Is the Titanic technically an icebreaker?

April 21, 2016 By Rick Nash

Before online dating, ice breakers were relatively impersonal. Online dating has given us the benefit of the profile. The idea that we know a little bit about the person before actually engaging conversation.

In late February I decided to openly display my HCV status on my dating profile.

Before doing so I took to Reddit for some critiques. Unsurprisingly the voices of strangers echoed the voices of my friends in the leeriness of posting that I have Hep C.

I am still petrified that they might be right.

At first I was surprised to see my interactions double, likes increased. I assumed it was in response to my honesty about my status.

In the messages or in conversation, it was easy to see when they read/understood that I have HCV. The tone changed, questions changed, and I became more of a curio than a person.

This doesn't always happen, but when it does it's nauseating. listing HCV did not affect my ability to get new numbers. It did lead to longer interactions and more time before the initial first date though. My profile will only be up for a few more months as the dating process is (emotionally at the least) exhausting. Listing my status means I tell every person I date regardless of how far it goes, and that's a lot of elevator speeches about HCV.

To those of you without HCV or similar Invisible Disability (ID) stigma, it is rare to see the reaction like this. To wear ID stigma so openly when you don't need to, doesn't generally happen.

I came across critics who's response to my posting of my HCV status, was "duh, What did you expect?" Or advising against listing it as a whole.

HCV is kinda odd in this experience. In many ways it shares the same intimacy fears that HIV can have. But HCV's side effects don't really kick into gear until sometimes decades after infection.

One of the reasons I'm doing this is because I want my generation to see how prevalent this disease is.

I want people with Hep C to know they're not alone.

I want it to be uncomfortable, that’s how we change and grow.

And to know that after two months of listing my status, my response rates haven’t changed… makes me smile a lil bit.

Numbers and Birds for scale:

To give you a better picture of just how frequently I mean, in a collective 4 years (in between relationships from 22-30) I’ve gone on around 200 first dates, and around 40 second-fifth dates. Normally within a month period (between all apps) 4-5 new numbers.

The thing is, I use the app differently because I’m not looking for NSA or casual sex and I’m not looking to settle down. I’m looking to meet new people, if we click like we should then that typically translates to friendship. Every so often there’s some passionate romantic blur.

There is something beautiful in finite experiences.

Breaking the Ice with HCV isn’t all that advisable unless you’re very comfortable with yourself and your knowledge of it. Icebergs can still sink a ship.

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http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/blog/titanic-technically-icebreaker