Dear Alice,

I'm an eighteen-year-old male. I'm beginning to become good friends with a guy, but I'm also feeling that I want something beyond friendship with him. I know that I'm bi, but I have never expressed it to anyone. I guess I fear the social implications of it, but then again I am a very liberal person. I can't stop thinking of this guy, not necessarily in a sexual way, but in a "relationship" context. He isn't dating anyone, but I have no idea if he is bi/gay or straight (he hasn't made any announcements, but he seems to be "playing it straight" as I am).

What should I do? I don't want to destroy a potential friendship by approaching him about this. But, I've never felt this way about anyone (male or female) and I don't want to let a potential opportunity slip by and be miserable. I'd also rather keep my sexuality a private thing, but I do think I can trust him.

Help!

Puzzled

Answer

Dear Puzzled,

This is a tough one. Often it's hard to predict how the people in our lives will react to who we really are when we tell them or just by living our lives. Would it be possible for you to let him know of your relationship and sexual interests -- not for him, but in general, when you're having one of those deep, late-night conversations? If he sees that you're comfortable talking about yourself with him, and that you trust him, maybe he'll follow your lead and come out as bi, gay, straight, a good friend no matter who you are...or attracted to you. Since you're just becoming close with your friend, perhaps a little more time in the getting-to-know-you phase of your relationship, before you raise the topic of "something beyond friendship," will make it easier for both of you to feel comfortable with such a dialogue.

Without question, getting to that point can be made a lot easier with every step that you take toward becoming more comfortable with your feelings about who attracts you. There are a ton of resources, books, and blog posts on the subject. A simple Internet search or trip to the bookstore should provide you with lots of options! Check out the Go Ask Alice! related Q&As below, too.
If your friend never seems quite ready for your "news," isn't interested in you as more than friends, or is not comfortable with your friendship once you've been honest with him, then the "opportunity" for involvement with him wasn't really there. Will you be miserable? Maybe, but as you meet more people around town who warm your hard drive, and who are willing to let you do the same for them, you'll be presented with even more exciting and fulfilling opportunities.

Alice!
Category:
Relationships
Friends or Lovers

Related questions
Am I gay?... The next generation
Bi, gay, pansexual: What do I call myself?
Asking someone about their sexuality
Told him my true feelings and now it's truly awkward
Asking for a kiss goodnight?

Published date:
Jan 14, 2000
Last reviewed on:
Sep 05, 2014

Source URL: http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/should-i-tell-my-friend-im-attracted-him#comment-0

Links