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Need advice about sex or relationships? I'm here to help. If you have a question, send it to casualsex@tribune.com. I'd love to hear what's on your mind.

A reader has been dating a woman with two kids for about one year. He said the four of them go to dinner about twice a week. He's wondering who should be paying when they dine out or bring in takeout, even if it's fast food.

A year is a crazy long time for that tiny subject called finances to be ignored. It sounds like the real question is about your financial responsibility to those kids. It's an accepted tenet that all kids who are invited to the dinner table, indeed, get to eat. If you're picking up grub for the family, you're picking it up for four. No exceptions. If you're feeling overwhelmed with the additional financial responsibility now, get your issue resolved. The benefit of supersizing is huge, but you have to be ready to make the investment.

A reader stopped me on Michigan Avenue to talk about her mother in-law, who has been constantly meddling and showing disapproval, despite the reader's attempts to gain acceptance by sharing personal information with her husband's mother. What to do when the in-law continues to simply find faults?

Stop bending over and you won't get spanked.

A reader lamented that when she brings up marriage with her boyfriend of five years, he freaks. The guy has admitted that although he thinks he'll wind up with her, he's still curious about what's up in the land of singles. She loves him but is wondering if she should let him get the single world out of his system.

He's not ready. Cut the rope; he's done all but given you the scissors. Five years is enough time for him to make that commitment. Take the hint. It's no reflection on you; it's his deal. If the two of you have that tight of a bond, he'll be back. If not, you can't lose what you never had. So take the time for yourself. Free yourself up to meet another fine Chicago man who shares your timing as well as your emotion. It may seem difficult. But it's much less of a price to pay than marrying someone with an uncertain commitment, not to mention the attorneys fees.

A 19-year-old reader said she's been in a relationship with a guy and only recently learned that not only did he cheat on her with several other women but that he also has three babies with two different mothers.

Kick this boy to the playground and find yourself a man. He doesn't even have enough self-respect to own up to his responsibilities. And that is not OK. What kind of person neglects to acknowledge his children? For nookie or not, it's selfish and sad. Do you

really need a thug like that in your life? There are men out there who are gracious and kind. They show their care through affection for you, not your entire neighborhood. The only thing this sad cat has going for him is a high propensity to make babies and your beautiful stiletto kicking him out of your life.

A reader wrote in to lament that after two years with her boyfriend--and a 1-year-old baby--their sex life is struggling. She's not satisfied with the "wham, bam, thank ya lady" that she said has become typical.

Hire a trusted baby-sitter. Then, make the time to flirt. Get yourselves out of the house and into each other--wherever, however and in whatever way you please. Shake it up. Blow off formal dining and find a hotel room. Order room service. Lock the door and make the rest of the night about satisfying each other's appetites. Whether or not he gets dinner, make dessert on you.

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