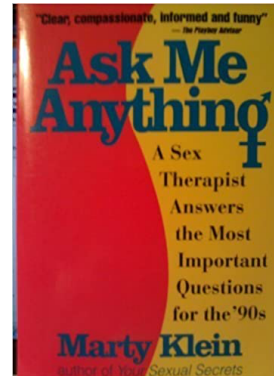


**"Ask Me Anything:
A Sex Therapist Answers
the Most Important
Questions for the '90s."**

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Question #372 from "Ask Me Anything," page 207

372. We plan to marry sometime next year. How do I convince my sweetheart that we should be faithful to each other now?

This sure looks like a disaster in the making. If you two can't agree on how to live your lives now, what will make it any easier after you marry?

There is validity to what each of you wants. The conflict is crucial; how you settle it will be a model for how you handle other conflicts that lie ahead. Until you settle this issue, I encourage you to put the marriage on hold.

The most you can do is tell your mate how much this particular issue means to you, and exactly why. Talk about how you feel, not about your mate's intentions. You should also try to understand his or her position in as much detail as possible. Then the two of you should discuss the meaning of this conflict, your respective willingness to insist on something the other rejects, and what this suggests about the future.

How do you convince someone to be exclusive? You can't. An ultimatum may work, but if you resort to one, you'll probably regret it—whether it works or not.