or in college. Hey, why did we break up?' And so forth and so on," the pastor said. "Before you know it, connections are being made."

To find out the real relationship risk, **FOX 2's Deena Centofanti** went to relationship expert, psychiatrist **Howard Belkin**, who points out with a few clicks and a simple search that suddenly you can be in contact with countless friends.

"The main problem is access is easy. People are always able to have affairs and they have relationships that they shouldn't have in the past, but it was a lot more difficult," said Belkin.

Here's the allure. Reconnecting with old lovers helps us recapture our youth. Smiling pictures and flirty messages create a fantasy world, an escape from reality.

"There's no kids involved. The dirty socks aren't there. You don't have to worry about the spouse yelling because you haven't done the dishes," Belkin said. "What the statistics show is that 20 to 30-percent of all affairs currently are actually instigated or have something to do with Facebook,"

This doesn't mean you have to leave your virtual playground. Dr. Belkin simply says don't do anything on Facebook that you wouldn't want your spouse to see, and follow his lead with the profile picture.

"It says I'm married. I'm happy. I have a pretty wife. I look nice. I know how to wear a tuxedo," said Belkin.

Remember, jealousy isn't limited to finding past romantic relationships. Time spent playing those games also leads to trouble.

One solution is to allow yourself a limited amount of time on any given website. Make sure you and your mate agree on how much time that should be, making sure that you're both on the same page.