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Title: You Ask, Laura Answers

Author: Laura Baron

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Thanks for your overwhelming response to this column. Here are my answers to some of your letters. If you have a question, send it, signed or unsigned, to casualsex@tribune.com. I'd love to hear from you.

Dear Laura,

I am a 24-year-old gay male. I've had a number of serious long-term relationships. I've been dating my boyfriend now for a couple of months. We've fallen head over heels for each other. He's never been in a relationship with a man before and has only been with one other man sexually. Since homosexuality is so new to my boyfriend, I fear he'll want to experience more men. Do I continue putting my all into the relationship, if he's likely to leave me anyway?

Dear Mr. Nervous,

You might get left. And you might get hurt. That's the risk of any relationship. But today you're in love. So embrace that. Just make sure you stay on the same page. Protect yourself by communicating, not running away. Talk specifically about the parameters of your relationship, especially since the two of you are at different stages. In gay years (time spent "out" and in the community), you are years apart. It's a process; remember your own. Before your Partner can truly go long term, he needs to own his identity in and out of the bedroom. There is nothing you can do but support him. While he may be young in experience, he can still be rich in emotion. And when is young and rich ever a bad thing, really?

Dear Laura,

I've been having trouble getting girls that I have an interest in to have mutual feelings toward me. I think that I'm a pretty good-looking guy and have a lot going for myself. Personally, I think that most girls look at me as the "nice" guy of the group and never see me as more than a friend.

Dear Mr. Nice,

The reason nice guys finish last is because they let everyone else take a turn before them. Reverse that and get in the game. You're already a good guy, no need to prove it. Women like strength, so find yours. Get bold. Have an opinion and take a stance. The more fearlessly you approach her, the more in control you'll seem. Assert the more interesting and textured part of you. Direct conversations toward your common interests. Bring something unique to the party: You.

Dear Laura,

I've been dating this guy that I really like. The only thing is, he only comes around at night and doesn't take me anywhere. It's about to be a year, and I really don't know if he's using me or not. I don't know what to do because I don't want to get hurt. Any suggestions?

Dear Ms. Discounted,

Don't allow yourself to be some guy's late- night value meal. You deserve more. When you feel like you're getting used, you are. It's because you're not fulfilled. So change that and stand up for yourself. By going along with the program, you're green-lighting this behavior. Demand better. There are plenty of good men out there. And as with everyone in your life, you need to school him on how to treat you. Respect yourself, and he will have no choice but to follow.

Dear Laura,

I am a married man. I don't want a lecture, and I don't want to hear that what I will be doing is wrong. What I want to know is: Are there any kind of Web sites to find women looking for discreet short-term relationships?

Dear Mr. Under Covers,

Of course. Please try www.BeAManAndGoHomeToYourWife.com, and have a nice day.

Author: Laura Baron. REDEYE SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR LAURA BARON IS A RELATIONSHIP COACH BASED IN CHICAGO. SHE CAN BE SEEN THURSDAYS ON "WGN MORNING NEWS."

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