

Does He Really Love Me Or is He Using Me? – 3 Relationship Experts Reveal How To Find Out

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If a man loves you, he chooses you, he honors you



The answer to this question is very simple.

If a man loves you, he chooses you. He honors you.

There is a deeper sense of safety and connection. He wants to include you in his plans, his choices, and decisions. If he loves you, he likely has given up older or bad habits to be the best he can for the relationship. He likely wants to make sure you feel safe and secure. He likely speaks into the future, and includes you in his future.

If men are using you, they are likely not completely interested in learning about you or perhaps avoid deeper conversations with you because they don't really care.

They may be secretive or “sketchy”. If a man is using you he probably doesn't spend much time with you without sexual interactions. You probably don't know his friends, or anyone in his deep circle. And if you do, those friends probably know he is using you, but do not want to say anything.

Obviously, some men are master manipulators and can be liars.

We cannot hold all men to this standard of course. This opens up the invitation to notice the type of character that the man is.

- Is he kind and giving?
- Does he make you a priority?
- Does he respond to your needs?

Love would show that the man is truly caring and invested. Love would show that he is curious about you, what's on your mind, and what brings you joy in life.

Sometimes, women can be blindsided by the charm of a man. Trust your gut. Your heart already knows the type of man that has just walked through the door.

Ananda Nelson, MSW – www.anandanelson.com

If someone is just trying to use you, you can feel that their interest is intermittent and inconsistent



How do you know if love is real? You can feel it.

When someone really loves you, you feel it – in your body, mind, and soul.

There is no doubt about it. If you find yourself doubting if someone really loves you, then he probably doesn't.

It takes time for love to grow and for a couple to move through the various stages of development in a relationship.

Moving from courtship into a more serious relationship, negotiating conflict, and building a strong commitment takes time. As time goes on, love can grow from infatuation into a more mature love. When this happens, the focus shifts from “what can I get?”, to “what can I give?”

It may not be realistic to expect mature love in the very beginning, as your relationship will need to go through various stages of growth during its lifespan. However, you can tell fairly early on if someone really cares about you or if they are trying to use you.

One way to know is by how he responds when you speak honestly about something that you want, something that bothers you, when you set boundaries, or have a conflict.

If he tries to understand your point of view, nurtures the relationship, and works with you to resolve issues, he probably really cares about you. When someone really cares about you, they care about how you feel, what you say, and not just how you look. If he is consistently caring in his behavior, you can start to build trust and the relationship will gradually solidify.

If someone is just trying to use you, you can feel that their interest is intermittent and inconsistent.

They will be highly interested in you when they want something, and not give you the time of day when they don't. Rather than blaming him or yourself, try to see the person for who he is. He probably does whatever he does with most people in his life, and not just with you. Therefore he is not intentionally doing it to you, but rather just being himself.

Another important point to consider is whether you yourself are capable of allowing yourself to be loved.

Sometimes we don't recognize real love when we see it, especially if we have had dysfunctional family relationships and not experienced love in a healthy way. It is important to do your own work to assess your own capacity for giving and receiving love and choosing healthy relationships.

Use your skills to assess the nature of people early on in your relationship.

Most people reveal who they truly are at some point in the beginning. Pay attention. These red flags present early and it is important not to overlook or rationalize them away.

In some relationships, people strike a deal and use each other for different reasons.

If it works for both of you, then you might have a fit. But if you want genuine love, and you have it to give, you owe it to yourself to find someone on your level who is truly capable of giving and receiving love.

Anita Gadhia-Smith, PsyD, LCSW-C, LICSW – www.drgadhiasmith.com

Ask yourself the below 6 questions



The possibility that a new love is a “user” is often difficult for a trusting person to consider for multiple reasons.

A warmhearted individual is often humble, so the idea that she possesses something someone else desires is often elusive. She may also be surprised and flattered by the attention. Also, a deeply caring nature is frequently what attracts a partner, yet if he is unable to match it, he may resort to manipulation instead.

A partner’s true intentions are important to decipher before a person invests or makes substantial sacrifices in a relationship.

Yet, a partner who uses a person for his own personal gain may be sly, so sorting it out is tricky.

An understanding person often trusts immediately and frequently sees the good in a partner, so accurately viewing a partner as self-serving may take time.

Although being a trusting and positive human being is valiant, it may blind a person to a certain extent.

Even so, a good-natured person should never change her character. Instead, she may ask six important questions.

The answers may shed light on the true intent of a questionable partner.

1. Do you continually seek his approval?

If a person is continually worried about losing a partner's approval, acceptance, or love, he may not be true. Partners who use people often need to be in control, so he operates from an aloof position, oscillating from accepting a person's attributes to belittling them.

For example, Brian tells Karrie he admires her generosity with her neighbors, yet a few weeks later scolds Karrie for volunteering to watch the neighbor's child while the neighbor runs an important errand.

Brian refers to Karrie as a "push over" and tells her she is being used. Karrie feels ashamed and although she enjoys watching the neighbor's child and maintains a strong bond with the child, she decides to refrain from helping the neighbor in the future.

Several days later, the neighbor asks Karrie to help during an emergency, and Karrie agrees. Due to her fear of Brian's judgement and disapproval, she is compelled to keep her good deed to herself.

2. Do you withhold personal achievements because you are afraid they will threaten your partner?

For instance, Amy is enrolled in a PhD program. Her partner did not complete college and often makes intensely devaluing comments about higher education.

Amy refrains from disclosing her involvement in graduate school because she senses it may threaten her partner. She withholds an important aspect about who she is to protect a partner's suspected low self-esteem.

3. Do you neglect activities your partner disapproves of, but jump into endeavors your partner endorses?

For example, Reese, an avid softball ball player, participates in two leagues. One league qualifies for an elite tournament. After her partner, Liam, makes several disparaging comments about softball, Reese stops playing. Instead, she takes tennis lessons to learn to play Liam's favorite sport. Several weeks later, Liam breaks up with Reese stating, "You do not spend enough time with me." Liam takes advantage of Reese's selfless nature instead of supporting her true passions.

4. Does a partner's actions contradict his words?

Tim proclaims his love for animals. He talks about his heroic deed rescuing a cat a few years ago. Yet, after Liz saves a cat from a car accident, Tim refuses to allow her to use her own money to pay for the vet bills and bring the cat home.

He states, "I want you to use your money for important things." This discrepancy between what he says and how he acts may indicate inauthenticity.

5. Do you find yourself trying too hard?

Ronda is supposed to meet Ken for a spontaneous dinner but worries she does not look “good enough.” Ken makes negative comments about her style of dress, so she is filled with anxiety about her appearance.

Ronda drives an hour home, stops at an expensive clothing store and purchases a brand of blouse Ken likes. She races back to the restaurant. At dinner Ken chuckles and says, “Nice shirt, but it’s not your best color.” Ronda is deflated and worries he has lost feelings for her.

A partner who is ultra-focused on superficial appearances and is hyper critical may be unconsciously defending against his own profound insecurities.

6. Did he want to know everything about you at first, but seems indifferent now?

Kind people are often open books. Wearing their hearts on a sleeve, they may feel flattered when a partner is interested. Yet, a partner who wants to know everything immediately may not be deeply concerned about a person’s experience, but rather focused on gaining personal information in order to use it manipulatively in the future.

If a partner’s interest in a person’s feelings and experiences wanes, the initial interest may have been self-serving.

Terry spends hours on the phone with Ellie. Ellie is flattered and feels as if he really cares. Ellie opens up and shares her hurt about a close friend, Liz, who talks to her past partner’s without her knowledge. Several months after Terry and Ellie start dating, Terry seems bored and indifferent. Ellie discovers he is also talking to Liz. Terry exploits Ellie’s past hurts in order to disempower her and gain emotional control of the situation.

A partner who is true, supports a person’s passions, accomplishments, and pursuits, and displays consistency in actions and words, may be truly in love. No one is perfect, so if a person falters or makes a mistake, it is normal.

An authentic apology followed by an attempt to repair the transgression helps mend ruptures in the relationship.

Reciprocating this accountability, understanding, and empathy is critical. Kindness is not weakness, nor is it stupidity, so when someone new comes along, go slow, be true to yourself, and know that a good heart is a human being's greatest asset.

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