Does my bisexual friend "like" me? [1]

Dear Alice,

My friend told me she was bisexual. We really aren't great friends, so I wondered why she told me. The next day at school, I asked why she told me rather than anyone else. When she started to answer, she stuttered (something I've never heard her do) and rambled on about how she thought she could trust me. I never really thought I had a reputation for being trustworthy. So now I'm worried, because she didn't tell anyone else (not even her parents!). Does this mean she likes me? She seemed VERY uncomfortable answering me. I'm scared that she likes me. She didn't tell her best friend, but she told me! Does this mean anything?

Answer

Dear Reader,

For one reason or another, your friend has decided she wanted to come out and tell you about her sexual orientation. Maybe she trusts you; maybe she is attracted to you; maybe she feels comfortable or safe with you, or sees you as open-minded. Coming out as a gay or bisexual person in a homophobic, heteronormative society is challenging. Perhaps she wasn't as fearful of potential ramifications, because you two are not so close. It's possible that she stuttered and rambled because she was thrown off guard or unprepared for your question.

Rather than focusing on her motives, consider thinking about your own feelings. How do you feel about bisexuality? How much do you know about bisexuality, and what sort of opinions do you have about your friends or family members who are or who might be bisexual? Similarly, what if your friend were trying to find a way to tell you that she was attracted to you ? what would that mean to you? You say that you're scared she may "like" you. What if she did? How would you feel?

Would you be similarly scared if a man were interested in you, even if you were not interested in him? Would you be scared if one of your male friends were attracted to you? Just because someone is interested in you doesn't mean that you have to do anything. You would probably handle it with a simple response, maybe, something like, "No, thank you," or "I appreciate your telling me, I feel honored, but I feel differently."

Once you have a better idea about your own feelings, you can decide what you want to do. Maybe you'll want to talk with your friend about your feelings. Maybe you'll decide you don't need to speak with her right now, or even at all.

Ask yourself if you want to learn more about her sexuality. Or, do you want to close the door?
If you choose to speak with your friend, keep in mind that perhaps with a genuine, caring conversation, your relationship may deepen. Maybe not to that of lovers, but in terms of closeness or intimacy. Your next or possible next steps depend upon the kind of relationship you want to have with her.

Alice!

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