

## LL07-Am I too Picky?

I'm Alvean Lyon and I'm Doug Weiss and welcome to Love Life.

So Douglas, we have another great one today.

You keep fielding really interesting questions.

Well to make this even more interesting we our family member on the love life team Barbara Hamm Lee

Hi everybody how you doing.

Actually, I'm Sso excited about today's topic. I know you must tell that the topic is, Am I too picky? So this is a personal story. I was at my best friend's house one evening and her parents were in town visiting and her dad, was very quiet man and never said much, you know, but he would sit at the table and listen. And we're just five women just talking away and we were talking about, lamenting the fact that I was not dating anyone at the time I didn't have a steady boyfriend or anything and that's been the story the majority of my adult life.

Changed by Maxie Lee, but the majority of my adult life, anyway so we're mentoring over this fact and her dad opens his eyes and he looks around the table and he says I'll tell you what the problem is, you're too picky and then he went back and just sat back in the chair never said another word.

But I went home and thought a lot about that and I had to say to myself, was I too picky, was I looking for certain things and if the package didn't come exactly the way I wanted it wrapped was I ignoring what could be a good person?

And what did you conclude?

I concluded that I was not too picky, I was an equal opportunity dater.

So what would you say, can you be too picky?

Well I think you can be too picky, but I don't think that's typically what happens. I do think that people have a bill of part you know sometimes finding what's not right about someone as opposed to starting with what is it about this person that I'm attracted to and how can I put the emphasis around those things and build energy behind them by blending my sensibilities with this individual. I think that you come into any relationship with an orientation. If you want to find things not to like about someone you will, we're human beings so we're so flawed. We have so many idiosyncratic tics and issues and problems.

I have to say, and maybe it's just me, I don't have a formula. You know when something about certain people grabs me and I find that there's an energy that starts to build in the relationship early on. The more time I spend with that person the more time I want to spend with that person and the more interchange I have with them the more I desire that. And that energy keeps feeding on itself in a very positive way and that's happened for me both in situations where I had a physical relationship with somebody early on, meaning that that we were in the same physical location but it's also happened in relationships where I didn't actually.

In one case for almost a year of just email back and forth. So I think you can you can build that sustainable kind of energy in a relationship but it's not a type for me, it's not here's my checklist, I've got to meet these qualities.

But maybe below the surface there is a checklist, and there are more positives than not, otherwise that energy wouldn't be building. You know that's the point.

What about you?

Full disclosure, I will admit, and forgive me for this, but I say to people I'm a little more boy than I am girl about

some things so I really physicality does matter to me. There are very few men that I have dated that were not beautiful in some way. And I'll be honest probably classically beautiful in a lot of ways although there are a few models OK.

But we have picture, so I do like a beautiful man. I genuinely appreciate a very physically attractive man but just when that is a man with a really good character I like a man that when nobody else is looking he does the right thing you know that.

But I mean it's really true for me. Like one of the things I loved most about my husband is when we were dating.... back then if you had a luxury apartment you had a washer and dryer inside of your apartment. We did not. So I remember us going to a laundromat one weekend and I was going about my way doing some things when we were at the laundromat. He was working on something else and after, as he's folding the clothes he folds my underwear. Now as small as this may sound, the fact is that it's underwear, it's teeny tiny, nobody would be mad if you threw that in the basket after everything else was folded, but the fact that even with my back turned, with me busy doing other things it mattered to him to do the small thing as well as he did the big thing. It said something to me and everything in our relationship since then has been very similar to that. It's not just when I'm around that he does the right things. I meet so many women every day because I'm not a jealous woman, so I love the fact that my husband talks to other women and has stories and you know quite frankly because he's beautiful I send him into stores,.... see what you can get for free.

I'm happy to be one of those women. When I talk to some women and they tell me how good my man is they mean it in a way that we women understand, that he's the kind of guy that despite the fact that you're not around he still is so respectful of your partnership that he's fun but his line is very clear. And so we can flirt we can do all of those things that are appropriate. But the line of appropriateness is that delineation. I appreciate those kinds of things because it's in the little things I think that matter so when it comes to picking this, I'm picky about the things that are going to be major issues later that sometimes seem like small issues in the beginning. So for instance, when you get angry what's your natural orientation does your volume go up, or does your intelligence, your ability to communicate with words that aren't four letter words?

Are there small things that if I don't do it the way that you would want me to do it then it's problematic? in Early on in the relationship you may say, oh he's just stubborn about that, or oh you know he's particular about how he likes this or that and you brush those things aside. But over time, everything that is a problem later on in the relationship you saw that early on in teeny little ways, because people have a way of unveiling who they are. But we also, especially when we're not whole, were so desperate to have a partner that we ignore those signs at the beginning. So I tend to be picky about the small things, because those small things are character things that will be relationship and commitment issues later on.

So friendship is huge for me. because we need to know those things about each other, but I want to stand this question on its head a little bit and say I don't think that there's such a thing as being too picky. On the other hand, I think there's a difference between being judgmental. And having standards.

And for me having a standard means that there are things that are acceptable and there are things that are not acceptable. I absolutely insist upon my right to have standards about conduct, about treatment of other people, about character, as you put it. So in the same breath, if I'm judgmental about another person, that is, I'm quick to find fault but not to recognize virtue, then that's really a reflection on me. At that point I would say, yeah if you find yourself constantly finding fault with the person that you are with, look in the mirror.

It's a very good point. And while we laughed about my friend's dad saying that I was too picky, I agree with you I think that it is perfectly fine, not only perfectly fine but it is a must that you set standards for yourself in terms of what you will and will not accept in a relationship what you will and will not accept in another human being, because you want the very best for yourself and if you don't set those boundaries then you're going to take everything that comes your way, and everything that comes your way is not good.

You know it's getting to the root issue here which is about self-respect.

Absolutely, you have to have self-respect, as we've said any number of times. The foundational element for any relationship is that you have to start by loving and respecting yourself. If you don't have that there's no possible way you can love and respect anybody else. If you don't have standards, if everything is fair game and you're blindly in love, as some people would characterize it, then that's just as bad as standing there and having too much judgment of another person. Finding that balance, looking at somebody else through the most generous eyes, looking at them and seeing the elements of their character that you would admire and respect and hold up as the virtues that you wish other people would have, that's when you know you love somebody.

You know we do make it a little bit lighter though as we get older. So in my twenty's he had to be taller than me he had to have you know a certain grade of hair, he had to have the right eye color .I mean he had to be that gorgeous model type. So then you move into the thirties, and maybe those things are a little less important. Point being, as you mature things change for you, and you recognize that character is so much more than anything else. It's true. It's one of the things some of us have that are non-negotiable and I will admit that there are some certain things for me that are just not negotiable. I will I talk to some of my girlfriends sometimes who may say, well but you know he's rich.

Well let me tell you what's in my non-negotiable. If I'm not attracted to you I don't care how rich you are, it really doesn't matter. And if you're rude to me, I don't care how much money you have. There are certain things that just do not matter to me. If you're just inelegant in how you handle yourself I don't care what you own, I don't care what your title is, I don't care what car you drive, or house you have. It doesn't matter to me. So there are certain things some of us have to make sure that we're aware of, what we're truly governed by. Some things are just not up for discussion.

For me it's intelligence, and I don't mean it in a kind of snotty way. I mean it has nothing to with education it has to do with people who question the world around them, think about things, have opinions and those opinions are informed by actual facts not speculations. You know, people who read, people who are interested in conversation with one another. You know I'm sorry just physical attraction isn't enough for you gotta talk.

I think I once said I would never date anyone younger than my daughter and one of the reasons I would never date someone many generations younger than me is that I'm not sure that we would have enough cultural context to have a meaningful dialogue with one another.

I think that brings this dialogue to a close for now. But we want to hear from you. How do reach us? Write to [alvean@lovelife.digital](mailto:alvean@lovelife.digital) or [doug@lovelife.digital](mailto:doug@lovelife.digital) And we want to thank our producer, Barbara Hamm Lee, and Todd Washburn our recording engineer who's making all this magic happen behind the scenes and we'll be back next week with more love life.