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Entering the dating game can be fun, confusing, inspiring, stressful, fulfilling, and heart breaking. There is no other aspect of life that is full of such contradictory aspects than human courtship. However, the key to making it a more positive than negative experience is in understanding personal desires concerning the dating experience. Some people wish to play the field, or date many people, while others seek an exclusive relationship and soul mate. The decision about whether to play the field or to date one person exclusively is found by self-analyzing personal needs concerning making choices, responsibilities, and gaining knowledge of the self and others when it comes to dating.   
Personal feelings about choices can influence a decision to either play the field or seek an exclusive relationship. A person who is brand-new to the dating scene may enjoy finding out that he is attractive to a variety of people and decide that casually dating different people is fun and fulfilling. He may not be ready to pick just one of these people to see, and enjoy the different choices, personalities, and variety in dating. The down side is that he may experience a lot of bad dates with people he realizes he does not like. On the other hand, a person may fall head over heels in love with someone and decide that he wants to see that person and no one else. Meeting someone it is easy to imagine spending the rest of a life with is a wonderful discovery. However, if the feelings are not mutual, he may find himself back to square one of the dating game again. When this happens, there is little to distinguish the experience of a person playing the field and one who would rather date exclusively.   
Desires concerning responsibility are another factor influencing a decision to play the field or date exclusively. Playing the field offers freedom to date people without answering to questions about whom one is seeing, texting, and other questions that people in exclusive relationships may ask each other. The down side is that there can be some very lonely nights when friends with exclusive boyfriends and girlfriends are busy with their significant others and no one else seems interested in a date. People in an exclusive relationship may enjoy the sense of responsibility to their significant others, finding joy in looking forward to seeing a particular person again, self-pride in being a good boyfriend or girlfriend, and always having someone to do something with. The down side of exclusive relationships is when problems occur, such as possessiveness and jealousy. The responsibilities for playing the field and dating exclusively are very different.   
A person can gain self-knowledge through both playing the field and dating exclusively. While casually dating many people, it is easy to gain a lot of knowledge about the self and others because of the wide range of experiences a person has through talking to and being with many different individuals. In exclusive dating, a person will gain a different kind of knowledge about him or herself, and a deeper understanding of another individual. Casual knowledge of many people and deep understanding of others are both valuable and enriching experiences.   
Based on personal desires or needs concerning making choices, having responsibilities, and gaining knowledge of the self and others, a person can decide whether he or she wants to play the field and date casually or become involved in an exclusive relationship. Both playing the field and dating exclusively have different rewards and down sides. By understanding personal needs and values, people can decide which type of dating is best for him or herself. Understanding personal needs and values help to keep things more on the enjoyable side and prevent misunderstandings with others. There is value in both dating casually and exclusive relationships; the key is to understand the self, and therefore to enjoy living life without regrets and being content with the choice made in dating style.