

by John_Gray

Dear John: My fianc , "Steve," asked me if I'd recently gone to lunch with an ex-boyfriend, and I said no. Well, I was lying and Steve knew this. He didn't act upset or anything, but he did ask if I wanted to go back to my ex-boyfriend. I said no, which is completely true. I think I have problems with trust and cheating stemming from that past relationship. How do I overcome my own insecurities before I ruin this really good thing I have going with Steve?  " Caught Red Handed, in Danville, Calif.

Dear Caught Red-Handed: You lied because you feared his reaction to an honest answer. Sadly, your little fib may have unwittingly raised the same doubts in Steve's mind that you've had with your past lover. In hindsight, if you had answered truthfully, you could have then explained the feelings that led you to have this meeting in the first place, and you would now have his empathy instead of his distrust.

If you want to save this relationship, you're going to have to keep things honest. You can start by setting the record straight on the meeting in question. Apologize for lying. Tell him that he always deserves an honest answer, and commit to give him that in the future. Then explain that you lied out of fear of his response. Also, give him the answer he's truly looking for: why you felt a need to meet with your ex in the first place. By doing so, you will clear the air of all issues, past and present.

Dear John: I'm a recently divorced woman who has been carrying on a long-distance relationship. I've never been in a commuting relationship. What are some tips for trying to make this work, and what are the chances of this working?  " Distant Desire, in Jacksonville, Fla.

Dear Distant Desire: Your chances are pretty good if you follow these three recommendations: 1) Keep in touch. Be it by phone, email, or frequent weekend getaways  " in your town, his, or somewhere mutually desirable  " a constant closeness will give you much needed information that will help you decide if indeed the relationship is worth moving to the next step; 2) Allow for uncertainties. Timing, circumstance and other variables will test your relationship.

Successful long-distance relationships withstand fate's challenges because both parties are committed to working through the obstacles that are thrown their way. Be flexible and creative with your solutions; 3) For this to become a long-term committed relationship, eventually one of you must make the sacrifice to move near the other. If neither of you is willing to do this, or one partner is reluctant to have the other closer in proximity, it's time to re-evaluate the reality of the situation.

John Gray is the author of "Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus." If you have a question, write to John by e-mail via the web site www.marsvenusliving.com. All questions are kept anonymous and will be paraphrased.

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