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Stereotypical lesbian? ^[1]

Dear Alice,

I've recently told a couple of my friends that I'm a lesbian, and they responded with a comment like, they already knew, or that they weren't surprised. I guess I have two questions. First off, is there a stereotype for lesbians, and if it's that obvious that I'm gay and a lot of my friends know, then how come I can't find a girl that I can share pleasurable experiences with?

Answer

Dear Reader,

Congrats on coming out to your friends — that takes a lot of guts! It's also a very important first step to finding, in your words, "a girl you can share pleasurable experiences with." More on finding the girl later... First, let's tackle your question about stereotypes.

The best way to figure out how your friends "already knew" you were a lesbian is to, well, ask them. Just because your friends had a notion that you were gay, doesn't necessarily mean that other people will make that same assumption. Yes, there are stereotypes about lesbian women and it's possible that your friends were assuming they knew your sexuality based on characteristics they've come to "know" as representative of *all* lesbians. Maybe you fit that mold in some ways. The problem with stereotypes is, of course, that not everyone fits; some women may, but many more do not. Another possibility: perhaps your friends "knew" because of other clues you unknowingly gave them. Is it possible you were more open about your sexuality than you realize? So, maybe your next step is to ask them. Why weren't they surprised? See what they say — it may offer a little more insight.

Now, on to your second question — how can you find a girl? This is a common question for recently out women and it brings up another important point: visibility. Perhaps other lesbian women will see you and, like your friends, suspect that you are into the ladies. And, if they are interested, maybe, just maybe, they'll ask you out or make their interest known. But, if you don't fit into their (yes, even lesbian women will internalize stereotypes) perception of what a lesbian looks or acts like, you could be mistaken as straight and a potentially interested party may not ask you out. This happens. You can wait around for a woman to approach you or you could take the leap of asking someone out yourself. If this seems like too much, too soon, another option is

to meet other women who also identify as lesbian. For example, on many college campuses, there are various gay and lesbian organizations or groups that may host events, or other social activities. Check out [Meet other young lesbians](#) [2] from the *Go Ask Alice!* archives for lots of ideas.

Regardless of what your friends (or anyone else) think they know about you, the bottom line is that YOU get to define, present, and share your sexuality as you see fit. As for finding a girl to share your time with, expanding your lesbian social circle might be the first step to increasing your lady luck.

Alice!

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