Calling out ex's name in bed [1]

Dear Alice,

My girlfriend and I have been having sex with each other for the last six months. Just before we began seeing each other, she had gotten out of a pretty serious relationship. She insists it is over and that she has no feelings for him. I believed her up until recently, when we were having sex and she cried out his name. I like her very much, but, of course this incident has made me very insecure about our relationship. I'm not sure whether she needs more time to get over this guy, if I'm getting myself into a position where I'll get hurt, or if I should just ignore the whole thing altogether. What should I do?

Signed,
Sleepy or Dopey?

Answer

Dear Sleepy or Dopey?,

Sorry to hear you're feeling sexcluded in your own relationship! In your question, you mentioned a few different issues:

- You think your girlfriend may need more time to get over her last partner. She is the only one who can answer that question, but you should feel free to discuss your concern with her.
- You wonder if you are getting yourself into a position where you might get hurt. While this is a possibility in any relationship, you may ask yourself if you are willing to take the risk for this person.
- You are considering ignoring the whole thing. Unfortunately, ignoring the issue won't reassure you of anything. Talking about your feelings and listening to your partner's can help you sort out the possible misunderstanding. You can be honest with your girlfriend and can ask the same of her.

These discussions can be challenging, especially since they deal with sensitive issues of jealousy and insecurity. A state-of-the-relationship discussion might be a good option. Either it will ease your anxieties and reaffirm your girlfriend's commitment and interest in you, or it will allow you to make a clean break.
Here are some ways to initiate a potentially difficult conversation. You can start by picking a
time and place where you are both calm and comfortable. You might focus on the name-
calling, or you might focus on the broader relationship. For example, you could say,

- The other night in bed it sounded like you said someone else's name. Do you remember
  that?

OR

- I've been thinking about our relationship lately and I'd like to talk about where we're
going. Can we talk now?

Start however you feel comfortable, keeping in mind that your partner may be as
uncomfortable, if not more so, than you are about the game-time misnomer. Avoid bringing it
up while in bed or on a date. You can ask her to talk with you about her perspective and her
feelings. Maybe your name starts with the same letter as her ex’s name. Maybe it was a brain-
freeze in the heat of passion. Maybe she was fantasizing about another person. Maybe she
does need a little more time to get over her ex.

Whatever the reason(s) for calling out the wrong name, and she may not even know why it
happened, she can tell you about her feelings for you, which could be all you're looking for.
Best of luck!

Alice!

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