Can our relationship survive summer break if we haven't had sex yet? [1]

Dear Alice,

I am a 19-year-old college student and am seriously involved with my boyfriend who is a 20-year-old college student. We have even talked of getting married someday. Our relationship is very close and we talk about everything, and he is very wonderful and supportive. I feel very committed to him and would really like to have sex with him. We have tried twice, but it hasn't really worked out because my vagina is too tight. I am pretty sure the problem is just that it needs to be stretched more, because I have been to the gynecologist and don't have any infections. He says that he is okay with whatever we do and that he loves me no matter what, but I still feel guilty about not being able to go all the way. How do I get over this guilt? I will be leaving college for the summer soon and we will be separated for awhile and I want to make sure that our relationship is as solid as possible before I leave so we have the absolute best chances of surviving the summer!

Answer

Dear Reader,

Though you may be apprehensive about flying solo for the summer, taking action to solidify your relationship may not be necessary. It's worth mentioning that there are never any guarantees when it comes to relationships. It may also help to remember that sex is just one way to express love and commitment?and having a bond that can withstand time apart won't be contingent on whether you've had it or not. The good news is, based on what you've shared, it seems that you and your partner already have a loving relationship despite not having sex. With these things in mind, it may be worth revisiting your feelings around this issue and sharing them with your boyfriend as well. The two of you can decide whether you'd like to try again before you part ways for the summer or if it's best to wait. And, though maintaining your relationship may take some work and creativity, there's no need to fret about the miles between you and your mate! It may actually be an opportunity to strengthen your bond.

Though your partner sounds pretty special and seems to care deeply for you, feeling ready and comfortable enough to be intimate with another person often takes time, trust, privacy, and even personal commitment. Perhaps your relationship has a number of these attributes already, with the exception of time at the moment. While sex may seem of the essence right now, have you thought about what's behind your feelings about not having it before summer
starts? Getting down to the root concerns may help you feel better about how to move forward. If you’re rushing to have sex for the first time out of feelings of guilt or fear of losing your partner, consider that it may not be a recipe for a mutually pleasurable experience. Additionally, you might think about whether you’re truly ready to have sex. If you aren’t, that’s okay! There’s no need to hurry! In any case, consider taking some time to explore whether you’re ready and why you feel the way you do. After a bit of self-reflection, you may decide to talk to your partner about it a bit more. In doing so, if you and your partner do decide to give it another go before the summer, it’s a good idea to also talk about ways to make the experience (the first time or any time) pleasurable for both of you. Alternatively, you may also take to heart your boyfriend’s assurance about not rushing to have sex.

Whether or not you decide to try again, it sounds like you’ll still be dealing with some time apart in the near future. Toughing out several months of long distance may seem daunting, but you can rest assured that you’re not the only one who’s been downtrodden about being away from their beloved. Many couples separated by distance have been able to maintain their bonds successfully. The key is having both partners make an effort. With that in mind, you might see whether time apart has the potential for a silver lining for the two of you (take a look at The upside of long distance relationship for tips). Plus, even if you’re miles apart, there are plenty of ways to stay in touch with your beau and keep the fire burning. Connection sans touch and emotional intimacy can be intense and satisfying in ways that being together physically may not. Still, these forms of communication may not replace the physical closeness; to that end, it’s good to remind yourself that the time you’ll spend away from each other is relatively short and that there’s an end-date in sight.

Here’s hoping that time flies and that you’ll be in the arms of your love before you know it!

Alice!

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