



Jenelle Schneider, Calgary Herald

Christine Hart of Six Minute Dates at the recent holiday mixer her firm put on at Beat Niq Jazz Club. The second tier of Hart's dating service, Your Date Coach, aims to improve clients' dating skills.

FROM C12

DATING: One-on-one consultations

Your Date Coach (www.yourdatecoach.com), is the second tier of Hart's dating services.

Launched earlier this year, it offers clients one-on-one consultations to help improve a person's dating skills.

"This was me formalizing what I've done for the past five years and that's giving advice, helping singles and being that unbiased best friend people can talk to," Hart says of Your Date Coach.

Her clientele ranges in age from young professionals to the recently single re-entering the dating scene after years away from it.

But before the dating expert is able to coach her clients to a better love life, she requires a minimum of two personal consultations (at \$75 each) to determine the problems that need tackling.

With women, she finds the biggest issue is helping them get in touch with their femininity and to feel good about themselves. As for men, they just want to understand women.

Based on her one-on-one consultation, she creates a list of recommendations for each client to work on, covering everything from dating etiquette to understanding body language, and

from image consulting to what to wear on a first date.

"When we're done, (clients) find themselves either attracting different people or feeling more confident about themselves," she says.

Back at the party, Jen Z. provides a telling comment on the reality of being a busy professional who happens to be single.

"It's funny, my married friends always ask me what I'm doing to meet men," says the 30-year-old, who also did not want to be fully identified. "Where am I supposed to meet them? Work is off-limits, which is where I spend a lot of my time."

This is Jen's first time at a singles mixer and she's surprised how much she enjoyed it.

"This (party) is a great way to meet people. I'm not sure if it's right for me, but I'd be willing to give it another try."

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OF SIX MINUTE
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With a friend in tow, Jen arrived at Beat Niq just in time to catch the last few minutes of the evening's introductory activity.

Meant to act as an icebreaker, both men and women were given cards with lists of attributes such as "Owns more than 50 CDs," or "Knows how to make a great martini," and told to find someone of the opposite sex to correspond with it.

To some, the icebreaker was more like a competition than a chance for introductions. One man barely stopped to get a woman's name before declaring his card full.

But for the most part, the icebreaker was successful. And as the night wore on, clusters of men and women were heard laughing above the music and couples paired off into corners to talk.

As for Petr, he may not have found the woman of his dreams, but he had a good time trying. What began as an awkward night in a room full of strangers ended with him spending the evening engaged in conversation with a woman he could see forming a friendship with. This may have been his first singles mixer, but it won't be his last.