

SEX and the STEEL CITY

Don't let jealousy get the best of you

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As a child, you may have secretly feared the monster bunking beneath your bed. You now know that it was merely a figment of your imagination. Luckily, this fear died with age, and, with your ability to rationalize fully matured, it's a laughable situation.

Yet, perhaps a new monster has made its way into your life, and unfortunately it's not an under-the-bed-roomie. Instead, this monster resides *within* you, or perhaps resides within someone you know. It's jealousy, and it can easily consume your life, whether you are a jealous person yourself or find yourself in a relationship with a jealous person.

Jealousy often spurs resentment, which can quickly turn into rage if it's not properly dealt with at the time. Many things can cause a person to feel jealous, so understanding what these reasons are is the first step in getting a hold on jealousy before it gets a hold on you.

In relationships, jealousy is usually about insecurity. A person who easily feels jealousy in a relationship may feel insecure with their partner – perhaps their partner has lied, or even cheated, and so has caused the other partner to feel insecure about the relationship. When trust has been broken, feeling jealous is quite normal. Your partner has betrayed you and consequently you cannot trust them in the same way as you once did.

Yet feeling jealous may not stem from an isolated situation. In fact, people who by nature are more controlling or have low self-esteem can be predisposed to jealousy. In this way, jealousy comes from within and will have little to do with your partner. Think of it this way: your partner could be any other guy or girl and you would still feel jealous.

If you're predisposed to jealousy, thinking back to past experiences can sometimes be helpful. For example, say you were once in a bad relationship where your partner mistreated you – maybe he or she neglected or lied to you.

If the issue was never fully solved at the time, a wound can still exist and you can carry these hurts with you into future relationships.



RYAN JANSEN / SILHOUETTE STAFF

Jealousy causes feelings of anxiety and paranoia, but getting a hold on it before its get a hold on you is the first step.

Or perhaps you had some similar experience growing up. Maybe a sibling was given more than you, or was treated better. This can cause you to feel insecure, yet at the time of being a child you could not fully comprehend the problem and so it carries on with you into adulthood.

Once you can understand what *truly* causes you to feel jealous, getting a grip on jealousy may prove to be easier.

Predispositions to jealousy, however, are not to be taken lightly. Jealousy will often leave a person feeling anxious and paranoid. In turn, this can easily amount to rage. A person can become irrational, making poor decisions for themselves, their partner and their life in general.

Because of this, jealousy can overtake a person to the point where they no longer even feel like themselves. If you've ever witnessed

a partner experiencing this feeling, you may feel very put-off. They end up pushing their partner away. Jealousy ruins relationships.

But recovery is not impossible. The first step is coming to terms with reality. When feeling as if jealousy is about to overtake you, you must try to accept your situation for what it is, or it will only badly.

The next step is positive thinking. A person who experiences jealousy will often feel inadequate. Thinking about all the positive aspects in your life will help to clear your head.

Next, stop comparing yourself to others. Let's say if your partner is out with his or her friends while you're at home. You might feel as if you should be out having fun with your friends as well. Stop. What does it matter? You're at home, might as well try to make the best of it.

Following this, accepting that you are predisposed to jealousy is the final step before eliminating it. This is you. But you cannot allow past grievances to control your present or future any longer.

If you are in a relationship with a jealous partner, try to understand where they are coming from. Recognize that it may not be you specifically that is a cause and so try to comfort them in any way possible and appropriate. However, if your partner is at all violent, then get out.

If you, as a jealous person, are violent towards your partner, then seek help immediately. Self-help techniques will not always work; in this case it is okay to see someone.

Just remember, there is a way to eliminate jealousy, and knowing that you will one day be free from jealousy can be the greatest comfort.

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