Come out to girlfriend about boy-crush? [1]

Dear Alice,

I am a bisexual guy, and I have a problem. I have a girlfriend and a major crush on my best male friend, each of them are straight. I have already told my friend about my sexuality and my crush on him, but I am afraid to tell my girlfriend. She is an understanding person, but I think she might think I went bi because of her. How should I tell her? I am pretty paranoid about this, and I haven't even told my parents about my sexuality. Please help me.

Sincerely,
Paranoid bi-boy

Answer

Dear Paranoid bi-boy,

Sounds like you're in a tough spot! It can be scary, but also exciting, to explore sexuality and relationships. You seem to feel confident about who you are, hopefully that will help people around you feel comfortable too. It's great that you were able to have an open conversation with your male friend. Hopefully having one challenging conversation under your belt will give you courage for the next ones.

It can be confusing and hurtful to have a partner come out to you as gay or bi. In breaking the news, it might help your girlfriend to hear the things you value about your relationship with her. Also, you may want to reassure her about why you are attracted to her. (Assuming you are. If you're not, it probably makes sense to be honest with her sooner rather than later.)

Do you want to stay with her? If you do decide to stay together, she will probably need time to adjust to the news of your bisexuality. You've probably spent quite a bit of time thinking about it; she'll probably need some time too. Do you two want a monogamous relationship? It's natural to have crushes on other people, but if you and your girlfriend want to be monogamous, it would probably help your relationship to have clear boundaries with each other about how you act on a crush.

There are lots of stereotypes and myths about bisexuality. That a certain partner would "make someone go bisexual" is one of them. Sexuality is complex and many people feel their sexuality is fluid, but no one can make someone else's sexuality change. Being around a certain person might make you realize things about yourself. For example, spending time with a specific person may have made you realize you were attracted to males. But that person didn't make you bisexual. Similarly, it's impossible to "treat" homosexuality or bisexuality to
make someone heterosexual. Sexual orientation is a natural, normal, healthy part of everyone’s identity, be it gay, straight, or bi.

If you are interested in ideas for coming out to your parents, see our related Go Ask Alice! answer to How can I tell my religious parents that I'm a lesbian without them disowning me? [2]. With any luck your parents and girlfriend will take the news in stride, and love and support you for who you are. You may want to think about places you can get support though, in case things are rocky for a while. Is there a counselor or teacher at your school who is cool with queer issues? Or an LGBTQ organization such as Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG [3]) in your community? You might also be able to get suggestions or support from other lesbian, gay, bi, or trans youth in similar situations to yours. The Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network [4] has a listing of queer student groups all over the country. If there’s no group in your area, you can also check out the GLBT National Help Center [5] which offers support and information.

Coming out to people you care about can be scary and liberating at the same time. Openness and honesty, accurate information to overcome stereotypes and allay fears, and time to process new information and feelings will hopefully help.

Alice!
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Links
[3] https://community.pflag.org/