

Act Like You Don't Give a Sh*t

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For the first time in my 30+ years, I asked my father for advice about relationships, and gasp, men. Call me desperate. I was. But I figured, after 64 years on the planet, he knew something about what makes his kind tick. And well, we've developed a relationship over the years where sugarcoating is unnecessary. I knew he was going to give it to me straight.

Why was I desperate? Oh where to begin. I had fallen for a guy who seemed to have fallen for me. We were hot, hot, hot. Then he turned lukewarm out of the blue. Then damn right cold.

I had seen this scenario before, so I was not opposed to wondering what role I played in this disturbing trend. I wanted my love life to be different and wanted to know what I should be doing differently—you know that whole if you keep doing the same thing you're going to continue to get the same results school of thought.

Hence the Sunday call with Pops.

I ran down the details then asked him what I should do.

His advice?

Act like you don't give a sh*t.

I know; it sounds like the title of a dating book for women written by a man.

But I've heard this sentiment before. Men like a chase, blah, blah, blah.

"That's not how I am," I pleaded with my father. "If I like someone, I like him. I don't want to play games."

"I know," my father said. "I know that's not you."

And it's not a lot of women.

Oh but how I sometimes secretly admire those women who can keep their emotions more in check and who don't wear their heart on their sleeves. The Keisha Greene's of the world (but you see how it ain't all that different when they get caught up).

Originally, I dismissed my father's advice.

Until, as part of an attempt to demystify my love life, I asked my ex-boyfriend why he broke up with me.

"You were too accessible," he said.

I took in his words. Listened. No judgment. Just tried to learn.

Then I asked only one follow-up question: what does that mean?

"You made it too easy for me." He responded.

That's all I needed to hear.

It was time to try something different.

So I stopped giving a sh*t.

What does that mean? Who knows really.

Do I wait to call at least 48 hours after seeing someone? Do I not, under any circumstances tell a dude how I feel? Do I act nonchalantly towards any feelings he may display for me? Should I stop being so helpful?

For me, I translated it as not being too accessible, which really turned out to mean: not putting all my eggs in one basket. I was still easy as Sunday morning, but with more eggs to nurture, who had time to always be available and who had the capacity to care too deeply with everyone?

Talk about fun. I finally found out what people meant when they said they were dating.

Oh I called back when I called back. I responded to texts when I got around to it. I hung out with guys occasionally, when the mood hit.

As much as I hate to admit this, there was a power in it all. I was in control of my feelings instead of the other way around.

Was it all genuine? Nope. Was I playing games? Yep.

At the end of the day, was it me? Nope.

I do give a sh*t. I like one-on-one situations (I've been told my other male friends through my investigations to avoid the R word wherever possible) and not just for the mental simplicity, but also because that's what I prefer. Period.

And you know what else? I'm a giver. I'm a lover. I care deeply. That's me.

And call me silly, unrealistic, but I know there's a dude out there who prefers that.

But I did learn something from my father's advice. I've slowed down. And in doing so, interestingly enough, it has affected my accessibility, not in a character-changing way, but because I'm interested in really getting to know someone. That takes time; it's a process.

And well, eventually good sh*t will happen.