Dear Alice,

How do I dump my boyfriend? I have been going out with a guy for over a month and it's just not working, but the problem is I don't know how to dump him.

Please help,

Emergency in Edinburgh

Answer

Dear Emergency in Edinburgh,

Good call: it's best to recognize and deal with your relationship problems now, rather than letting them linger for too long when they can become harder to handle. Of interest, however, is your choice of words. Do you want to:

a) "Dump" your boyfriend like yesterday's rubbish -- with no explanation?
b) Trash him soap opera style with a phony blackmail plot involving Madonna and the Scottish Prime Minister?
c) End the relationship cordially with minimal reasoning?

In a situation such as this, it is important to remember that kindness and respect are what count. Of course, you have options. You can let him know over the phone, through an e-mail, or you can see him one last time. If you choose to meet, a quiet place (rather than a restaurant or party) shows caring, and allows for fewer interruptions or opportunities for humiliation (or even a dramatic scene). In the end, you simply have to tell him what you mentioned in your question: "It's just not working." You don't have to blame him, and you don't have to justify yourself. Keep your message short and clear.

You may be doing him a favor by breaking up ? that is, saving him from wasting any more time or energy in an unsatisfying relationship that just ain't gonna work. Thinking on the bright side, you are even giving him the possibility of meeting someone new. And as you give him this option, you also give it to yourself. After the break up, it might be helpful to spend some time with friends, whether old or new. Perhaps you'd like to join a new club or take a fun class.

Seeking out advice or support during a break up can also help you build your confidence and help you clear your mind. You may find it helpful to speak with a trusted friend, family
member, or counselor during this time.

Wishing you the best,

Alice!

Category:
Relationships [2]
Relationship Stuff [3]
Moving On [4]

Related questions

Miss ex-girlfriend, or is it something else? [5]
Should I stay or should I go? [6]
How soon can I date after a break-up? [7]
Ex-girlfriend dumps me for my best friend [8]
We love each other, but we fight all the time... [9]

Resources

Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) (Morningside) [10]
Mental Health Service (CUMC) [11]
Published date:
Dec 03, 1998
Last reviewed on:
Jul 19, 2015

Go Ask Alice! is not an emergency or instant response service.

If you are in an urgent situation, please visit our Emergency page to view a list of 24 hour support services and hotlines.

Source URL: http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/breaking-can-be-hard-do

Links