

Showing Affection in a Chaste Courtship: How Far is Too Far?

You're spending some time at the park with your boyfriend or girlfriend, and judging by the googly eyes you're giving each other, you are both feeling overwhelmed with romantic love and passion, and want to show it. But how far is too far?



Before you know it you're embracing, and since you're good Catholic kids, you're pacing yourself to make sure you don't go too far.

After all, you have your boundaries. You've discussed them and you both agreed to do certain things and not others.

However, as the minutes tick by, somewhere at the edge of your brain, is a little voice that is telling you that maybe you shouldn't be doing what you're doing.

The question of "how far is too far", is one that is both easy and complex at the same time.

Obviously, if you avoid all signs of physical affection, along with improper speech, you're in the clear.

But life is not always like that.

Sometimes you want to show affection to the person you are in a courting relationship with.

How far is too far?



Every couple is different and what works for some might not work for others. Boundaries defined by couples might differ. So “how far is too far” may be different for different couples, within reason.

For example, my position when it comes to open-mouth kissing is to [avoid](#) it altogether.

Let’s look at some questions you can ask yourself to make that determination.

Is Your Intention Arousal or Affection?



Arousal and affection, can get a little muddled, can’t it?

Even a closed-mouth kiss can be arousing, depending on the intention. Some feelings of desire are inevitable when a man and a woman who like each other spend time alone (don’t spend too much time alone).

How do you know if you're getting near the danger zone?

Are you experiencing physical signs of arousal?

Do you get a thrill after going a little further each time? That should clue you that the reason you're showing affection is either to entice or become aroused yourself.

Be honest with yourself and identify your intention.

Are you starting to fantasize about being married so you can go all the way?

Of course, it is natural for us to desire our future spouses and to daydream somewhat about being one flesh. However, you should try not to linger on those thoughts, because they have a way of popping up in when you're spending time with your beau or gal.

We can't help the thoughts that enter our minds, but if you start fantasizing about sleeping with your boyfriend or girlfriend, while expressing affection, you're already in the danger zone.

By the way, this is the way the devil tricks us in to thinking we're doing something proper by fantasizing about sex after marriage, when all that's happening is that we're getting more and more sex-focused, which can lead to either devaluing the relationship or lowering our guard.

Do You Sometimes Fear That You Might Be Going Too Far?

Once you begin to fear going too far, that means your inner radar, aka your conscience, is warning you and it's time to take a step back.

You wouldn't feel that way if both your body, mind and soul weren't picking up danger signals.

If we would listen to our conscience rather than override it, we would avoid quite a bit of trouble.

I hope these guidelines were helpful.

How did you know in the past when you were going too far?

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Too Close Too Soon? 3 Ways to Safeguard Your Heart Through Emotional Purity



For those singles who believe in chaste courtship and sexual purity, avoiding premarital sex is a given. However, what is more nuanced and not so easy, is maintaining emotional purity.

In the same way physical purity involves setting boundaries when it comes to physical intimacy, emotional purity refers to setting boundaries around your heart so that you don't become too close, too quickly, to someone you are in a relationship with.

What's wrong with being vulnerable and how are we supposed to get to know each other, if we don't relax those boundaries?

Good question.

Tammy & John met on the internet and knew they were meant to be with each other from the get-go. They had so much in common, including their love for God and our Lady. Since they were local, they began to see each other twice a week. Within a matter of 3 weeks, they were telling each other everything and spending hours on the phone.

However, it turned out that Tammy had a huge temper, something she had not yet mentioned. One day, during a disagreement, Tammy slapped John.

John was shocked and devastated.

You see, he had been in a relationship where he was physically abused by his girlfriend. Having been raised as a gentleman he never hit her back, but he began to doubt the longevity of the relationship.

Unfortunately, it took him 2 years to untangle himself from that relationship.

He knew that given his history, he should probably break up with Tammy, but since they had gotten so close, he was loathe to do so, especially when the tears started flowing. He couldn't bear to see her cry.

If Tammy and John had not gotten so close so quickly, it would have been easier for him to tell her that it was just not working out.

So how can you tell if you're getting too close too quickly?

If you suddenly feel like you're in love after two weeks and you start looking at reception halls, then you're already in trouble.

Would you like to avoid this type of complication? Pace yourself and avoid these 3 pitfalls.



1) Don't Have Discussions of Your Past Sins or Current Sins Too Early

In discerning our future spouses, we have to look for virtue.

This involves learning someone's strengths and weaknesses. However, doing so too quickly has its perils.

For example, if you were sexually active in the past, your significant other should know that.

However, you don't need to go into details that you haven't shared with anyone else and you don't have to ask the other person to pray for your current struggles with chastity.

This puts the other person in the role of "counselor" so they feel responsible for you. At the same time, you become dependent on that person to help you solve your problems.

Emotional purity is threatened by making you feel close to each other prematurely.

2) Don't Fantasize Together About Marriage in the Early Weeks

Although your intention to find someone to marry should be clear from the beginning, fantasizing early on in the relationship about the house you're going to have or the amount of children you will have, or the dinner ritual you will have, can affect your objective judgment of the relationship. It is important that you're able to properly discern without heavy emotions getting in the way.

If you can conceive it, you can achieve it.

The more you fantasize about your future life, the more committed you will be to making it a reality. The question is, "do you yet know if you want to make it a reality"?

Although talking about the future in this way is entirely appropriate further on in the relationship, if you do it too soon, you risk prematurely getting too close to someone you

don't even know yet.

3) Don't Spend Too Much Time Together Alone

Ideally in a courtship, most of the time you spend together will be spent at the parent's house or in the presence of a trusted mentor or older couple.

However, life is not perfect and sometimes a young couple may not live close to their parents or they might not have a mentor, or they might be an older couple.

Don't spend every day together the minute you meet.

Don't get into a rhythm which might give you the false impression that you or your guy/gal has made a greater commitment than the two of you actually have.

To recap, emotional purity is important early on in the relationship when you are discerning. Both men and women need to safeguard their hearts (women even more so) to avoid making an imprudent decision.