

CHAPTER 39

Problems, Situations...

QUESTION: When I become hungry, I eat. When I'm thirsty, I drink. When I'm tired, I sleep. If I have physical sexual feelings, and I'm not supposed to sexually satisfy them before marriage, why do I have them?

ANSWER: If someone ate ten times a day or slept 18 hours every day, it would be considered abnormal and excessive, unless, of course, the person were still an infant. Just as we learned to control our desires to eat and sleep and fulfill them in an appropriate manner, puberty is a time to learn to master our sexual desires. As we learn to live with and control our desires and feelings, we grow as a person and learn how to relate well to all kinds of people and to manage all kinds of situations.

In the same way, when we have sexual urges, we must decide whether to act on them. We don't have to follow our impulses. Our sexual desires are there for us to think about and to remind us of who we are. They can encourage us to decide how we will grow up, and what kind of man or woman, husband or wife, mother or father, we will be. Remember that the greatest portion of our sexuality is expressed





through our personality. Sexual energy can and should be integrated into loving energy on behalf of family, friends and humankind.

QUESTION: What should I do when I have sexual urges?

ANSWER: During our development, emotional and physical feelings serve to increase our awareness, sensitivity, thoughtfulness, and responsibility in the maturing process that leads to manhood and womanhood, marriage and parenthood.

There are many ways to release sexual energy. One thing that distinguishes us from animals is our ability to channel sexual energy into productive activities and relationships that give us joy and allow us to release intense emotional and physical feelings. You can become involved in sports, drama, academic or scientific projects, artistic endeavors. Doing things together with your friends, such as skating and skiing, can also be an outlet for such energy. It's very healthy to develop your talent for giving love and joy to others in a non-sexual way.

QUESTION: Is self-control easier for some people than others?

ANSWER: Yes. But it isn't "easy" for anybody. It takes practice and commitment. One of the best things about learning self-control is that success in one area will pay off in another. If you can manage your sexual feelings, chances are you'll also be managing other areas of your life as well, such as your studies, relationships with your parents, friends, etc. The best time to learn self-control is while you're still young; but it's never too late to start!

QUESTION: What should a girl do if a boy tries to get what he wants?

ANSWER: A boy might be very passionate and seem emotionally loving. His usual line is "If you love me, you'll do it." But love first of all needs mutual commitment and responsibility. The girl should test what a boy really means when he talks about love.

A teacher said to her teenage students, "Tell me, in one word, what love means to you." The boys used words like "sex, girls, and fun." The girls used words like "sharing, caring, and tenderness." Part of the reason for such a difference is because girls mature faster than boys and have more of an emotional need. Girls need to realize that boys can become physically involved with sex without becoming emotionally involved.

If you've decided to save sexual intimacy for later, you'd better develop refusal skills. We all know the famous lines, and here are some possible responses:

"You can trust me."— "I do trust you, I trust you to stop pressuring me."

"You don't know what you're missing."— "Yes, I do; I'm missing only worries."



“Everyone’s doing it.”— “But not with me.”

“I love you. Don’t you love me?”—“If you really loved me, you’d respect me. I don’t need to prove my love.”

“I can’t stop.”—“Well, I can.”

“What’s wrong with you?”—“Nothing’s wrong, let’s keep it that way!”



QUESTION: In sex the boy is supposed to take the initiative, and girls know that. Then what is so bad about a boy insisting on having sex?

ANSWER: A boy who uses his sexual nature to seduce another can easily begin to feel it no longer matters with whom he has sex. If he is not ready to submit himself to the interests of the girl, to dedicate himself to her, should he become involved in something that should have such a level of commitment? The girl thinks that he loves her, while he is just using her. Isn’t it selfish?

You should consider that this is someone’s future wife and someone’s future mother. How would you like it if someone treated your future wife in this way? How would you feel if someone had used your mother in this way before she was married and caused her a great deal of emotional shock and pain? If seduction is so normal or justifiable, would you encourage another boy to treat your own sister in this way?

QUESTION: What should a boy do when a girl tries to “trap” him into having sex?

ANSWER: Out of their need for emotional bonding, girls sometimes confuse sex with love and try to engage a boy into a committed relationship by using sex. A girl might even allow herself to become pregnant to try to pressure a boy into marrying her. But if you realize that girls want emotional bonding and security long before boys are ready for that level of commitment, then you won’t confuse sex with love.

Male and female differences are a protective shield. If boys wanted commitment as soon as girls do, and if girls normally wanted sex as soon as boys, marriages would take place much too early in life. Their differences, when respected for what they are, help to delay union until sufficient emotional growth occurs.

QUESTION: We’re living in the modern world, in a free society. Don’t you think this virginity stuff is a little old-fashioned?

ANSWER: Everyone wants to be free, but there’s a lot of confusion about what it means to be free. Some think being free means doing whatever you feel like, whenever you want to. The idea of abstaining from sex seems to be the opposite of being free. But if you think about it, the person who abstains from sex outside



marriage doesn't have to worry about all the problems that go along with such a lifestyle: sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies, pressure to marry someone they don't really love, the responsibility of being a single parent, pressure to have an abortion, dropping out of school, and a lot of emotional hassles. So who is really free — the person who does whatever he or she feels like, or the person who has self-control? A free person does what he or she knows is right and doesn't give in to peer pressure.

Chastity is not old-fashioned. You are looking ahead. You should learn to appreciate the dignity of using your mind rather than being controlled by instincts. Our freedom should be used to make mature decisions.

QUESTION: Some people believe that teens think about sex all the time. I hardly ever do. Am I normal or is something wrong with me?

ANSWER: Just as it's normal to have sexual thoughts and feelings, you needn't worry if, at this age, you don't. A man-woman relationship needs love, intelligence, respect and commitment. You can't love someone if you don't respect that person.

Make up your own mind. Because of our fear of rejection and our desire to "belong," we sometimes do things we don't really want to do because we want to be accepted and not have to stand up against peer pressure. If you feel good about yourself, you are more forceful about standing up for what you believe in. You can take the pressure. You are less likely to do something just to be liked by others.

Once you understand the meaning of sex and where it belongs in your life, you will have more strength to resist temptations, and get on with the important tasks of learning, maturing, and becoming a productive and creative person.

QUESTION: My boyfriend says he really needs sex, and if I don't do it with him, he'll find someone else. What should I do?

ANSWER: If he believes that sex is more important than his friendship with you, then let him find someone else.

QUESTION: How do you control your feelings if you really like someone, but you're too young to get serious?

ANSWER: These feelings are only natural, and often you will like certain people more than others. Problems can arise when you concentrate all your feelings on just one person, because you make your growing emotions harder to control. To help yourself stay in control, find your security in a number of friends of both sexes and continue to meet and be friendly to others.

QUESTION: Is it good to have a girlfriend or boyfriend?

ANSWER: Having a girlfriend or boyfriend provides additional pressures that most teens don't need. In these years when we experience many personal changes, it's easy to find that in a few months we are no longer right for each other. However, it is hard to break up. As our affections grow for a person, we sometimes find ourselves being dependent on him/her rather than growing as an independent, secure person. Finally, in a boyfriend-girlfriend relationship the sexual temptation becomes stronger.

Many teens who are very involved in sports, academics, drama, or other activities find that their social needs are met through the friendships of classmates also involved in these things. This is healthier.



QUESTION: What if I already have been sexually involved with someone, but now want to save sexual intimacy for marriage. Is it too late?

ANSWER: Many people think that you can't go back once you've "gone all the way." The fact is, you **can** still make choices about your sexual activity. Once you have given in to your sexual impulses, you can regain control over them. You can choose sexual freedom. This decision to stop having sex until after marriage and the acting out of that decision is called "renewed virginity."

Any person can do this by:

- ✗ deciding to change.
- ✗ detaching him/herself from old habits, from people, places and situations that weaken self-control.
- ✗ developing new, non-physical ways to share affection.

It's not always easy to do the right thing, but it's a sure way to feel real self-confidence, self-respect, and self-control. It's never too late to be free. Believe in yourself, in your ability to live a life of real value and real love.

Expectations

Boys say...

- ✘ The trouble is, whenever you invite a girl for a date, you feel so much pressure. You can't feel at ease or be your normal self. All the time you have to pretend to be someone you're not so as to meet her expectations.
- ✘ Girls expect too much from us. A person naturally feels anxious about going out on a first date, but you have to hide this uneasiness by all means. I wish we could be above all that fuss. If you let them see that you are shy or scared, you're bound to be rejected.
- ✘ Your friends put pressure on you as well. Time and again they ask how far you've developed the relationship. So you start telling all kinds of stories although nothing took place in reality. And that can bring about serious problems.
- ✘ Everybody puts pressure on you. As soon as you start going out with a girl everyone starts preparations for your wedding. Perhaps we'd like to get to know each other better, to see for ourselves whether we make a good match. But your peers are always expecting some action from you.

Girls say...

- ✘ The trouble is, guys expect you to do whatever they want. And almost always they have but one desire.
- ✘ Girls can't go anywhere by themselves. It's okay for guys to wander around by themselves on the streets. But if you're a girl, you're expected to have a boyfriend. If you don't have a boyfriend, there must be something wrong with you. But if you have a boyfriend, you have to behave in a way girlfriends are expected to behave. If you don't, you're looked at as if there were something strange about you.
- ✘ Despite the fact that our society is considered to be free, in reality there are many things that are taboo for girls. It is considered to be indecent for a girl to approach a guy; or a girl shouldn't argue with a boy if his buddies can hear it, no matter what the boy might be saying or doing.
- ✘ It is much easier to go out with another girl rather than with a boyfriend. You don't feel any pressure. When you go somewhere with boys they pay attention to your every step. You have to pretend to be sophisticated and grown up, no matter what you may actually feel.