

-- [00:00:01] Welcome to the Closeness podcast. The following is based on both personal experiences and wisdom, as well as personal experiences that have been contributed to us. Generalizations are sometimes made for the sake of brevity, but are never meant to exclude or offend. Regardless of your gender identity, relationship status preferences, or sexual orientation, it's our sincere hope that you can take away something positive, construct and useful from each topic explored. You can support these podcasts by donating to our [patreon@patreon.com](https://www.patreon.com/patreon) Closeness now, are you ready to come closer? Let's get started. Today's topic is very unusual. We're exploring whether or not you should talk to strangers, meaning people that you don't know and whether you should refer to people who you don't know as strangers. Are we isolating ourselves, blocking ourselves off and closing down channels of communication by believing that there is us and there's them? Those who we know, those who we don't. Back when we were children, almost everyone was told not to talk to strangers. And this was one of the most powerful things we may have ever learned when it comes to social interaction because it stuck with us through most of our lives. So while it was completely useful and beneficial as a child to avoid danger and situations that we don't want to be in as adults, this thread of not wanting to speak to people whom we don't know has carried through significantly. So we're going to be exploring what all that's about. How does not talking to strangers present itself in today's world as an adult? Maybe some of this sounds familiar to you.

[00:01:42] You don't know me.

[00:01:43] You don't know anything about me.

[00:01:46] You're a stranger. I don't go over to people's houses who I don't know. I don't invite someone over to my house who I don't know. You might be a serial killer. You might be an axe murderer. Oh, I don't meet anyone in public until I've sent 100 text messages to them first. Even though I meet people outside or in the market every single day, there's no way I'm going to be speaking to you on the phone because I need to write you text messages in order for me to feel comfortable. If someone says these things to you, consider how you might respond to something like that. Now, as I mentioned in many podcasts, closeness is about spending time with people who you are interested in and who you do want to see. So if your mind is getting all fired up right now of examples of how you wouldn't want to speak to a stranger in the middle of downtown Los Angeles or in a dark alley at night. Or how if someone who's got really bad energy invites you over to his house, that you wouldn't tell him no and get out of that situation right away. These are very obvious examples where, yes, you would not want to talk to these types of strangers. That's not what we're going for here. If you're actually using the sentences, I don't know you, you don't know me, you're a stranger. It should be because you actually do want to get to know them, and you want them to know you, but you just haven't learned to communicate properly. And that's why I'm here, to help. When someone is the object of our attention, it actually feels good to get to know someone. And deep down, this is what we all want. Everybody wants someone to take the time to get to know them. Don't you love saying about someone? God, he just gets me. Or she just understands the way I work. Rather than taking such an on to the next, on to the next, where's the next best thing kind of approach. Sometimes it's nice to peel back the layers and learn a little bit more about someone else. Or more specifically, let them in. The big point I'm making here is that we make these layers totally and unnecessarily difficult to get through, and shutting someone down immediately at every turn is just not the way to get to know someone. In other words, there's no effective strategy in telling someone that they don't know you. So after decades and decades of witnessing some members of our world do this, it's time to clear some things up. Of course, before we do this, given today's climate, we have to give a very strong disclaimer. What I'm about to share does not preclude looking out for yourself, being careful in the world, being a smart person, listening to your intuition, we should all be careful, be aware of our surroundings, tune into our gut and listen to our intuition. But we take this to such an extreme lev --

-- el in dating that we are still like terrified little children, scared to go outside and speak to strangers. What is a stranger to you anyway? Take a moment, pause. Consider what a stranger means to you. Is it just somebody who you don't know?

[00:04:40] Are they unsafe?

[00:04:43] Are they dangerous?

[00:04:46] Does it depend?

[00:04:48] What does it depend on? Even if you listen to how you say the word stranger, it sounds negative. It even has the word strange in it. It sounds like someone that you don't want to know. There's us, and then there's strangers and most of us in our lives today, we make everyone a stranger. This is possibly one of the biggest shifts you can make. It has to do with how you see the world. Is your view of the world a negative, fearful, scared. Terrified of strangers. Fearful, traumatic view of the world. Is that what you see when you open your door and look outside? Or do you see it as your playground? An exquisite tapestry of nature and animals. A fertile place for growth, place of opportunity, something new to discover around every turn. Because your belief and your expectation about the world is going to directly shape your experiences that you draw into your life. When you classify someone as a stranger, it does something very specific to your mind. In fact, rather than philosophically speaking about it. Let's bring it directly into a dating situation. When someone's talking to you, flirting with you, or getting to know you, and you say to them, you don't know me. You don't know anything about me. Is your communication shutting everything down? Or is it being open and receptive and allowing a connection to occur? If any of you have been on dating apps like OkCupid, hingE, Tinder, bumble, and I know most of you have, you know that all the conversations start with text, and it's always interesting to see who the connected people are. And from a man's perspective, it's fascinating to see how many women are craving a real connected, long term relationship. But the way they initiate or the way they start out is by shutting someone down immediately. So I remember once I was having a good stream of connections and talking to a few different people. And with three or four of the conversations I was having, everything was in flow and going really well. There was an openness, a receptivity. I felt like I could ask and they could ask, and we could find out about each other. In other words, the purpose of online dating. Well, this one particular woman who was looking for a long term relationship, she had the obligatory no hookups written in all caps in the profile, started talking to me, and to me, things were going pretty well. There was nothing sexual, nothing boring, nothing weird. We were right smack in the middle of a good conversation. And then, out of the blue, after she wrote her sentiment, and then out of the blue, after she wrote her sentence or two, she said, as if someone was leaving, well, have a nice day. Even that right there is interesting behavior if you're communicating with someone and then all of a sudden, you vanish or run away or cut the whole thing short for apparently no reason, why are you doing that. So I took it in stride and I said, thanks, but I thought we were in the middle of a conversation here. Do you need to go now? Get this. Her response was, you didn't ask me for my phone number. And then she gave me her phone number. Now this is where it gets really interesting. I left her a message and didn't hear back for something like a day and a half. And if you've listened to this podcast, you know in very specific detail how we feel about those people who are busy all the time. So the response back I got was, sorry I didn't get back with you. I've been busy with friends. Now, the irony of this really cracked me up. So jokingly I said back to her, I just created an episode about very specifically not leading with that as your first sentence. When you're starting to get to know someone, telling them how busy you are all the time. To which she responded, well, that's the truth. So why wouldn't I just say the truth? That's ridiculous. So rather than getting into it on a text, I say, well, let me give you a call and I'll say, hello, are you available to talk? And she said, yes. So I called and she didn't answer. And I called again, and then she didn't answer. And then she said, let me call you back. I said, okay. And finally we get on the phone for the very first time. Now --

-- , in my line of work, I'm also pretty good at identifying red flags for people who I don't want to associate with. And I could tell already and have been able to for years, that when I hear that accusatory tone or an almost argumentative way of interacting, that it's likely not going to go well, especially if it's within the first moment of us speaking. But for moments like this, to be able to share with you all the type of things that people say and respond. I wanted to continue in a very neutral tone and see what this girl was about. So when she called back, I made sure to take three deep breaths, make sure I was in a very calm, soothing space. And we began talking about her dog for a little while. And so I asked what part of town she was headed to, and her reply is Los Angeles. For those of you who don't know, that's sort of like saying Rome, New York, Florida, Central Europe. It's an answer and it's a true answer, but again, it's something that inhibits the conversation from moving forward. And to me, that was like strike three. Obviously, she's going to pick up her dog in the city that we live in. So we get off the subject of dogs and living situations come up. We start discussing her strong distaste for roommates and how she loves to live on her own and how she can never live with anyone. And I thought, great. I big fan of an independent woman who makes her own money and lives in her own house. That's amazing. But then she begins to tell me, I make a lot of money and I live in a very nice place. So I said, that's great. A lot of people don't have the luxury to live on their own like that. I love the area that you live in. What do you wind up spending on rent down there, if you don't mind me asking? To which she said, not flirtatiously, not coily, and not playfully, that is none of your business.

[00:10:23] Full stop. And yep, awkward silence. And that's exactly where I let it sit for her for five or 7 seconds. That's none of your business. Is another cold way to shut another person down. Why are you talking to me if you're so defensive? Are you looking for someone to date? Do you want to be having this conversation? Is there a better way that could have been said? If you want one surefire way to make the moment feel uncomfortable between two people, use statements like that and you'll wind up making yourself even more uncomfortable than you thought you were. So when you put up a defensive wall this way, it creates a huge boundary. But now you are uncomfortable for even saying it and you leave the other person in an awkward position. It's just like saying you don't know me and you don't know anything about me. You're putting up a wall and you're expressing this strong sense of privacy. Now, of course, if you just meet someone, you don't have to share what you spend in rent or what your mortgage payment is. I don't think it's all that personal. Unless you live in some multimillion dollar estate, in my opinion. And if she doesn't want to share, that's fine. I can respect that. I can get behind that. And there are certainly things that I wouldn't want to share with a stranger either. But delivery and tone are everything. In fact, you could make the exact same statement. You could make rude statements, but if delivered correctly and delivered with sincerity and authenticity and sweetness, you could turn it's none of your business into that's none of your business. Or maybe I'll tell you next time. Or maybe I'll tell you when we get to know each other a little bit better, why are we going into this so deeply? Because what on earth do you say to someone when they close a conversation down like that, but you're in the middle of talking? And does it make you want to continue the conversation in a positive way, or does it put you on the defensive? Does it make you want to snap back? Or if you're a very agreeable person, does it make you want to apologize? So, getting back to our story, I listened to a few more moments of this, and then, whether it was her or the nature of cell phones, the call suddenly dropped mid conversation while she was speaking. And no, I didn't hang up on her, but I sure as hell didn't call back because I don't want to associate with someone who is interacting with me in what would be an intimate way. We're getting to know each other, seeing if we want to go out on a date, seeing if we feel attraction to each other, and ultimately even sleep together. I'll actually cut off communication with someo --

-- ne that's very argumentative or defensive right away because I know that's not what I'm looking for in someone. The interesting thing about this story is that all of the other women I was speaking to were so receptive, so friendly. One invited me over to her house to go swimming. Another invited me over to spend time with her daughter. Another invited me to a class. Another invited me directly to her house. All sorts of different levels of comfort. And I understand that that might not be for you, and that might seem a little out of your ordinary experience, but I'm a firm believer in feeling into and listening to your intuition. As you're listening, you've got to be thinking how strange it is to have to share something that might sound so obvious to you. And congratulations, Gold Star. You are a great person. But for everyone else, I want you to imagine that it's you on the receiving end of comments like this. You don't know me. None of your business. I'm not telling you that. Almost as if someone's holding something secretive over your head, authentically think for a moment how you would respond to someone who says, you don't know me. When you are in the middle of getting to know them, when you're sitting across from someone, asking them questions or you're texting back and forth, you're in this process of discovery. So it may sound to you that this is really in the nitty gritty here, but our language and our tone and our delivery is always doing one of two things, welcoming or shutting down. And I need to repeat again, it's okay to shut someone down who you're not interested in. It's okay to break off communication from someone who you don't like. But if you're in the discovery process or you want to give someone the chance to get to know you, consider that your language can destroy an interaction. In my personal life, I'm at the point right now where if I hear that, that activates a very strong signal for me. If someone says that, I go, oh, you're right. Guess I don't. Being open and receptive means also being able to be vulnerable. Yes, vulnerable as a man or a woman. I wish we had a better word for vulnerability because it sounds so fragile or exposed. Exposed might be an appropriate word. We need to expose or give a little of ourselves if we want to receive anything back.

[00:15:06] All of us want to be seen. We want to be appreciated. We want to be loved. But how can that possibly happen if we're not willing to expose or be vulnerable or share ourselves and let someone know us, let someone spend time with us and share the personal details that we feel comfortable with. Closeness is about letting people in.

[00:15:29] Of course. To be clear, there is terror and tragedy in every corner of the world. You can shine a spotlight on it. You can make it big. You can prove that there are many reasons to think that the world is a dangerous place. And this isn't just between men and men or men and women. There are terrible things happening every day, in nature, in the world, in our environment. I get it. And I fully recognize that it's a very different experience to be a man in the world today, especially walking down a street at night, or being by yourself, or just walking alone. But it really is possible to take a different approach. You can shine a spotlight on all that's good. You can open your door and see the trees instead of the street. You can see birds instead of the dirt. You can take an optimistic approach towards life instead of a pessimistic one. And you can activate that within your field. What does that mean, your field? Not many people are comfortable with the word vibration. But what about your energy, or your attitude, or the way you feel? Or have you ever noticed that when you're pissed off, you bump into other pissed off people? Or people don't treat you as well? It's always easy to notice what's wrong in the world today. It's easy to disregard people, to treat them as expendable as you're bustling through your day. What's not easy, but what has the most reward is noticing and appreciating what's right in the world. Whatever gives you the sense of relief.

[00:16:57] You've seen the people who view the world as a dangerous place. Their shoulders are a little bit higher. They also tend to be protracted forward, also in a manner of protection. Their eyes are often wide, like saucers. They're excitable, they're scared easily. And then I've seen those who see the world with a fresh set of eyes, regardle --

-- ss of their age or sex. They're buoyant and happy and vibrant, and they greet you with a smile. And why do you think they're able to maintain that level of happiness and pleasure? Because they get back what they put out. The people who look others in the eyes and welcome them and are open to saying a simple hello on the street or smile. And in other states, depending on where you live, this type of behavior of saying hello and greeting people and smiling or making eye contact is actually quite normal. I don't see them get bothered, hassled. I see them in their power. At the same time, I do want to be sensitive to people who just aren't like that and can't be like that, possibly because of mental illness or depression or anxiety. I want to be very clear and share with everybody else that sometimes you cannot control those feelings. And no matter what you do to try to feel better, you're unable to get out of that state. I understand that. So it's not about having an empty gas tank and just putting a happy face sticker on it, and then everything is fine. It takes real work to pull yourself out. Our life experiences have colored who you now are as a person, and that contributes to how you behave towards people. Yes, that is all understandable. But when possible, when the sun is shining, when we're feeling like we can make a small change or a small difference in our lives, when we can choose our emotion and we can choose our response instead of our reaction that we have to people.

[00:18:40] It's about closeness. When I see people communicate from a place of friendliness, where they don't think the world is out to get them, I don't see them getting hounded by thousands of members of the opposite sex, never leaving them alone, irritating them and bothering them, I see a respect and a mutual acknowledgment of life. Finding your internal confidence and finding your ability to communicate with the world from a place of love is what draws people into you that are healthy, nontoxic and vibrant as well. So in your future interactions with people, consider if there's anything useful in uttering the words, you don't know me, you don't get me. I don't know you, and you're a stranger to me. Feel deep inside and see if some change in languaging and how you communicate with others might draw a different type of person into your life. And it's my hope that the next person you find cute or attractive, who's a total stranger to you, surprises you and impresses you because you've chosen to see them as a friend.

[00:19:45] And if all that doesn't convince you, remember that anyone you've ever been friends with, anyone you've ever had sex with, anyone you've ever been close with, was a stranger before you met them.

[00:19:56] It's because of strangers and women who I never met before that I didn't get lost in Japan. It's because of strangers and a woman who I'd never met before that I had an incredible, luxurious place to stay in Abu Dhabi during my first visit to the United Arab Emirates. It's because of strangers that when I traveled all over the world, people were kind enough to host me, be hospitable, allow me to have workshops for them and teach in these different locations everywhere around the planet. I don't, and I never did see these people as strangers. I did, however, gain new friends, and that, to me, is one of the best ways that we can orient ourselves in this world. Have a wonderful day. Thank you for listening. We hope you've enjoyed this immensely. You can learn more about the closeness, lifestyle and movement by visiting Getcloseness.com. If you've been touched by what you've heard here today, or this has made a measurable difference in the quality of your life or sex life, or if you'd like to get one of your own intimate questions answered on an upcoming episode of the Closeness podcast, please consider donating to our [patreon@patreon.com](https://www.patreon.com/closeness) closeness. All of these links can be found in the description. Until next time, stay close. --