



SAYING SORRY

There's a psychological reason why we forgive someone more easily when they give us a gift. A recent study suggests that offers of compensation increase forgiveness – and reduce anger – by making the aggressor seem more valuable as a relationship partner. It also causes the victim to feel less at risk of getting hurt by them again. The bigger the gesture, the more fully victims forgave over time.



LIFE LOVE etc

Our monthly look at the world of love, friendship and sex



SEEING RED

A recent study investigated the surprising effects of a red dress. It turns out other women view a lady in red as more interested in sex, compared to the same woman in a white dress. Researchers then changed her dress from white to green, and found that women were still more likely to put down the woman in red and to guard their partner from her.

Soul SEARCHING

“He’s jealous of my ex”

Q My boyfriend’s upset because I like to go out with my ex once a month, and he thinks that’s too much. He’s jealous, but we are genuinely just friends. What can I do about it?

A What your boyfriend is saying is “Who matters more to you, me or him?” Viewed from another perspective, your boyfriend is saying, “I really want you, I care about you, I want to know if you are my woman”.

I wonder how you’d feel if he didn’t care whether you saw your ex, if he was seeing a woman he’d previously been passionately in love with, or prioritising his mates over time with you?

The ability to see the perspective of the other is an important part of maturing in any



JAN DAY

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relationship. It doesn’t mean we always give in and do the bidding of our partner just to please them. Instead it gives us the scope to feel the pain our actions create. By being willing to expose his own feelings of jealousy, your boyfriend is taking a step towards deep intimacy. Try this too.

While it is admirable not to descend into antagonism with your ex, to maintain a close friendship will almost inevitably touch the insecurities of your new boyfriend. This is especially true if you haven’t cemented your dedication to him and shown that he is your priority.

Before you can commit to a new partner you have to be willing to turn away from your ex, and that usually means having no contact for a period of



DID YOU KNOW?

A survey has found that spontaneous, mundane gestures are vital to a happy relationship, the most cherished being the simple cup of tea.

time. By letting go of the bonds between you a new relationship can fully develop. Once things have moved on for both you and your ex, it will be more possible to have a friendship that doesn't interfere with your current relationship.

As soon as your new boyfriend knows that you are giving him commitment, it's very likely that he'll be more relaxed about you having a friendship with your ex. But in any situation where one partner is bonding in some way outside the relationship, it is worth asking, if what I am doing is causing so much pain in my partner, do I really want to keep doing it? However, if your partner is using jealousy to control you in other ways, then you would need to look at that carefully.

Your boyfriend seems unsure if you are really choosing him. You could ask yourself that question. How important is he to you?

1.5 - the average number of times a month that people in long distance relationships see their partner

Inner Self | LOVE & SEX

The LOVE CLINIC

CAN'T HAVE A RELATIONSHIP? BLAME GRANDMA!

Have you ever wondered why it may be so hard to be happy, or why it can be so difficult to have a fulfilling relationship? It may be that part of the answer lies in our family history. Could it be that feelings of shame, insecurity or rage are inherited from our ancestors?



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There is growing evidence that not only biological traits such as eye colour are inherited, but other less concrete characteristics are too. A recent study by the University of Zurich showed that early trauma in mice is carried to the following generations. Other studies in Israel on the effects of past pain (from a people whose history often contains the intensity of the Holocaust) have reached the same conclusion.

What if it was not just trauma which was passed on but a predisposition to any emotional state? My clinical work with family systems regularly shows that women who believe, for example, that you can't rely on anyone else and develop an overly-strong sense of independence often come from a long line of women who held similar beliefs, representing an accumulated ancestral energy.

I believe that we are in a unique position within our lineage to discharge those beliefs. Consider this – life up until, say, 100 years ago was hard. Most people struggled to make a living and to feed themselves, and survival was a real concern. It has only been in the late twentieth century that our standard of living enabled us to have the space to reflect on our emotions. As my grandmother used to say "We managed perfectly well without emotions in my day." Now, no longer challenged with threats to our daily survival, we can instead explore less concrete pursuits.

When we are concerned with survival we will suppress emotions to get through the day. Thousands of years of suppressed emotion may have been handed to us at our birth. Since we are blessed to live in a culture which allows emotion, we may be the generations who are blessed – or cursed, depending on how you look at it, to release the trauma of millennia.

I believe that releasing emotion is an evolutionary phase. It was only in the late 19th century, from Freud onwards, that outside of the spiritual communities we had an understanding of the nature of the unconscious, therapeutic mechanisms to release emotions.

Once we have released our inherent emotional baggage, we may then be able to move into a less volatile and more energetically sensitive state of being, which I believe is the next evolutionary step of humankind. It may just allow us to improve our quality of life and relationships.