

By Courtney Sandora



I Love Him, But... HE'S INCREDIBLY JEALOUS

At some point every person who's ever been in a relationship has been jealous. While sometimes that jealousy can be a bit endearing, other times a guy can cross the line. Marilyn Anderson, author of *Never Kiss a Frog: A Girl's Guide to Creatures from the Dating Swamp* (Red Rock Press, \$14), had a date accuse her of sitting too close to the guy next to her in a movie theater.

"Jealousy is ultimately a sign of a man's insecurity," Anderson reveals. "You need to evaluate on what level your man becomes jealous. If he won't let you drive a car because driving offers you too much freedom, then jealousy becomes a problem. However, if he is slightly jealous when another guy is paying attention to you at a party, that can be harmless and even flattering."

I Love Him, But... HE'S A FIRST-CLASS SLOB

Your man cuts his toenails and lets them fall on the carpet as you watch TV; he thinks his floor is the appropriate place to "hang" clothes and a nasty funk is growing on the dishes piling up in his sink. You love him, but will you still love him after picking up his dirty gym socks month after month?

Anderson suggests taking a long, hard look at how much you are willing to put up with when it comes to issues of cleanliness, and then ask your man to make these changes. "A guy will make an effort to change if he cares enough about you, and you deserve someone who wants to make you happy," she assures.

Draft a mental list of ways he can, literally, clean up his act. Talk to him in a non-threatening manner about how these changes in his behavior are important to you and see if he responds. If he does make an effort, he could be a keeper.

I Love Him, But... HE'S SO SECRETIVE

There are times when you wonder if your guy is actually a CIA agent. He is vague about where he's been, what he's up to this weekend and how he knows his female friends. Can you love a man without knowing everything about him?

"In the beginning a mystery man can be exciting, but if he's mysterious for too long, you should disappear," advises Anderson. "Ask yourself why he's being so secretive and why you are allowing yourself to be with someone who holds back."

Evaluate what stage in your relationship you are in to determine how much he should still be holding back and whether you feel like he's leaving you in the dark too often. If he won't give you his number or let you see his home, take these signs as red flags.

I Love Him, But... HE'S A SPACE CADET

Sometimes you wish you were a sports announcer. Maybe then your man would pay attention to what you're saying for more than five seconds. You know your boyfriend cares about you, but when it comes to listening, he tends to tune you out.

"More often than not, men are missing the communication gene," reveals Anderson. But, if a guy never listens to your "everyday" talk—frustrations at work, with family or friends—then he may actually be very selfish. "If he doesn't listen, he basically doesn't care what you have to say," believes Anderson. "It's like having great sex with no intimacy. Someone who doesn't listen will leave you emotionally unfulfilled."

I Love Him, But...

HE'S AN OBSESSIVE WORKAHOLIC

If your boyfriend gave you even half the attention and passion he dedicates to his job, you would be a happy woman. Unfortunately, your man is more concerned with advancing his career than his relationship with you.

"If business consumes him every minute, when he comes home to bed, don't you be in it," warns Anderson.

But if you're not sure if he's simply very ambitious, rather

than a complete workaholic, Anderson advises you to look out for these signals that interfere with your relationship: he constantly breaks plans with you, arrives late for dates and regularly handles work calls on his cell phone when you're out together.

If his 100-percent commitment to his career doesn't thrill you now, it probably won't make you any happier 10 years down the road, either.

Marilyn Anderson interview in
COMPLETE WOMAN – cont'd.



I Love Him, But... HE'S TOTALLY ANTI-SOCIAL

It continually blows your mind that you and your boyfriend have such a blast when you're alone, but he absolutely hates hanging out with those closest to you. Every time you go out with friends or family he refuses to go, causing you to divide yourself between groups.

"You need to ask yourself why he won't be with your friends and family," advises Anderson. "Is he threatened by them?"

After evaluating the source of your man's negative feelings, see if there are ways you can make him feel more comfortable during these outings. If he still resists any of your attempts to help him bond with your loved ones, you need to reassess whether you want to put up with his negative feelings for the rest of your life. After all, Mom, Dad and your best friend are here to stay.

I Love Him, But... HE'S SERIOUSLY SELF-DESTRUCTIVE

He smokes, never works out and has no intention of scheduling a physical in the next decade. You care about him greatly, but it would be great if he cared about himself a little, too.

Anderson stresses the importance of always talking to your partner about issues you see as unhealthy in order to help him understand where you're coming from.

While not many independent, modern women are big on playing Mom to their guy, you can suggest going to the gym

together or making a healthy dinner for him to help wean him off his daily deep-dish habit. Of course, his well-being can't rest solely on your shoulders; he also needs to make an effort to prove he's up for making some changes.

Anderson suggests making a compromise with your partner if his bad behaviors are getting on your nerves. If he smokes, make him promise to not smoke in your presence. It may not save his lungs but it could save your relationship for the time being.



I Love Him, But... HE'S BECOMING A MACHO MAN

Your guy lives for boys' nights out. You don't mind it once in awhile but sometimes you feel as if he is more loyal to hanging out with the boys than spending time with you.

"If a guy has close friendships with other guys, that's fine," Anderson encourages. "A good balance between friends and your dating life is healthy. But, once he starts using his friends as an excuse not to be close to you, you need to leave. It's when the relationship

becomes lopsided that you often run into problems."

To keep things exciting in the relationship, Anderson suggests coming up with creative dates to show him how fun it is to be a couple. If he loves playing cards with the guys, engage him in a one-on-one game of strip poker. If sexy tricks still can't compete with his friends, you may want to take Anderson's advice: "If your man is being too much of a guy's guy, you need to go become some other guy's girl."