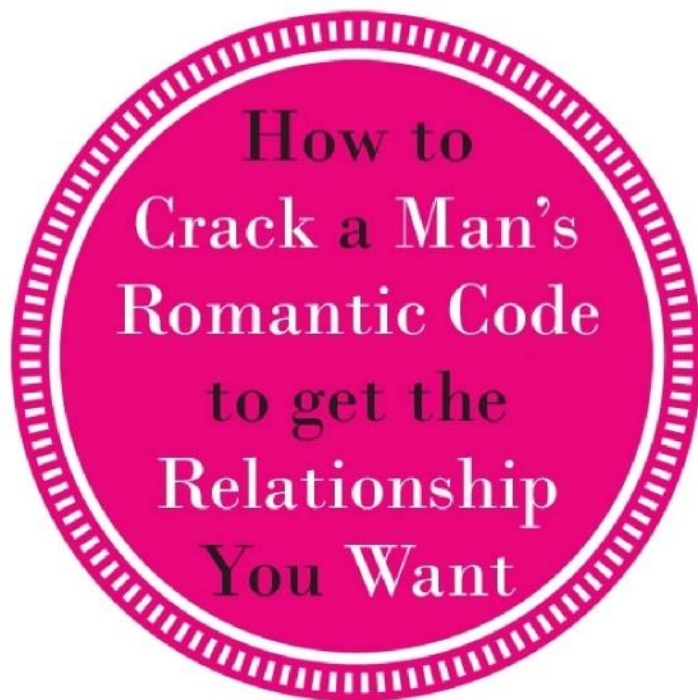


# He's Not *That* Complicated



By Sabrina Alexis and Eric Charles

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Now let's move on to the fun stuff...

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# FREE CHAPTER INTRO

## *From Sabrina*

Once upon a time, long before A New Mode even existed, I was just like you - an amazing woman with plenty to offer who just couldn't seem to get the love I wanted.

I wanted to have an amazing relationship with an amazing guy, a guy who loved and appreciated me for exactly who I was, but it just never panned out. It wasn't that I couldn't get a man; it was that I couldn't seem to make it stick. And even when I did find myself in a relationship, I always felt like I was at the mercy of the guy, like the relationship was a ticking time bomb and the slightest movement on my part would set it off and send him running for cover.

I could never really enjoy my relationships because I was crippled by the fear of everything coming apart.

The real kicker for me was when the guy who I considered to be the love of my life left me for someone else. Not only that, this new girl managed to turn him into the guy I always wanted him to be. With me he was distant and confusing, giving me no comfort or security in the relationship. Even though he was with me, I never felt like I had him. I felt like he was always just beyond my grasp and could slip away at any moment. With her, he was Mr. loving and affectionate. He became official with her in a matter of weeks, he posted album after album of the two of them on Facebook. With me it took six months to get him to admit we were in an actual relationship, and being official on Facebook was totally out of the question.

At the time it made zero sense to me. I was so good to him, so loving, so kind, why wasn't he that kind of guy when he was with me? Why

wasn't I worthy of his love in the same way she was? Was she better than me? Prettier? Smarter?

The answer is no. The answer is something I didn't discover until much later. The problem wasn't that I was unworthy of him, the problem was I didn't *know* I was worthy of having an amazing relationship. Instead, I accepted whatever scraps he was willing to give, and as a result, all I got were scraps.

This guy wasn't the only one who broke my heart, there were others who dented it along the way.

Time after time I just felt so helpless and confused. I just wanted to understand what I was doing wrong and how I could attain a happy relationship with a guy I could just be myself around. I felt so lost and alone, two of the worst feelings there are in this life. I would buy books on relationships and read any article I could get my hands on, but the answers I was desperately seeking were never found.

What I didn't realize at the time was one fundamental secret about how men operate, an understanding that put an end to my confusion by making me realize that men really aren't so complicated. From there, relationships became easy, fun, and effortless. Once I spread the gospel onto my friends and watched as their relationships completely transformed as well.

My years of heartache instilled an overwhelming desire to create a resource where women could get answers to all their dating dilemmas. And not just any answers—real, honest, no-nonsense answers that cut straight to the heart of the matter.

I teamed up with dating coach Eric Charles in 2008 to launch A New Mode and within a few short months our readership exploded on account of our relationship content.

In time, we decided that blog articles wouldn't be enough to help our readers get the relationships they were seeking....we needed to get it all down in a book so they could really learn the system inside out. And this is how "He's Not That Complicated: How to Crack a Man's Romantic Code to Get the Relationship you Want" was born.

With this book, our mission was to break down the most common relationship issues and identify why they happen and how to avoid them. When you understand how men operate and what a relationship looks like from a male's perspective, you will know exactly how to get the relationship you've always wanted.

Without further adieu, I hope you enjoy this free chapter from the book.

## CHAPTER 2: When a Seemingly Good Connection/Relationship Goes Bad

“Before you fall in love, make sure there is someone there to catch you.” – Anonymous

The most common types of questions boil down to amateur detective work on why a guy didn’t do what the girl wanted him to do.

The questions take on different forms, but ultimately the pattern is this: A girl likes a guy... he shows some kind of signal that he might like her... a courtship of sorts ensues and things seem to be going great, but then... he starts to withdraw. As soon as this happens, the poor girl becomes overwhelmed with self-doubt and confusion about the guy and might start chasing him and hunting him down to get some answers...which causes him to withdraw even further.

The ultimate question comes down to this: "I thought he liked me, what happened?"

We get flooded with e-mails about how some guy didn’t text back or didn’t call or didn’t set his Facebook status to say “In a relationship.” The majority of these issues could be resolved by doing one simple thing: backing off. When you take a few steps backward, it gives him the space to move a few steps forward and put forth a little more effort to win you over. Keep going and you’ll see what we mean.

### WHY DIDN’T HE TEXT BACK?

Using a guy’s text message habits as a litmus test for your relationship status seems to be the norm these days (even though it’s completely and utterly arbitrary, but we’ll get to that later).

If a guy doesn't text a girl back it's usually for one of the following reasons:

1. He's not that into her
2. He's busy
3. She's being needy and he doesn't want to deal with it
4. He didn't have his phone nearby
5. He's hanging out with another girl

First and foremost, do not try to fix the behavior with *why didn't you* (*Why didn't you call? Why didn't you tell me you might be late? Why didn't you text back sooner?*), nothing along those lines! You might think you're drawing a line in the sand, but he sees it as something else entirely: *neediness*.

Here are a few tips to help you keep a clear head and an objective perspective if you find yourself in this sort of situation:

### **Examine the Circumstance**

We live in an ADD culture and when a guy doesn't text back immediately, it's most likely because he's busy. Guys tend to be single-minded in what they're doing and tend to focus on meeting one objective at a time. If a guy is busy, the last thing he wants is to be interrupted over and over again with text messages and the burden of having to respond right away. Usually, what started out as something innocent (him being busy) turns into unnecessary drama (you overreacting and seeing it as a sign that the relationship is in trouble).

Before you get all riled up about his texting habits and what it means, examine the circumstances. If he disappears when you're in the middle of making plans and things start to get complicated (you say you're busy this day, he's busy on that day, you're free after eight, he can only do before seven), then he probably got distracted



somewhere along the way and is directing his attention elsewhere. It doesn't mean he doesn't want to see you; he was probably in the middle of something else and planned on getting back to you when he could focus and didn't feel the need to text further at that exact moment since you guys were going around in circles anyway.

He may also go silent if you're having one of those texting-but-not-talking-about-anything conversations (*How are you?...Good, you?...Good, work is stressing me out...Same, today has been non-stop...Same here...*). Guys are very goal-oriented and oftentimes they'll just get distracted and not feel the need to text further unless it's for a specific purpose.

Men are not women, shocking right? While most women can effectively juggle a minimum of five things at a time, men have enough trouble focusing on one thing at a time. Just because texting while you're in the middle of a million other things comes easily to you doesn't mean it's the same for him. Women are naturally good at multi-tasking; most men are not. Remember this and cut him some slack when he takes longer than you would to respond.

We can never really know what's going on in someone else's head. When it comes to this whole texting issue (and by the way, most guys have no idea how crazy this whole texting/calling regularly thing is for girls, none!), trying to get to the *why* is an exercise in futility. A much more effective use of your time is to focus on how you react to the situation.

### **The Best Reaction Is No Reaction**

When you stop reacting to things automatically, you gain awareness of the situation. You will stop getting lost in emotions that don't help you and will gain a clearer perspective on the best way to respond (if the situation even warrants a response). When you are unreactive, you get to choose the best move. When you are able to see things

from a more objective standpoint, you'll realize that him not texting you back promptly isn't *that* big of a deal.

Rather than getting consumed with fury when he takes a while to respond, just shift your focus and do something else. And whatever you do, *don't* wait on him. People tend to see how much they can get away with. If you're always available to a guy, he'll treat you like an option rather than a priority. If you are *selectively available* and only act as accommodating as he is to you, you will get the respect and "good behavior" you're looking for.

This isn't just a guy thing, it's a human thing – we value only what we have to work for. Or, put differently, we value the things that aren't guaranteed or freely available to us unless we earn them.

When trying to figure out the appropriate response to certain situations, it's helpful to think about the way you interact with your friends. If you text one of your friends asking what she's up to that night and don't hear back from her for a few hours, do you go into panic mode and assume she no longer cares about you? Do you analyze the last text you sent her, searching for hidden clues to tell you what you did wrong? Do you feel angry and throw your hands up with an exasperated *I just don't get it!*? Probably not. Chances are you don't even notice how long she takes to answer your text. And if you do, you probably assume she's busy or doesn't have her phone handy.

Wouldn't life be so much easier if you could respond in the same calm and collected manner when a guy you like takes a while to text back? Well then there you go! The choice is up to you.

Remember, this doesn't make you a pushover or a doormat. It makes you a confident woman who doesn't need a guy to text her every five minutes in order to know he really cares about her.

## Assume He Likes You

If you assume he likes you, you remove the fear and the anxiety that stems from this whole “why didn’t he text me back?” conundrum. He likes you. You know he does (or at least, you’re doing a good job convincing yourself he does!), so what is there to worry about?

People who assume other people like them are more likable. The same is true for people who assume others *don’t* like them: if you believe you are unlikable, people will be more likely to dislike you. Sure, it may seem a little delusional to force yourself into believing the other person feels the way you want them to feel, but the truth is that we do it all the time anyway. The trouble is most people automatically assume the worst and look for signs that point to the outcome they don’t want. If you’re going to make any assumptions, you may as well go with the one that serves you instead of one that guarantees failure.

## Be Complete

One of the best things you can do is make sure that you have a full and enjoyable life. When your life is meaningful and full of friends, fun, and fulfillment, you won’t fall into the trap of obsessing when that next text is going to come or if he called or not; you’ll be too busy enjoying the rest of your life.

If you are smothering a guy with *needing* him to reassure you and text you back constantly, you will drive him away. The right move in this situation is to back off, keep your life filled with fun and exciting options, and give him space to put in the effort and pursue you. This isn’t being manipulative – guys actually like to pursue women (to a point) and they appreciate having the space to do so.

## What It Looks Like

Marissa and Luke had been seeing each other for a few months and while things were going well, Marissa was growing increasingly frustrated by Luke's texting habits.

Luke would often go MIA when they were in the middle of making plans and while she often accommodated his flakiness, she was getting sick of telling her friends, "Oh, I can't commit to anything this weekend because I might have plans with Luke, still waiting to hear back..." She called him out on it a few times and while he would apologize for "leaving her hanging," the problem persisted.

Luke was simply a bad texter, some people are just born that way. He didn't mean to do it; he wasn't intentionally trying to piss her off; he just didn't have any sort of substantial motivation to change this ingrained behavior. By waiting around for him to respond and being so accommodating to his schedule, Marissa was perpetuating the very problem she was so steadfastly fighting against.

Eventually, Marissa decided enough was enough. One week she made tentative plans with Luke to do something that coming Saturday. True to form, he didn't finalize anything and simply stopped texting after they decided "maybe we'll do something on Saturday." Marissa knew if she pressed him to make a definite plan he would just give her vague answers ("I may have to work, I'll let you know," "My friend might be coming to town, not sure yet, I'll keep you posted"), so when he didn't lock down something by the end of the week, she made other plans. That Saturday, Luke texted her at around 5 p.m. asking what time they were meeting and was stunned when she said she couldn't see him because she made plans with her girlfriends.

"What do you mean you have other plans? We were supposed to do something tonight."

“Well you said you might be free, but we never decided on anything concrete, so I assumed it was a no go. So sorry for the mix up, have a fun night!”

Luke stayed home that night twiddling his thumbs and torturing himself with thoughts of how many guys were hitting on his girl at that exact moment. From then on, he never left her hanging and was sure to make definite plans in advance.

### **When He Goes from Texting A Lot...to Nothing**

There are some situations where a guy is a horrible texter from the start (like Luke), and other cases where his texting habits slowly disintegrate over time. In the beginning, he's a texting machine. After a month or two, not so much. He'll text here and there, but nowhere near his texting glory days.

The problem is not that you are doing something inherently *wrong* to cause him to text less frequently. The problem is that it's not sustainable. Texting constantly is—to put it bluntly—a pain in the rear for most guys.

In the beginning of a relationship, it's natural for the guy to try to win you over and to do whatever he can to keep your attention on him. And what better way to insert himself into your mind than by texting you throughout the day? Once things are a bit more established, he may not feel the need to do this anymore. Also, it's not a realistic, sustainable habit to be constantly texting little messages all day.

Guys, lovable as they can be, usually like to use the phone to make a plan and that's it. They don't like chitchat if it's not towards a purpose; it's just not how they're wired.

A big mistake many women make is assuming the guy no longer feels as strongly for her because he texts less frequently. Texting isn't

a barometer for the relationship. The time you spend together, and how meaningful and enjoyable it is, counts much more than the amount of time that has elapsed since his last text.

Instead of counting the texts and analyzing the emoticons, put your focus on creating a life that is fulfilling *outside* of the relationship and a connection that is meaningful *within* the relationship.

## WHY DID HE VANISH?

Now this is a frustrating situation if ever there was one. You're seeing a guy, you think things are rolling right along splendidly, and then suddenly he's gone, vanished without a trace. You consider for a moment if he might be dead or in a coma, but you notice there has been activity on his Facebook page, so that's not it. He has just suddenly and abruptly decided he no longer wants to see you and you're left trying to figure out why.

At the end of the day, you don't know why and there is no way you'll be able to know for sure. And frankly, it would be a waste of time to try and play detective. There's no benefit to putting yourself through that agony.

It really doesn't matter why he vanished or what, if anything, broke the camel's back. The bigger issue here is your emotional state. You're confused, you're worried, you're upset. You're racking your brain trying to pinpoint the moment it all went wrong. You examine all the possibilities. *Is it something I said? Something I did? Something I didn't do?* These emotions are all understandable when someone you care about disappears.

### The Most Likely Reason...

While every situation is different, these disappearing acts usually occur because the guy feels trapped or freaked out by the relationship and finds it easier to just remove himself entirely instead

of looking you in the face and telling you why he doesn't want to be with you (does anyone, guy or girl, ever *really* want to have that conversation? Yes it's the more dignified approach, but it's also the more torturous!).

This sort of thing doesn't usually boil down to one particular thing you said or did. It's probably rooted in an overall vibe that you're conveying, and that vibe would be none other than our dear friend *neediness*. If you are absolutely positive that you did not send out any "needy" signals and you were as cool and confident as can be, then he probably has a wife and kids somewhere, or maybe he did lapse into a coma. It's always one of those three.

Guys aren't anti-relationship. A guy will happily hop into a relationship with a woman who brings out the best in him and makes him feel great about who he is and what he has to offer. If you communicate, even in the slightest way, that a relationship with him is going to be some kind of life preserver or crutch for your emotional stability, he will definitely not want to pursue a relationship with you. His reasoning will most likely be that he's got enough problems of his own to deal with and the last thing he needs is to take on someone else's.

The best thing you can do is work on yourself and focus on becoming the best version of you. Be the kind of girl that no man would ever dream of leaving without an explanation, or leaving period.

### **When a Guy Vanishes After a Great First Date**

While not quite as tormenting as when a guy you've been seeing pulls a vanishing act, a guy disappearing after an amazing first date is equally puzzling and can do a number on your self-esteem.

There are a few possible reasons why a guy might fade into the abyss after a seemingly wonderful first date. Either he wasn't that into



you and was just being polite throughout the date, was primarily trying to get laid and decided not to push it any further when you didn't put out that night, or he didn't think you were that into him.

### **Possibility #1: He's not that into you**

For whatever reason, he may just not be into you. Sometimes the chemistry just isn't there, it happens. There is also a possibility that you came across as alarmingly eager. Interest and enthusiasm are not the same as over-eagerness. If he feels that you're unjustifiably eager, he may want to get out of the situation as quickly as possible.

On a first date, a guy can usually piece together whether dating you is going to be more of a liability than a good thing for him. He asks about yourself, he gets a sense of how much you enjoy your life and what you do to fill your time. If you pretty much don't enjoy anything (you don't really like your friends anymore, you don't like your job, you don't like your lifestyle), then he is most likely going to avoid dating you because he doesn't want to be the guy who has to perk you up.

On the other end of the spectrum, talking endlessly about how great your life is reeks of the same emotional baggage. Bragging conveys that you have something to prove and that you're trying to impress him. You don't have to tell him about how many guys hit on you when you go out, or how your ex is still so obsessed with you, or how you are the *most* important person at your job, or how you have the *coolest* life anyone can imagine. If you carry yourself with confidence, he will assume these things all on his own and then he will be the one trying to win *you* over.

When you make a strong case for your awesomeness, all he'll see is your insecurities and no guy wants to deal with that. Next time you find yourself asserting your "greatness," take a step back and remember this phrase: A rich man doesn't need to tell you he's rich.



**Suggestion:** A useful concept to keep in mind is the self-fulfilling prophecy — that which we believe (or fear) tends to come true when it is focused on earnestly. This concept can have a positive or negative effect on a person's life, depending on whether they habitually focus on positive outcomes or negative outcomes. If you go into a date full of fear of rejection, you are setting yourself up to get rejected. If you go in with confidence, truly believing this guy will be powerless against your charm and endless virtues, then you pretty much guarantee a second date before you even start the first one.

### **Possibility #2: He doesn't think you're into *him***

Guys can be somewhat uneasy when they first meet a woman. It varies from guy to guy (and also depends on how many women he's dated), but sometimes it takes a bright blinking neon sign in order for a guy to know that a woman likes him. As guys get more experienced with women, they generally know that their best bet is to assume the woman is interested in them and act accordingly (respectfully, of course). However, not all guys come from this place of internal validation and they may look to the woman for signs that indicate she's attracted. If she is guarded, playing hard-to-get, or just not a very expressive type of person, he may interpret her behavior as meaning she's not feeling him.

Here are a few things that a woman might do unconsciously during a date that signal to a guy she's not interested:

- Texting or talking on the phone during a date. (If you genuinely have to and you're apologetic, that's fine. Otherwise, red flag.)
- Not smiling.
- Not really participating in the conversation. He talks and you respond with something minimal in an indifferent tone.
- Actively showing disinterest in talking to him – paying attention to

other things happening in the room, checking the time, checking for the waiter to hurry up and bring the bill.

### **Confusing Situation Decoded**

You go on a date with a guy who not only seemed *really* interested, but actually said, “I’m really into you”...and never hear from him again (or worse, receive an e-mail from him apologizing and saying he didn’t feel a “spark”). You feel utterly confused by this, especially since he poured it on so thick, telling you how beautiful/amazing /smart/incredible/fabulous you are and even ending the date with a passionate kiss. No spark?!

The most likely explanation here is that during the date, the guy, for whatever reason, decided that you weren’t the kind of girl he could see himself with. However, he still finds you sexy and his feelings of attraction may overpower the logical side of his brain, hence the sweet nothings. To put it bluntly, he’d be up for having sex with you, but not into having a boyfriend-girlfriend type of relationship with you (which is what he believes you want).

This scenario is one of the main reasons women are warned so heavily against sleeping with a guy on the first date. If you sleep with this kind of guy, he’ll never call again and if you don’t sleep with him, he’ll also (most likely) never call again. The moral of the story? Ignore the kisses and compliments and hone in on the actual person.

### **Cheat Sheet**

On a first date, it’s always best to show interest without seeming over eager. If it sounds confusing, here are some quick tips to get it right:

**Do:** Listen to him, make eye contact, keep your phone tucked away (and if you must check it, do so when you take a bathroom break), ask questions, smile, laugh when he says something funny (or something he thinks is funny), find subtle ways to touch him.

**Don't:** Hang on every single word like a love struck Romeo, agree with everything he says even if you don't actually agree, brag about yourself, complain about your life, talk about your exes, ask when you're going to see him again, ask him what he's looking for relationship-wise, be too aggressive, throw yourself at him.

### **When A Guy Vanishes *Before* A Great First Date**

You meet a guy—maybe it's at a bar, a coffee shop, bookstore, wherever, and it just clicks. You talk about hanging out sometime, swap digits, he says he'll call...and he never does. Now you're really flippin' confused. How can he dump you *before* taking you out on one stinkin' date?

This premature vanishing act can occur for a million reasons. You never really know with strangers; he might be married with kids or a serial killer on the loose. He may have chickened out or maybe he forgot about you (this is usually the case if you met at a dark bar during the wee hours).

You can never really know with absolute certainty why a guy never called, but we can give you helpful pointers to up your odds and help you become more call-able.

The best way to pique a man's interest is to be *confident*, open, friendly, and able to hold your own in a conversation. Talk to him like you already know him (as opposed to awkward, interview-like, stilted bar conversation). This establishes a connection and comfort level and reduces the risk of him chickening out on making the phone call.

Here are a few more handy pointers:

#### **1. Have him picture you hanging out together**

This is a great psychological trick. When you're talking to a guy that you're digging, try to maneuver the conversation toward things you two could *do* together. Most importantly, get him to picture doing

whatever this thing is together with you. It doesn't matter what it is—cooking, grocery shopping, rock climbing, playing Wii Tennis. If he is able to picture the two of you having fun hanging out in the future, it is much more likely to happen.

Having someone picture hanging out with you in the future and having fun makes them feel comfortable with the idea, like it's already happened. Remember, don't force things along (unless you're incredibly skillful in conversation), just work it in naturally and gently.

## **2. Don't be afraid to be challenging and/or tease him a bit**

Most men would agree that the women who make the biggest impression are the ones who challenge them in some way. Sometimes they're challenging by teasing a bit. Sometimes they're challenging by not going along with everything he's saying. Sometimes they're challenging by calling him out on his B.S.

When a woman is challenging, in addition to being interesting and fun, it's an irresistible combination. Being challenging without any other qualities, however, is just plain annoying. When you can mix in a little bit of challenge in addition to your normal charming disposition, you'll find that a little push goes a long way.

A lot of women misinterpret this to mean being difficult, bitchy, or contrarian. That is *not* what we recommend. The simple trick here is to act like a complete equal who can expand and deepen his experience of life because you don't just go along with everything he says and everything he does. If you do agree with him or want to go along with him on something, by all means do! It would be silly to put up static against what you *do* want.

Don't be afraid to voice your true feelings and true opinions for fear that the guy will reject you. In reality, this kind of honesty will only deepen your relationship with him (and his respect and attraction towards you).

### **3. Enjoy the conversation for what it is**

Girls who have experienced this sort of disappearing act many times before may end up developing a complex around it, telling themselves things like, “All the guys I actually like never call me back” or, “Guys never call me, what am I doing to scare them away?” This automatically poisons their interactions with men because they will be coming from a place of fear and, you guessed it, neediness.

If you go into a conversation fearing that a guy won’t do something that you want him to do, you are bringing neediness into the interaction. That is, you *need* him to act a certain way otherwise you’ll feel worried/upset/sad/insecure.

Neediness is one of those vibes that just repels people, even if it doesn’t manifest in an outwardly obvious way. Neediness from a guy is just as repulsive to a girl as neediness from a girl is to a guy. Think about the guys who go out of their way to impress you before they even really know you. Does this make you feel special? Probably not, it probably creeps you out.

So what’s the solution? Enjoy the conversation for what it is. Put your best self forward and if you like him, try to set the stage for a date.

### **4. Assume he’s going to call**

No matter what, assume he’s going to call from the start of the interaction and stick to that assumption! Don’t try to get him to give you this assurance by saying something desperate like, “Are you sure you’re gonna call? You promise? You pinky promise?” And don’t think you’re being stealthy by hiding your desperation under a cloak of flirtation with something like, “I bet you always hit on girls and say you’ll call you sneaky little stud you.”

No matter how you phrase it, if you try to get some sort of

guarantee that he's going to call, you're telling him that you're insecure and don't think you're good enough for him to call. If you don't think that about yourself, why should he?

## **5. Let it be**

Once you've done all that... that's it. Women set the stage for future heartache (and a whopping headache) when they analyze and obsess over the details. If you don't hear from him and you did everything we mentioned above, then there were extenuating circumstances that had nothing to do with you (the wife, the kids, the cops on his tail).

Your only option at this point is to take a step back and swallow a giant chill pill. Maybe do some yoga, practice meditating, hang out with friends, any distraction is good because the thinking and obsessing will only cause more problems down the road.

## **WHEN A GUY ACTS DISTANT AND WITHDRAWS**

Before a guy vanishes, there is often a period of withdrawal. Only he doesn't seem to experience any withdrawal symptoms. No those are reserved for you (nausea, stomach pains, anxiety, sweaty palms, insomnia). Yes, as he withdraws, you go further into *withdrawal*. You are a junkie and he is slowly weaning you off the drug known on the streets as *Him*.

This is a critical time when the fate of your relationship is almost entirely under your control.

When a guy pulls back, the curtains open, the spotlight is on and it's shining right down on you. How you react tells him exactly who you are and what kind of girl you will be in a relationship. It might not be true, but it feels pretty darn true to him so he'll back off, more and more.

The way you react to him pulling away speaks volumes and is the deciding vote in whether or not this relationship will survive. You are down to your final question and your lifelines have all been used up. Are you *sure* you want to choose that reaction?

Now to be clear, we do not advocate intentionally manipulating your behavior for the sole purpose of getting the guy, that's just neediness all dressed up. No, if you're going to survive this inevitable relationship hurdle, you need to genuinely be in the right place emotionally.

When a guy starts to pull away, a lot of women hit the rewind button in their minds and think back to a happier time—the beginning. *He liked me so much at first, I don't get it! He told me I was beautiful, that he had never ever met anyone like me, that I was the most magnificent creature to ever walk the earth. Why is he doing this?! Why????!!*

We're gonna get to all of that, but first let's talk about the things guys say in the beginning of a relationship because this really seems to trip up most women.

**“But he was so sweet in the beginning, was it a lie?”**

When a guy says things like, “I’ve never liked a girl so much so soon,” or texts you saying he misses you when you barely know each other, he is not making a declaration of everlasting, undying love for you. He is just saying that at that moment, he feels good about you. However, all emotions are subject to change. Statements like this should be enjoyed, but taken with a grain of salt and *not* treated as milestones or markers of the quality of your relationship. Not in the beginning, at least.

The things a guy says in the early stages of a relationship are also often rooted in his own insecurity. That may be hard to believe, but it's true. He doesn't know whether or not you actually like him or if



you are attracted to him, so he may throw things out there just to see how you respond and to get a read on the relationship potential. Everyone wants to be liked; it's a great feeling for both guys and girls. However, it's important to keep in mind that all that mushy stuff he piles on in the beginning is primarily his way of hooking you in and seeing where you stand, not necessarily his way of expressing his feelings.

It's not that he doesn't feel anything for you or that he won't feel anything for you, but at this early phase, it's all just poetry. It will be real when both of you are convinced that you like each other and you are both able to drop your guards and get to know each other on a more real and personal level, one that doesn't involve reading the proverbial signs.

When he feels that there is a real connection between the two of you, when he knows that you like him back and you both enjoy your time together, that is when things will take on a more meaningful shape.

### **When the Sweet Talk Stops**

He's being all sweet and it's working, you start to really like him... and then there's a palpable shift. This is usually the point where the guy realizes that you really like him, he has you, and he doesn't have to worry whether or not he could lose you anymore. Things are probably starting to get comfortable—you make plans regularly, you're in contact more frequently, and a relationship seems just around the corner.

While you might start getting really excited by this prospect, this particular guy has probably gotten freaked out. At this point, he's afraid everything he said in the beginning led you to believe that you guys are a couple. As a reaction to this fear, he may start acting out to show you that this is not the case. He cancels plans, he goes MIA



for days at a time, he acts distant when you guys do speak or hang out. You feel overwhelmed by confusion and yearn for things to go back to the way they were.

At the root of it, the same sense of insecurity that made him obsessed with finding out if you like him is now scaring him into thinking that you're going to take his freedom away. This is a guy thing; he might be completely faithful to you in every way, but he still wants to feel like he can do whatever he wants. What may seem like a sudden loss of interest is really just his way of holding onto his freedom. It doesn't mean he's not into you anymore; the reason he'll send those sweet texts from time to time is to make sure you know he's still interested. His behavior is really his way of trying to slow things down. The way you respond determines whether they ever pick back up.

### **The Freak Out Phase**

The Freak Out Phase usually occurs after a relationship hits some sort of milestone. This can be something substantial, like becoming "official," or something subtle, like a sense that the relationship is deepening. As soon as this happens, an alarm bell may go off in a man's mind, scaring him into thinking that he's about to lose his freedom and independence. As a reaction, he may withdraw a bit.

The way you respond during this time is critical.

If you start getting on his case (*Why didn't you call? Where have you been? Why are you being so shady?*), he will start to feel trapped and suffocated and will pull away even more. If you keep badgering him, he will no longer see you as a prize he needs to win over, he will see you as a desperate and clingy pest.

When you take his actions personally and assume he's withdrawing because of something you said or did, you will start acting all needy and insecure, suffocating the guy with your fears and

concerns. When this happens, his mind goes, *SEE!! I told you you're losing your freedom! Look at how she's all on top of you now! Not giving you even an ounce of space or freedom for yourself! Run Forrest, run!*

When a guy asks for space, this is what usually happens:

1. Guy, for whatever reason, feels emotionally unbalanced. This could stem from feeling pressured, fear of commitment, or any number of reasons, but something is causing him to feel a little “freaked.”
2. Guy feels he needs to handle his issue and thinks that having girl around will make it much harder for him to figure things out.
3. Guy tells girl he needs space.
4. Girl gives him space, but then starts thinking about what she could have done wrong and tries to figure out what sparked this sudden need for space.
5. Girl’s thinking quickly becomes coated with tremendous insecurity, fear of abandonment, jealousy, a feeling that she screwed up somehow, or that she wasn’t good enough.
6. Girl works herself into such an emotional wreck that she can’t help herself from contacting the guy, hoping to receive reassurance or validation while trying to force things to go back to the way they were pre-freak-out.
7. Guy feels pressured and interrupted, which makes him more emotionally unstable and makes it harder to handle his issues.
8. Guy pulls back further, girl sees this as further confirmation that everything she was fearing is true.

9. Cycle continues, repeat steps 7, 8 and 9 indefinitely.

A guy can withdraw for any number of reasons and it isn't a phenomenon exclusive to the early stages of a relationship. Guys may also take a step back when they feel that something is wrong in the relationship and they want to get a handle on how they feel about it on their own. What they don't want is someone hounding them to explain their feelings and actions, especially since they're not clear on these things themselves.

Or maybe there's nothing going on upstairs and he's just testing the waters before he emotionally invests himself further...

### **The Testing Phase**

What many people refer to as the "Testing Phase" is actually more like "the guy showing his true self to see how you will react phase." Realistically, a guy isn't always going to act the way he did in the very beginning. In the beginning, he's trying to win you over. He calls you every day, he takes you out to nice places, and when he's with you his focus is fully on you. However, this can't go on forever. There will be times when he can't constantly check in and eventually, he's going to have to devote energy and effort to areas in his life outside of you.

What may feel like a test or a withdrawal is often just him being his normal self. The way you respond is vital if you want the relationship to live to see another day. If you instantly pounce on him when he takes a while to text back, he may see it as a taste of worse things to come, of more constant questions, of more demands he has to fulfill, and he will head for the hills. If you freak out when he turns his head to look at a pretty girl or if he has a conversation with a female other than you, he'll see you as insecure (and a little crazy) and there is nothing that turns a man off faster than that (actually neediness can, but neediness and insecurity go hand in hand).

The best way for a guy to determine if he wants to be with a particular woman is to see how she reacts when she doesn't get what she wants. Think about it, it's easy to be with a woman when she's happy and when you're doing everything she wants. But that's not always possible; every man knows that sooner or later the woman is going to be unhappy with something he says or does. For a man, it's better to know how she'll react to these things *before* he gets in too deep.

When a guy "tests" you, he's really looking to see how secure you are and how well you can handle yourself and your emotions. If you lose control, you will confirm his preconceived notion that all women are crazy and too emotional. Keep your cool and handle yourself with dignity and he will think he has *finally* found the diamond in the rough. *At last! A woman who will let me breathe! I'm hanging onto this one and never letting go!*

It may seem childish or unfair, but before you rage against the whole system, remember that women *also* have their way of testing men. We may complain about it, but when you get to the heart of it, testing is a good thing. Testing is how we protect ourselves from long-term heartache and eventual heartbreak.

If a girl is too insecure to handle having to wait for a text or her guy glancing over at another woman, then she's really not ready for a long-term relationship anyway, plain and simple.

### **An Important Clarification on Testing**

Many women hear about men "testing" women in relationship and get this idea that men are intentionally doing and saying things to test a woman's response. This is not the case. Men don't seek out ways to cause drama and promote game playing. A man's ideal world is a world with no drama and no problems.

The reality is that men are just going along being themselves and when a girl reacts with drama and turmoil, they notice it. Men can't help but take note and remember these things. Guys are typically pretty understanding; they understand that everyone has the occasional bad day. But when they see a pattern of drama, neediness, or insecurity, it becomes a huge red flag. This is all picked up subconsciously; it's not that men are intentionally testing women, it's just that men can't help but pick up on, and remember, bad reactions.

### **The Post-Coital Test**

The way you behave after you sleep with a guy for the first time is the biggest “test” of all, so if you want this relationship to work, you best not screw it up!

After you sleep with a guy, he will often assume that you're going to get attached and want to be his girlfriend, like, yesterday. It's a powerful stereotype that isn't going anywhere anytime soon, sorry.

Again, it comes down to being cool, collected, and confident. Do not start having visions of the future; stop planning those couples vacations in your mind; stop thinking of all the fun things you and your new boyfriend are gonna do. Why stop? Because he's not your boyfriend yet!

If you guys are official before you seal the deal in the biblical sense, then just move along at the same pace as before. Don't assume everything is different now because in his mind it isn't, he's just so terrified that it is in your mind. After you sleep with a guy for the first time, he turns into a teeny tiny mouse; even the slightest most minute thing can send him scurrying off to vanish into the nearest hiding place until it's safe to come out.

Remember, play it cool. Act as if everything is the same and do not press him for any sort of reassurance. If he backs off, do not freak

out. He did not use you, he wasn't only looking to get laid, he isn't backing off because he no longer cares. Pulling back a bit might not even be a conscious decision on his part, it may be a manifestation of society's notion that all women turn into clingy crazies after they do the deed and he might unconsciously be trying to see if it's true. Keep your cool and he will know you're a keeper.

Just to clarify, a relationship certainly *can* deepen after sex, especially if you wait until you've established a solid connection with your partner. It really varies from one couple to the next, but for all intents and purposes, it's best to not over-dramatize things and keep moving along at the same pace. If there has been a real shift in the dynamic of the relationship, you will both feel it and the level of commitment and intimacy will intensify organically.

### **The Proof is in the Science**

A study conducted on a college campus to understand gender preferences when it comes to dating versus casual hookups can better elucidate how men and women typically react after getting physical. Overall, researchers found that men and women prefer traditional dating over random hookups and both genders were in accord on the benefits and risks of dating and hooking up.

However, there were some notable differences:

- Women more than men seem to want a relationship. Women fear, both in dating and hooking up, that they will become emotionally attached to a partner who is not interested in them.
- Men more than women seem to value independence. Men fear that even in hooking-up relationships, which are supposed to be free of commitments, a woman might seek to establish a relationship.

**Fun Fact:** The fears men have about women wanting a relationship right away aren't fully unwarranted. There are biological reasons why women become more emotionally attached to their lovers than men do. Studies conducted to better understand romantic attachment discovered that orgasms cause both oxytocin and vasopressin to be released from the hypothalamus (the part of the brain that is responsible for pleasure and mating).

Although the two neuropeptides associated with continued attachment are secreted in both men and women, oxytocin and vasopressin have a stronger influence on women. What this means is women, much more than men, will get that warm and fuzzy feeling and feel a deep connection to their partner as a result. If you notice your feelings for him have suddenly changed while in a state of post-coital bliss, remember that this “connection” you feel is just an illusion, or rather, the crafty work of some feel-good hormones!

### **How to Get Through the Tests and Freak Outs**

Surviving the “Freak Out” or “Testing” phases is pretty simple: just play it cool.

Guys want to keep the drama in their lives to a minimum. When a girl starts making a guy's life more uncomfortable, less fun, less enjoyable than before, he'll try to get away from her as quickly as possible. You don't want to be the crazy lady he's running away from, you want to be the awesome girl he can't stop himself from moving closer to, and you can be!

There is nothing more appealing than a confident, happy, self-fulfilled woman. Ask any guy and he'll agree that this sort of a woman is the ultimate dream girl. Unfortunately, such a woman can be very hard to find. This is why it is so unbelievably important to find happiness within yourself before you jump into a relationship. If a guy knows that you don't need him in order to be happy, he won't be

afraid that being with you will mark the end of his days as a free man. If he sees that you have your own life and enjoy doing your own thing, he'll know that you won't cause a fuss if he does the same.

Remember, a guy is only as invested in you as the *effort* he puts into the relationship. If he's not putting forth effort, he's not investing in the relationship. So don't try to push him to do anything – live your life and give him the space to come to you. If he does, great, he's further invested. If he doesn't, well as they say, there are plenty more fish in the sea. Either way, that's much better than pushing on him, him pulling away, and you smothering the life out of the relationship.

The results can be pretty astounding. If you just back off a bit and *let it be*, he will suddenly go from mixed-signal-sending-jerk to knight in shining armor. If you don't believe us, give it a try.



## Reader Reviews:

*Just finished your book, loved it and felt it was worth every penny and more....to the ANM audience that hasn't purchased this yet, I highly recommend it! There's a lot of info that has been broken down in easy to read format with cheat sheets for go-to reference. If you're like me, you won't be able to put this down from start to finish. Now I feel like I have a better focus and more clearly defined purpose into the type of relationship I've always wanted to have.....I knew the two of you wouldn't disappoint.*

– Joanne

*Just wanted to congratulate you guys on this great book. There were a lot of "Oh my god! This was exactly what I did!" and "Dear god, I wish I had known all of this sooner!" moments. Like your articles on ANM, this book is very VERY helpful. I've learned a lot and I am certain I'll be able to apply everything I've learned from you guys in my next relationship. Thank you guys. You both rock!*

– Ika Koeck

*So finally I read your book and I have to say it is brilliant and to the point. I read it in one sitting because I couldn't put it down. You systematically addressed all the most crucial issues and laid it out clearly and concisely. I hope there will be another in the future!*

– Dolores

*Reading this book has changed my life. No joke! It was eye-opening in so many ways. I was able to pinpoint exactly where things have gone wrong in all my past relationships. At times it made me feel foolish because I realized I was making the same mistakes over and over. However, I finally have answers. I don't have that "what happened?!" feelings anymore. I know I'll be rereading this again and again.*

– Brittany

*Put simply ... thank you! This book has been enlightening and most importantly explains why people think or react in a certain way. The 'final thoughts' page perfectly sums up how I feel ... ready to close the past and excited to look to the future with a whole new, far less complicated, outlook.*

– Donna

*I love how this book is different from many relationship books out there, it does give you the knowledge and understanding, not just some clichés and bitchy advice. Unlike others it does not teach you to play some kind of role, manipulate, or change yourself completely to get what you want. It teaches you to understand men and maybe even more importantly, yourself. I would say one just needs an open mind, happy attitude, and this book to find the love they want.*

– Lana

*I bought the book last night and I could not put it down. I seriously read the whole thing in one sitting!! I loved it, this is probably the best advice I have ever read from a dating book. You have certainly opened my eyes to a few things and gave me a reminder of my self worth. Thank you!!!! This book is going to help so many people!*

– Heather

All right, enough talk, time to take some action and get the results you want! The full book can be purchased here→

<https://issuesoflove.com/hes-not-that-complicated>

And once you finish it, please e-mail us with your feedback. We work very hard to give our readers exactly what they want, so don't be shy!

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