Dear Alice,

My boyfriend and I have been seeing each other for a year and a half now. He makes me happy most of the time that we are together! We share almost everything in common. Except one thing, SEX! We have discussed the subject numerous times. He tells me that he loves me very deeply and I tell him that that makes me the happiest woman in the world. However, he says that we should wait until we are married. The problem is that I want to show him my feelings by giving up my virginity to him now, the one true love of my life, and he still says that we should wait.

My question is this: Is he cheating on me, or does he really love me enough to wait until the night of our wedding so that it will be more special?

Sincerely, Totally Confused

Answer

Dear Totally Confused,

Congratulations on finding that special someone. To address your concerns, only your boyfriend truly knows the answers to your questions. However, his not wanting to have sex before marriage isn’t necessarily an indication that he’s cheating on you. Everyone holds different values when it comes to sex, so while you may want to have sex now, he may genuinely hold waiting until marriage in high esteem. You may find it helpful to think about both of your values when it comes to sex, where your doubts originated, and what steps can be taken to end up on the same page. You may also want to consider how you’ll proceed if you can’t find common ground.
Trust is crucial in most relationships. Has he provided you any reasons not to trust him? While you may worry that he’s cheating because he doesn’t want to have sex until marriage, has he done anything to indicate to you that he’s cheating? It can be helpful to ask yourself: Do you genuinely trust him? If you do, what is leading to your concerns that he’s cheating? If you don’t, what leads you to not trust him? Further, do you want to be with someone you don’t trust? Additionally, does a potential lack of trust stem from the idea that if he doesn’t want to have sex with you, he must be cheating? If you find that to be the case, you may find it helpful to evaluate your goals and values together.

A critical aspect of a healthy relationship is having and sharing common goals and values. Have you both discussed with each other your values related to sex? Sharing what the experience means to you both may help you find some understanding of each other’s perspectives. It can also be helpful to understand how you’re both defining sex. If you haven’t yet discussed it, you may want to talk about behaviors you’re both including when thinking about sex. You can think about what other activities you could do together that meet both of your needs, sexually and otherwise.

Ultimately, while you both may love each other, it’s key to think about whether you’re both satisfied in the relationship and if your needs are being met. If you find that you aren’t able to meet each other’s needs, you may want to think about what the future of your relationship looks like and whether you want to continue being in it.

Here’s to a fulfilling sex life for you both, now and in the future!

Alice!
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