Dear Alice,

Okay, let's say you have this teenager who is gay. He's dating this girl, and been doing it for over a year, and only doing it to fit in as being straight. In this school, if you don't have a girlfriend, you get harassed and called queer. Well, now this teenager has hit a big dilemma. This girl wants to have sex, but he can't because he isn't attracted to her. What should he do? He really cares for her, but feels he is using her, and she is developing strong feelings for him. What to do? Should he "come out," or keep playing it off, finding some way to have sex with her?

? The Fake Straight Dude

Answer

Dear The Fake Straight Dude,

It's unfortunate that The Fake Straight Dude (FSD) lives in a world where he feels forced to pretend he's someone he's not. It's equally tragic, and understandable, that he fears he'll be hurt if he just lives his life. On the bright side, our friend the FSD seems to already have a good handle on the basics of who he is. Coming out is a personal decision and it may take a while for someone to decide what is right for her- or himself. Some people are surprised at the support that awaits them when they come out, and others are disappointed in the lack of support they receive. For now, staying a FSD ? at least publicly ? might be a workable option, even if it's not his first choice.

So, then, what about the girlfriend? The FSD does have options. Since not every guy is attracted to every girl, and vice-versa, perhaps the FSD could bring an end to his romance with this as the reason: He needs to concentrate on an internship, a job, clubs, sports, or whatever so that he wouldn't have time for a girlfriend (or so his classmates will think)? He might even get lucky and find new friends and partners in the process. He can also tell his girlfriend that he is not ready or has chosen not to have sex at this point; certainly a feeling many guys have, gay or straight. If he prefers to be more direct, he might say that the relationship is getting too intense. Or, if the FSD is feeling comfortable, courageous, and trusting of his girlfriend, he might tell her that he's attracted to men. Notice that among these options there's no suggestion to have sex with his girlfriend just because that's what's expected.

Is there anyone in the FSD's world who might get the way he feels, either because they
feel/felt it themselves, or because they’re tolerant and open? Having a trusted ally and expressing one’s true self can help an FSD (or a Fake Straight Gal, for that matter) feel like s/he’s living more for her- or himself than for others. These people might be nearby: friends, family, and again, even the girlfriend. They could be further away: a teacher, counselor, or community organization.

Here’s info about gay-straight alliances, mentioned earlier:

- GLSEN: Student Pride USA
- Gay Straight Alliance Network
- YouthResource: A Project of Advocates for Youth

The FSD’s situation is surely challenging. For what it’s worth, readers of Go Ask Alice! frequently email with questions which relate their feelings of being trapped or muzzled by the expectations of others. Finding and expressing one’s true colors can be challenging from any perspective; but keep the faith that yours will shine!

There are a number of programs, nationally, that help to address the bullying and violence faced by a number of students. Students who may identify with or as Fake Straight Dude, or New Black Girl, Recent South Asian Immigrant, Religious Muslim Guy, The Overweight One, Lesbian Lass, Not-So-Good-At Sports, Gal With Green Hair, Learning Disabled Dan, The Jew From Peru, and many others, aren’t being the students they can be because they’re distracted and consumed by fears of ridicule, threats of injury, and physical and psychological abuse itself. Tolerance of, or inaction on, these everyday occurrences interfere with the health and learning of students. The Center for the Prevention of School Violence and Keep Schools Safe are just some of the programs and resources that address these issues.

Hope this helps!

Alice!
Category:
Relationships
Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, or Questioning
Life issues and resources
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Come out to girlfriend about boy-crush?
Am I gay?... The next generation
Asking someone about their sexuality
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Resources

Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) (Morningside)
Mental Health Service (CUMC)

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