

WRITE YOUR
AUNTIE PEARL



Dear Auntie Pearl: I'm going to be best man at my kid brother's wedding. He's my only sibling, and I think of him like a friend. I'm out to my parents, and they're cool about it. But my parents are saying that it's best if I don't bring my lover, Scott, to the wedding, because the rest of the family might not be as understanding. I think people will be fine, and if they're not, who needs them? The last thing Scott and I want to do is disrupt this day for my brother. Our friends' advice ranges from going along with it, to boycotting, to crashing in drag. What's the right thing for all concerned? --

Texas Twoface

Dear Texas: Unless you're prepared to ask the same question before every family wedding, holiday, and clam bake, it's time to have a chat with the folks.

Your parents have the chance to make it clear that they are proud of both their sons and their mates at an event designed to celebrate partnership. Loving a queer person entails a lifetime's advocacy.

If nobody in your family will stand by you, you must take a hard line and refuse to attend without Scott. Let your parents know that if they want no queerness at the wedding, then they need to revoke your invitation. Your brother asked for a best man -- not best straight performance in a supporting role.

Dear Auntie Pearl: I came out 5 years ago, and as far as my friends know, I've never slept with anybody. They try fixing me up with really nice women, but I always make excuses. I guess they think I'm celibate.

What nobody knows is that I've been having an affair with a very highly respected woman in the community ever since I came out. I swore to never tell anybody about the affair, because it would destroy "Tracy's" relationship.

If anybody knew, they'd be shocked - not only that Tracy is having an affair, but that she's having it with me. I'm considered very shy, and Tracy is everybody's idol.

Well, six months ago, Tracy said it had to end. I was devastated, even though I always knew it was coming. We avoided each other for weeks, but then Tracy said she missed me and wanted to try to be friends. Well, surprise-surprise, we started up again. Every few weeks, she says it's over. Then I try to get on my feet, and she calls again.

My friends keep asking what's wrong, but I can't tell them. I can't get a full night's sleep. I have no appetite. I'm sure I look like hell. If it weren't for my work, I'd lose it. Auntie Pearl, please give me some words on how I can gather the strength to say goodbye to the woman I've loved for five years when I don't want to! Please answer soon! --

Spineless

Dear Spineless: You want words? All you need is one: no.

Say it and stick to it. Tracy has no reason to leave you. She's got status and stability with or without you. You have to be the one to end this.

Somebody has to start thinking of you, and it's clearly not going to be Tracy. Any woman who would insist on the isolating restrictions of your 5-year affair is thinking of nobody but herself.

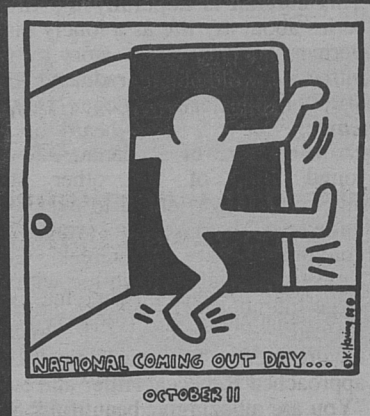
Unless you're working on your martyrdom badge for the Order of Eternal Suffering, Auntie remains unimpressed by your loyalty to a destructive promise. It is tragic to think of the community connections, deeper friendships and above-board relationships you have given up.

Your first task is to break your vow of silence. Tell all to at least one trusted person. The key to leaving Tracy is in establishing the very support your pledge of silence is designed to deny you. Don't think Tracy hasn't figured that out. ▼

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"Coming out isn't just for National Coming Out Day! Come out, some way, every day."

Amanda Bearse
National Coming Out Day 1994 - Los Angeles



National Coming Out Day is a non-profit educational project of the HRCF Foundation. For more information, please call 1-800-866-6263.



As lesbians and gays, we can come out every day of our lives, and not just on October 11. Maybe you know how Amanda feels: exhilarated, empowered and confident. A feeling about coming out that lasts all year long.

Remember, you don't have to wait until next October 11 to take your next step.

National Coming Out Day wishes to thank Amanda Bearse, our national spokesperson, our official sponsors,

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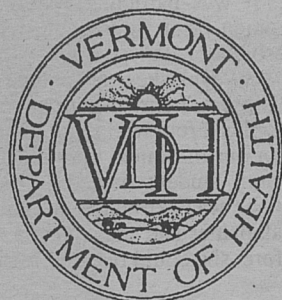


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