Tell my current partner I'm bisexual? [1]

Dear Alice,

I am a bisexual woman who is dealing with my sexuality... sort of. I'm still a virgin in both instances, but I know I'm attracted to both sexes. I'm currently in a (new) relationship with a guy, and for some reason, we've never really gotten around to asking questions about each other, health conditions, near death experiences, sexual history, etc. Should I tell him I've had girlfriends before? Even if there wasn't any sex? Is it my responsibility to tell him or is this information on a privileged basis only??

?Ms. Confidential

Answer

Dear Ms. Confidential,

Being in a new relationship, it's natural to want to share information about yourself and your past; sharing our experiences is one way we get to know and understand each other. However, telling your current beau about your attraction to women isn't a prerequisite for a healthy or ethical relationship. It's your choice when and how you disclose your experiences with other women. In weighing this decision, you may want to consider how the news may impact your relationship and to what extent these details define you.

Many people find they are attracted to both men and women and may identify as straight, bisexual, gay, or choose another label entirely. There is nothing unusual or wrong with your past ? in fact, exploring your attractions and desires is often a positive thing, as it allows for personal growth. The central issue in your budding relationship is who you are now and who you want to be with him. How would you feel if you tell him? How would you feel if you don't tell him? How might he react in either scenario?

If you decide to open up and share some of your history, it's not necessary to disclose every detail. You could consider framing your time with women as events that happened in the past and could happen in the future, without shame, but not necessarily events that are relevant to your current relationship. Disclosing your attractions could bring up some insecurities or anxieties for your current partner. For example, might he wonder if you'll leave when an intriguing girl enters your life? This conversation may be the time to discuss not only your past, but your intentions with your current main squeeze. Be prepared to give him some compassion and reassurance in response to any questions or concerns he may bring up.

Keeping your past to yourself is also a valid choice. Some people only disclose their full past
to people who they expect to be with in a committed relationship. What does the future look like with your current guy? At what point in a relationship would you feel it's time to share your past romances? Do you want to know about his past romances? These questions may help you get an idea of when you should share and what information you might like to know in return.

Navigating the gray area surrounding personal privacy is no easy task in a new relationship. With some careful, intentional exploration on your part about who you are, it is likely the right way forward will become clear.

Alice!
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