

# Being too intelligent and easygoing may harm chances of finding love

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Intelligence and easygoingness are commonly regarded as attractive qualities in a prospective mate, but is there a point at which elevated levels of these characteristics start to become less attractive?

The answer appears to be yes, according to new research carried out by The University of Western Australia.

The lead author of the paper, UWA senior lecturer Gilles Gignac, surveyed 383 young adults from Perth, Western Australia about a series of characteristics that people typically seek in a partner.

The four primary characteristics were intelligence, easygoingness, kindness, and physical attractiveness. The subjects were asked to specify how attracted they would be to a potential partner who was more intelligent than 1 percent, 10 percent, 25 percent, 50 percent, 75 percent, 90 percent, and then 99 percent of the population. They were then asked the same question across the other personality traits.

The study, published in the *British Journal of Psychology*, found that there was a statistically significant reduction in rated attractiveness for a hypothetical person at the 99th percentile for both intelligence and easygoingness, compared to the 90th percentile.

Mr Gignac said although kindness and intelligence were commonly ranked as two of the most important characteristics for a [romantic partner](#), there could be too much of a good thing when it came to these sought-after partner characteristics.

"Previously published research suggests that elevated levels of intelligence may incite feelings of insecurity in some people, which may reduce desirability," he said.

"Correspondingly, exceptional easygoingness may be viewed as an indication of a lack of confidence or ambition."

Kindness and [physical attractiveness](#) plateaued at the 90th percentile.

"So, on average, there doesn't appear to be any gain to being exceptionally kind or exceptionally physically attractive in the context of attracting a romantic partner," Mr Gignac said.

The study also examined why some people were much more attracted to intelligence in a romantic partner than others and found that neither how intelligent a person is, nor how intelligent they think they are, could predict the degree to which they found intelligence attractive in a prospective [partner](#).

"This result is surprising, considering there is assortative mating for intelligence that indicates a correlation between people in a romantic relationship having similar [intelligence](#) levels."

**More information:** Exceptional intelligence and

easygoingness may hurt your prospects: Threshold effects for rated mate characteristics, *British Journal of Psychology*. [doi.org/10.1111/bjop.12342](https://doi.org/10.1111/bjop.12342)

Provided by University of Western Australia

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