

meBuddy

By Bob Pladek

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The dangers inherent in online conversations are legion, and need not be regurgitated here, especially since I'd probably forget a couple of major ones. Suffice it to remind you that its tough enough finding the right person when you can actually meet them, smell them, and see whether they pick up the check. If you can't do even those few things, you haven't got enough information to ATTEMPT an error in judgement.

Yet, even single people spend hours and hours creating eFriendships, eLovers, eEnemies eVen, ignoring the probability of the reality being very different. We persist because when it comes right down to it, damn, we're chatty people. The quietest of us, in public, becomes a veritable FedEx spokesman, online. Maybe its the illusion of making contact... but maybe its just the desire to YAK and have somebody listen.

Nobody wants to listen. Ever. Everybody wants center stage. Always. Online chatrooms are like going into a crowded theatre and yelling "Tire!" You don't want to alarm anyone, but you're willing to employ any cheap linguistic or vaudevillian device to get the attention you so sorely want and so richly don't deserve. You want to hear/read responses like "Oh my... that is very, very deep."; "You're right. You're absolutely right. I felt that, but I could never put it into words"; " God, you have a way with words"; " STOP! I'm DYING LAUGHING HERE!!! YOU'RE the FUNNIEST PERSON I'VE EVER KNOWN." One of these star_eyed admirers would do: but you want a bevy, mostly members of the opposite sex, but enough of the same sex to be considered jealous disciples. People that secretly read/listen to you just to try to figure out how you got so good.

Problem is, you got a bunch of problems. First... you're not that deep, that eloquent, or anywheres near that funny. But let's assume there are other people out there less deep, less eloquent, and even less funny. You STILL don't look a lot like what you claim to look like, or that "thank_god_for_software_editing" photo you've posted. So if its your goal to be impressive in body as well as spirit, you know you gotta stay out of sight. Unfortunately, somewhere along the line you're going to discover one or more of your devotees lives within diner distance, and your excuses about leprosy, paraplegia, kid soccer games, cat illnesses, and various inlaws dropping dead all around you are going to either get exhausted, or lead to serious myth debunking. You'll have to show up, or shut up. Won't you?

No. You won't. 'Cuz you got meBuddy.

meBuddy provides you with your own personal online venerates, the "Numbnets." You are everything you want them to think you are, including handsome, in a rugged, big_nosed, beer_bellied, bald, bespeckled, BO kind of way. meBuddy can be adjusted to be easy on you, or tougher: to focus more on your syntax or your wild and crazy sense of humor. Or both. Or everything. You can make your Numbnets very smart, or even dumber than you. You'll never have to say a stupid thing again, so long as meBuddy is properly configured. The basic meBuddy comes with only two persona, but additional Numbnets are available at a modest price. Probably get 3 for the price of 5, or something. Each Numbnet is individually programmable. This fairly sophisticated piece of software will take a bit to run, so it has the added advantage of emulating real_time internet_time delay. And unlike what Furbies promised but didn't deliver on, Numbnets can learn HELPFUL things as you go along, like being careful NOT to mention that you repeated the same joke 5 minutes before. Or to say something supportive like "Oh, Bill, I'm SO glad you told that joke again!!! One more time, pleeeeeease!!! ...and please, PLEASE send me another picture. I wore the first 10 out."

This, my friends, is The Universal Baseball Association, Inc., J. Henry Waugh, PROP. for the new millennium. Or at least the next 18 months. For once, you can be yourself and actually make new friends. All you have to do is buy them.

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