

Shrekking trend: why GaiGai says singles should look beyond looks

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The Shrekking trend has people asking whether dating someone seen as less conventionally attractive earns you more appreciation. Singapore matchmaking service GaiGai says the premise misses the point, and wants singles to look at compatibility first.


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THE COMPREHENSIVE DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Image: GaiGai

What is Shrekking?

Shrekking describes dating someone perceived as less conventionally attractive in the hope of receiving greater appreciation or better treatment. The idea has spread through viral social media talk about romantic â??leaguesâ?•, and it has sparked debate on dating standards and relationship expectations.

Attraction is personal, not a competition

GaiGai, a Singapore-based offline dating and personalised matchmaking service, argues that physical attraction is not an objective measure of someoneâ??s worth as a partner. What one person finds attractive differs from the next, so a fixed attractiveness â??leagueâ?• is subjective at best.

It also challenges the assumption behind Shrekking: that a partner seen as less attractive will automatically be more committed or emotionally secure. â??Choosing a partner because you believe you have an advantage over them can distract you from the qualities that actually make a relationship work,â?• said Alex Tam, Group CEO of Paktor and GaiGai.

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Four principles for a healthier approach to dating

- Know what matters to you. Separate the qualities that genuinely add to your happiness from expectations shaped by social media or outside validation.
- Prioritise mutual respect. Both partners should feel valued, rather than counting who holds more leverage.
- Stay open to meaningful connections. Let people show their personality, values and intentions before judging by appearance alone.
- Seek mutual connection, not obsession. A partner who shares your values and returns your feelings matters more than one you expect to be more devoted.

GaiGai adds that singles need not ignore physical attraction. Weigh it alongside communication styles, emotional availability, lifestyle preferences and long-term intentions.

Our take: compatibility beats checklists

For Singapore singles juggling long work hours and dating apps, a rigid checklist can narrow the pool of compatible people faster than it helps. A viral label is an entertaining talking point, but it says little about whether two people suit each other. If you are also looking for ways to unwind between dates, see our things to do this weekend in Singapore, or our guide to managing stress and finding free support. For a lighter read, check out how LANY fans turned out at The Kallang.

About GaiGai

GaiGai says it takes time to understand membersâ?? preferences, personalities and relationship goals before making introductions, and reports arranging more than 18,000 dates. Singles interested in a consultation can visit letsgaigai.com.

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