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**Meeting Safety Needs**

**By Kevin B. Burk, Author of The Relationship Handbook**

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One of the most valuable life skills we can learn is how to meet our safety needs. We are responsible for maintaining the minimum balance in our safety accounts. When we learn to meet our own safety needs, every area of our lives—including our relationships—improves dramatically. Meeting our own safety needs is relatively simple. Meeting other people's safety needs, however, is a bit more complicated.

**MEETING OUR OWN SAFETY NEEDS**

When we realize that we feel unsafe or that our fight-or-flight response is active, the first thing we must do is evaluate if we are actually in a dangerous or threatening situation. If we feel unsafe walking through a deserted parking lot in the middle of the night, we should certainly honor that feeling and stay on our guard! When used correctly, the fight-or-flight response is designed to save our lives. We simply need to learn how to weed out the false alarms. If we feel unsafe and there is no reasonable threat to our life or limb, then our fight-or-flight response was activated by our egos, and we can safely disengage it.

The most common reason that we feel unsafe is that we are projecting our attention into the future or the past. Our power only exists in the present; when we worry about the past or the future, we give away our power and feel unsafe. The "Present Moment Safety Exercise" on the following page can help to return our awareness to the present moment, and bring the balance in our master safety account back to its minimum level.

## Meeting Safety Needs

Often, in order to feel safe enough to even do this exercise, we need to create some space. If we're feeling unsafe in a discussion or an argument, we may need to simply walk away—to take a few moments to let our tempers cool. Even though our partner in the discussion may not pose an actual physical threat to us, if we're experiencing boundary violations in the discussion, we will need to reinforce our boundaries and reclaim our space before we can address our safety needs.

### PRESENT MOMENT SAFETY EXERCISE

Stop whatever it is that you are doing and take a few deep, cleansing breaths.

If possible, find somewhere to sit or lie down, and then let yourself feel supported by the chair, floor, bed or sofa.

As you become aware of your body, and aware of your breathing, feel your mind begin to quiet.

Gently release your attachments to any thoughts and simply observe any activity of your mind.

Softly draw your awareness back to the present moment. The more we worry about the past or the future, the more unsafe we feel. The only place we have any power is in the present moment.

Experience the truth that in the present moment you are safe. The past has already happened, and the future does not exist yet. Remember that we create our futures through our choices.

Take a moment to feel the truth that in the present moment—in this moment, and in every moment—you are supported, safe and nurtured. Because you are an individualized aspect of All That Is, your needs are automatically met.

Let your awareness rest on your breath. Let your mind quiet. And for a few moments, simply be. Simply experience what it feels like to be completely safe, completely supported.

You can now consider your current situation from this place of safety, support, and power. You can evaluate your options objectively. You are free to make the most elegant choices available to you. You choose, knowing that your choices create your reality. You choose to experience the truth that you are fully supported in this moment and in the next. And these

choices create a present and a future where your needs continue to be met easily and effortlessly.

### MEETING OTHER PEOPLE'S SAFETY NEEDS

Meeting other people's safety needs is often a tricky proposition. In our intimate relationships, it's appropriate for us to explore emotional connections with our partners. We can look for ways to nurture and protect our partners, and expect our partners to nurture and protect us. It's rarely appropriate to do this in professional or casual relationships, however. Unless we share an intimate personal connection with someone, it's difficult to meet his or her safety needs directly. The most we can do is to avoid making them feel unsafe. We do this by respecting their boundaries.

Other people's boundaries are not always easy to recognize, however. Sometimes the only way we can recognize a boundary is

by inadvertently crossing it and making our partner feel unsafe. Often, our partners didn't even realize that they had this particular boundary until we crossed it. Once we've become aware of the boundary, however, we can own it. We can step back, and take responsibility for crossing the boundary. And we can choose to respect that boundary from this point on. We are now both aware of this particular boundary, but more importantly, we are both aware that the boundary will be respected. The boundary is now stronger, and our partner is now able to feel more safe. So how can you tell if you've crossed a boundary that not even your partner knew existed in the first place? Body language is the best indication that you may have stepped over a line and made someone feel unsafe. When we feel unsafe, we adjust our bodies to protect ourselves. We may:

- Cross our arms in front of our chests.
- Lean forward and drop our heads (breaking eye contact).
- Round our shoulders (expressing the desire to curl up into a ball to protect ourselves).
- Clench our teeth and tighten our jaw.
- Stop responding to our partner and disengage from the conversation.
- Change our tone of voice and become more defensive.
- Raise our voices.
- Speak more emphatically.

If you notice any of these behaviors in your partner, you have

crossed a line and made your partner feel unsafe. And if you notice any of these behaviors in yourself, then you're feeling unsafe because your partner has crossed one of your boundaries.

In any event, whether you're feeling unsafe or you've made your partner feel unsafe, what you need to create is some space to defuse the threat.

- If it's possible and appropriate to move away from your partner by taking a step back, or moving your chair.
- Change your body position so that you're leaning away from your partner.
- Take a few deep breaths, and return your awareness to the present moment.
- Check your voice and body language. (The louder and more rapidly we speak, the more aggressive we appear.)
- Slow down, and shift your body into a neutral and receptive posture.
- Uncross your arms and leave the front of your body open and unprotected. (This makes you vulnerable and demonstrates that you are not a threat.)

If you've made someone feel unsafe through your choice of words or subject matter, it's important that you not pursue that particular subject. If appropriate, you can acknowledge that you may have inadvertently become too personal, and apologize. Remember, when we recognize and take responsibility for crossing a boundary, we make our partners feel safe.

Kevin B. Burk is the author of *The Relationship Handbook: How to Understand and Improve Every Relationship in Your Life*. Visit <http://www.everyrelationship.com> for a FREE report on creating AMAZING Relationships.

### **6 Great Online Dating Safety Tips**

**By Andy Thompson**

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Title: "Online Dating Safety Tips"

Author: Andy Thompson

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## Meeting Safety Needs

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### Online Dating Safety Tips!

By Andy Thompson.

Online personals and dating is a great way to meet that special someone, however it is important to approach it with safety as your first priority. While most online services are very secure and do a good job at helping ensure your privacy and confidentiality, you are ultimately responsible for your own safety.

Most services do not pre-screen their users, therefore they cannot assume any responsibility for the people you meet through their sites. This officially grants you the title of screener, a responsibility which you must take very seriously. After all, if you are comfortable and feel secure online, you will have much more fun with online dating!

Here are a few good security tips:

1– Never reveal your last name or address to a stranger. If telephone numbers are exchanged, try to use a cell phone with a private number. If you call a stranger at home, always use caller ID blocking to maintain your privacy.

2– Do not use your primary EMAIL address for online dating correspondence – create an anonymous Email account (such as a Hotmail account) to correspond with potential dates.

3– If you decide to meet that special someone, always meet in a public place – NEVER meet in private

for your first date! Always let someone know where you are going.

4– Be honest about who you are and what you are seeking – do not reveal more than you normally would in a face to face first meeting. If your online contact attempts to pressure you into revealing more than you are comfortable with, re-evaluate his/her intentions.

5– Always review the security and confidentiality policy of the online dating service you are using. Many of the better known online dating sites have very good privacy policies. A comprehensive listing of major online dating sites is available at <http://www.cosmodating.com>

## Meeting Safety Needs

6– Don't rush into a face to face meeting – take your time, chat up a storm and get to know each other. Is the person on the other end being honest, or do you get the feeling they are just saying what you want to hear. You are the sole judge and jury in this love trial – use your best judgement!

In conclusion, safety should be your #1 priority as you venture into the world of online dating. Go slow, take your time to and get to know you potential dates. Like the song says, "Only fools rush in" – taking your time will only increase your chances of meeting that special someone and at the same time help weed out the bad seeds!

Andy Thompson is owner and operator of <http://www.cosmodating.com> – he can be reached at the following address: [admin@cosmodating.com](mailto:admin@cosmodating.com)



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