Dear Alice,

I met this guy I like about a month ago and I think that he really likes me. He has a very busy schedule with school, homework, and sports, but when he says he will call me, he usually doesn't. If he really likes me, why won't he call when he says he will? Also, how can I tell if he likes me for me and not just my looks?

Answer

Dear Reader,

Believe it or not, sometimes how much someone likes you can have nothing to do with whether that prospective partner calls you. The human race has figured out how to get to the moon, climb towering peaks, and paint masterpieces, but communicating effectively with one another in relationships can still be a challenge for some folks. So, before you write him off as a lost cause or get downhearted, it's good to keep in mind that there could be a huge number of reasons why he hasn't called you. These reasons can range from logistical issues (he's lost your number or has a broken phone?), to personal issues (he's too busy to call?), to personality traits (he's too shy or doesn't like talking on the phone?), to relationship dynamics (he's just not interested?). Until humankind figures out telepathy, trying to figure out why he hasn't called or whether he likes you for all of you (and not just what's on the outside) can be a guessing game?unless you take matters into your own hands.

Wondering why the phone won't ring can throw you for a loop, too, especially if you've got an inkling that this guy's into you. In order to put your wondering mind at ease, you may benefit from being proactive. It can be scary to put yourself out there with someone you like, but consider giving him a ring rather than waiting on him?sometimes you have to take a risk to get the reward! It's not uncommon in relationships to feel like ball is in the other person's court, and wait for her or him to make a move. But, no matter who you are (female, male, young, old, gay, straight, etc.), there are no rules about who is supposed to reach out to whom in romantic interactions! It's simple: if you like 'em, ask 'em! Maybe after an honest conversation about how things are going between the two of you, you will get a better sense of why he hasn't called when he said he would?and maybe you can even brainstorm some more concrete ways to communicate that work for both of you (say, talking on the phone every Thursday at 8 p.m.).

As you weigh the options?whether you want to be the one to reach out, to keep waiting on
him, or to let it go and choose to move on? keep in mind that life tends to be a little brighter when you fill it with people who you enjoy spending time with and who want to spend time with you in return. While a budding new relationship is exciting, how might you feel if you ended up missing out on a fun night with friends because you were waiting by the phone for his call? If you feel you've made your interest in him known and have clearly communicated your desire for him to call you? and you're still not getting what you want out of the relationship? it may be time to move on.

As for your second question, it can be hard, at first, to tell if someone is attracted to you for your looks or for who you are? or both. This is something that usually becomes apparent as you spend more time with a person. If the attraction is purely physical, the relationship may eventually fizzle, rather than sizzle, as you realize that you don't have much in common. And, healthy relationships have many qualities beyond physical attraction; consider reading Who to date? The looker or the bookworm? [4] in the Go Ask Alice! archives to read about how different aspects of a relationship? looks, intellect, emotional intelligence [5], and more? can play a part in making or breaking that special bond.

A good rule of thumb with any potential partner is to pay attention to your instincts. Do you feel happy spending time with this person? Can you talk to him easily? Do you spend time together doing things other than being physical? Do you listen to each other's needs? Although it can be difficult to tell at first what someone is interested in, after a while you might be able to get a better sense of his motives. For more ideas on ways to navigate the maze of communication in a new relationship, consider checking out the Relating & Communicating [6] and Finding a Partner [7] sections of the Go Ask Alice! archives.

Getting on the same wavelength with a budding beau can be frustrating, but, after all, that's amore: confusing, exciting, and enlightening all at once! And whether it pans out or not, the romantic journey can be an excellent opportunity to learn more about yourself and what kind of partner you're looking for in a relationship.

Alice!
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