Another long distance relationship [1]

Dear Alice,

I have been involved in a relationship with my girl for over a year now. We both love each other and are very happy. We met in college and spent the summer together in an apartment. Both of us have two years of college left, but unfortunately we do not attend the same school. The problem is that I fell "in love" with her by the end of the summer and then suddenly we were separated.

We had many discussions about our relationship and she told me that she is not ready to commit to eventually be married one day. Here is where the problem is: I starting college this spring and my girl is stuck in Maine. I just want to know if I am wasting my time on a long distance relationship with no promise of resulting in marriage after our college years. The thought also occurred to me that when she starts college, will she be so committed to this long distance relationship? I just don't want to be played for a fool.

?Nice Guy or Fool?

Answer

Dear Nice Guy or Fool?,

So does absence really make the heart grow fonder? You are faced with a question that many have considered over the ages. Long distance relationships are hard, even when the couple has been together for a long time. The idea of carrying on a long distance relationship and worrying about whether or not there is, or might ever be, a commitment can be incredibly stressful.

Have you and your girlfriend discussed monogamy? How about the future after you both complete college? And yours and her short and long term goals? Is it possible you are conjecturing what your girlfriend is thinking, and that it's time for you two to talk? You likely want to focus on questions like: What do you each want out of your relationship? What are you each getting out of the relationship? now, in the past, and in the future? What are your needs in a relationship? Are they being met across the distance? Can they be met over time? What are the terms to which you are both willing to agree to continue this relationship across the miles?

You have many choices ? you can both agree to be monogamous and see what happens; you can both agree to be monogamous and make a commitment to get married in two years; you can both agree to see other people and see what happens; you can agree to see other
people, with the idea of making a commitment solely to each other in two years, etc. The key here is that you need to make this decision together. It may be a painstaking process, especially determining the details of your agreement; but, if you can both spend some time exploring the questions you have about the relationship and then generating feasible solutions, you should be able to come to a compromise that you both can accept.

If it helps, you can try to think of it all as a big experiment? if what you first decide to do isn't working for one, or both, of you, go back to the drawing board and redefine your terms. Relationships near or far, are a constant process? and a lot of work. If you are both willing to do that work, then your relationship has a better chance of lasting the years of separation.

Best of luck clarifying your needs and goals together,

Alice!

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