

11 Good Reasons to Keep Your Relationship Status Secret



By Kelly Rouba for Galttime.com

You know that euphoria that fills you up when you first start dating someone? That fun and excitement of entering a new relationship that makes us want to shout it from the rooftops for all to hear? That feels really good. But sometimes, sharing the news widely isn't a good idea. Sometimes, we should keep the rooftop-shouting only within range of our closest friends – at least for a little while – before we broadcast it online.

Carlee, of New Jersey, kept her relationships status quiet when she got back together with her ex-boyfriend.

“When I broke up with him, I hid my relationship status so I didn’t have to deal with people asking me what happened. I kept it hidden even after we got back together a couple months later, until I was sure things were okay between us and so people wouldn’t interfere in our relationship,” Carlee said. “Now that we’ve been back together for a while, it’s unhidden again.”

April, of New Jersey, understands Carlee’s quietness, which is why her Facebook status always indicates she is in a relationship even though she is currently single.

“I also want to avoid people asking questions like ‘what happened’ or just knowing information I may still be sensitive to,” April says, adding that she also keeps that status for safety purposes. “I don’t want unnecessary people sending me inappropriate messages or text messages.”

Relationship expert and dating consultant Stacie Ikka says displaying your true relationship status on Facebook isn’t necessarily a bad idea, but there are instances when it’s smart to hold off on announcing who you are dating or if you are involved with someone at all to your online circles.

Here’s when she says it’s best to keep your relationship status quiet.

1. IF YOU GET A LOT OF UNWANTED POKES, WINKS AND INVITATIONS

Some people see a “single” status on Facebook as an invitation to be in contact, overtly flirt or even harass someone. If you are getting invitations that make you uncomfortable, consider leaving your relationship status blank.

“If you are single and not necessarily looking to use Facebook as a dating site and simply selected that status because you thought that all fields in your profile needed to be filled out—BEWARE!,” Ikka says. Sometimes other singles, and even people who are in relationships already, prey on women who

announce that they are on the market.

2. IF YOU DON'T WANT OTHER PEOPLE TO INTERFERE IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP OR ROMANTIC BUSINESS

"For a relationship to develop between two people in a way that leads to a healthy future, it is often best that the details and status of that relationship be contained among the two people involved—and the select few they choose to confide in," Ikka advises.

This also goes for those who are entering a new relationship.

"Moving from a casual to a committed relationship can often be tricky," Ikka offers, "and opening up that relationship to an online audience, which is presumably broader than one's immediate social circle, opens the relationship up to commentary—some of which could be damaging, especially if the relationship is new."

Consider keeping your status quiet for a certain amount of time or until the two of you feel secure in this new arrangement. Like Carlee, you may also want to consider updating your status at that point without sharing it widely through your newsfeed.

3. IF YOU WANT TO EASE SOME OF THE PRESSURE

"If the couple has not discussed how or whether they are going to 'announce' their union on Facebook, and one party goes ahead and changes their status, it might make the other party feel uncomfortable or put unnecessary pressure on that person," Ikka says. "Even if it was a joint decision, it exposes the relationship to scrutiny, observations, and involvement that is not necessarily appropriate during the early phases of a relationship, where the focus should really be on whether attraction, compatibility, common values, and shared interests will survive the long-term."

4. IF YOU WANT AN EASIER BREAKUP

Splitting up can be more complicated if a thousand of your Facebook friends can see your status.

“Breakups are painful in the best of times,” reminds Ikka. And changing a status from “in a relationship” to “single” or even “it’s complicated” can draw attention right in the middle of that pain. “Even if that attention comes in the form of support and sympathy to an already difficult, personal, and emotional experience.”

5. IF YOU’RE FED UP WITH JUDGMENT ABOUT YOUR LOVE LIFE

Facebook is not your diary or a private conversation with your best friend. It’s a loudspeaker to every one of your coworkers, high-school frenemies, mom’s friends, and siblings you are connected with on the social network. Not all of them may get the situation, or you.

“If you are the type of Facebook user who updates your relationship status on a regular basis and that status is changing with a frequency that others may deem abnormal, you are opening yourself up to judgment, ridicule, and the potential for losing credibility amongst your Facebook network,” Ikka says bluntly. “So, if you are sensitive to other people’s opinions, think carefully before changing your relationship status and ask yourself why you’re doing it.”

6. IF YOU OFTEN GIVE IN TO PEER PRESSURE

In many relationships, Ikka says, one person is more guarded about their personal life and details. The other person may be more forthcoming and therefore have no issue with listing their relationship status online.

“It’s not uncommon in these circumstances for the more private individual to feel pressure to change their status for fear of not appearing loyal or committed to their partner or the

relationship,” Ikka notes.

Resentment can build, she says, and the private person may let that spill over into real-life interactions with their partner.

“It’s usually a sign of bigger problems,” Ikka adds.

Avoid this friction by discussing what works best for both of you, even if that means the more open person lists a status and is understanding if the more private partner doesn’t.

7. IF YOU DON’T WANT TO HEAR FROM A NOSY OR AGGRESSIVE EX

Want to nix any opportunity for your ex to get back in touch, troll around your profile or hunt for more information about your new relationship? Then consider keeping your status set at a lower volume.

Showing you’re in a relationship can be an invitation for exes to peer into your current love life, Ikka says.

“Although nosy exes always have their offline ways of determining your relationship status, putting your relationship status on Facebook – especially if you are naming the person you’re in the relationship with – only encourages ‘stalker’-type behavior and may prompt them to attempt to sabotage or disrupt your new relationship,” she warns.

Those who are in the process of divorcing may also want to avoid displaying their relationship status, especially if they’ve begun seeing someone new.

“If you are in the process of a separation or a divorce, it might not be a good idea to draw attention to your relationship status for the benefit of any children involved, especially if they are on Facebook, and to protect yourself throughout any court proceedings.”

8. IF YOU HAVE OVERBEARING PARENTS

Have parents who are anxious for you to get married or just be partnered up?

Stating that you are in a relationship could give your “parents false hope, further fodder for offline marital pressure, and render them an even greater annoyance as well as promote unnecessary involvement in your personal life,” Ikka warns. Keep in mind, “even if they’re not on Facebook, they will find out...and FAST!”

9. IF YOU’RE NOT UP FOR EXPLAINING COMPLICATED CIRCUMSTANCES

Although it might be tempting to select the “it’s complicated” relationship status, Ikka advises against it.

Why?

“You are professing to the Facebook world that you are in relationship that is not completely fulfilling you and that you are settling,” she explains. “We all know you deserve better than that – even if you don’t believe it yourself. Again, you are opening yourself up to unnecessary judgment, loss of credibility, perhaps pity, and vulnerability. All relationships have their complications, but if you’re with the right partner, then your status would simply read ‘In a Relationship.’ Anyone who’s ever been in a relationship understands that things are not always perfect and, at times, may be complicated.”

10. IF YOU DON’T THINK OPEN RELATIONSHIPS HAVE TO BE AN OPEN BOOK

“While in this day and age, society may be more accepting of alternate forms of relationships, like polyamorous, bisexual, transgender, homosexual, etc., this is another category that leaves you wide open to judgment,” Ikka cautions. “People will naturally jump to conclusions. For example, they may believe you have commitment issues or that you are promiscuous or whatever else this status conjures up in their imaginative

minds.”

You don't have to be responsible for other people's concerns, criticisms or even their assumptions. But if you have a tendency to get wrapped up in them or if you would rather put your kind of relationship up for public scrutiny, then consider educating and informing others about in ways outside of social networks.

11. IF YOUR PROFILE IS FOR PROFESSIONAL USE

Facebook, for many folks, is a professional networking tool, an avenue for job-hunting or a way to stay in touch with clients. Many companies also use Facebook to check up on their employees or to survey someone's social presence before a job interview.

“If you are using Facebook for business purposes or suspect your personal information could get back to your employers or associates, then you may want to keep your page purely professional, this includes keeping your relationship status hidden,” Ikka advises.