Communication Breakdown [1]

Week of:
Jul 18, 2014

Fighting over money [2]

Alice,

How do I get my live in boyfriend to take care of his part of the monthly bills and groceries without sounding like I'm more worried about money than the relationship? He gives me money for some stuff, sometimes, but I have ended up taking care of most of the monthly expenses, and I'm starting to feel resentful. He makes more money than me, although I'm more financially stable. How do I address this sensitive issue?

Read more [2]

Crying when talking to authority [3]

Dear Alice,

I would like to know why I feel like crying when I speak to figures of authority. It happens most often when there is a serious subject to discuss; however, it has happened when talking about good things, too. It has happened when talking to my parents, grandparents, boss, and teachers. The common factor is that I see them as figures of authority and we are discussing me. I can talk with these people about anything else, but if we are talking about me, I begin feeling the urge to cry. I bite my tongue to distract myself. It is very embarrassing and uncontrollable. The most recent outburst happened when I was asked to describe my strengths and what I need to improve. I could feel myself wanting to cry, but it was still controllable by biting my tongue and speaking in short sentences. However, the teacher began using a soothing tone, asking what I thought because I wasn't saying very much. I was no longer able to control myself and cried. How do I stop this from happening and why does it happen? I am otherwise a very outspoken person and have no issues with public speaking.

Read more [3]

Told him my true feelings and now it's truly awkward [4]

Alice,
I'm very attracted to one of my close friends. He used to like me and I used to like him. The other day, I told him I still liked him and that it'd be cool if we took our friendship further. But he just said he liked me as a friend. However, many of my friends have been telling me that he likes me more than a friend and that we'd be good together. After telling him how I feel, I think that he doesn't even want to be friends now, plus he is really awkward. How can I get our friendship back and break the awkwardness? How can I make sure I don't get rejected again by someone else?

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**Unbearable mom**

Hi Alice,

I've recently moved back home with my parents and I'm struggling! While I know this is the best option for me financially, I can't help wishing I could just leave.

My Mum doesn't work right now, so she's constantly at home. I'm studying part time from home, and working 20 to 24 hours per week. I feel like I never have time to myself! It has come to the extent that I now feel paralyzed in my bedroom, unable to even get up because I don't want to see her. I don't think this is helped by the fact she has always been very pushy, and had ambitions for me that I could never fulfill. She constantly acts as though I am a disappointment and I feel helpless and totally unmotivated to work, and now even get out of bed, in this environment.

On top of this, during an argument a few weeks ago, I said something along the lines of, 'you don't own me, you don't have the right to run my life' and my Mum said, that she does in fact, own me, I am her daughter and I belong to her, and she will always be in control of my life. She treats me like a child. I can't go anywhere without demanding questions: where are you going, who with, what time will you be back, why, how, what, etc. She comes into my room without knocking, no matter what I'm doing, or what state of dress I am in. I am 23, and completely stuck. I see no other option for my mental health than to move out again and seriously reduce the amount of contact I have with her. But I can't afford to.

Can you please give some suggestions as to how I can make this more bearable? Thank you.

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**How to talk about ableism, without losing friends?**

Dear Alice,

I have an invisible disability and I'm really getting into disabilities activism. Even in liberal circles ablism is still pretty accepted and this upsets me. However, when I try to educate people around me, it sometimes goes awry. I had one friend get upset when I called her out for using the word "retard." Another got upset when I pointed out that her Facebook post of
inspirational people with disabilities (that just showed people with disabilities doing normal things) was a little offensive and tried to tell her about "inspiration porn." I get that using the word "retard" is normal as is "inspiration porn." I just don't think it should be.

I know my friends are caring, socially conscious people. I expect people to be a little upset, but ultimately I would also expect them respect the fact that it's really not OK to objectify people with disabilities in the way that inspiration porn and the use of words like "retard" do. What I want to know is how do I point out that people are expressing a harmful social bias, without having them get so upset that they write me off as an over sensitive concern troll?

Sincerely,

Nothing about us without us

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