



Dear Uncle Mike,

I'm recently single after twelve years of marriage. The dating game sucks, coworkers are out, I'm too old (34) for the bar scene. I'm not into celibacy and masturbation only takes a person so far. Here's my question. I have a long time male friend who's also single now. We've been buddies for years, not quite brother and sister, but close. Lately, we've started flirting. Nothing overt, but the cards are on the table. Or at least I think they are. That's the problem. Should I risk our friendship and make a gesture? Is being horny just making me stupid, or do things like this work out?

Lonely in Eugene

Dear Lonely,

Does what work out? Making love with a friend? Rogue that he once was, Uncle Mike makes it a practice never to be naked with anyone who's not.

That you sign yourself Lonely is cause for concern. Uncle Mike may live alone but he is not lonely. Being lonely means never having to say you enjoy your own company. Those who don't seldom make good friends. Uncle Mike can relate to the limits of celibacy and partnerless sex. But, as his granny used to croon as she bounced us on her knee, not being involved is nature's way of saying, so what?

As to whether you should take your friend to bed, how would Uncle Mike know? If your hearts are in the right place and no one is using anyone, a roll on the futon probably won't end a friendship. On the other hand, it will definitely dynamite the status quo. For the thoughtful, there is no such thing as casual sex. If what either of you are looking for is a dalliance, Uncle Mike suggests you try the laundromat.

Should you make a gesture? What are you, new on the planet? As any man will attest, women are just as able to hit one over the head and drag one into the cave as any post-Gloria Steinem male. If your assessment is correct and the two of you are co-flirting, the poor schmuck is bound to be sweating as much blood as you. Invite him for dinner and a substantive chat and make sure you have an extra tooth brush.

Dear Uncle Mike,

Got a cure for the hiccups?

Terrie L., Chicago

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IF YOU ARE NEW TO THE STEAM BATH, YOU MIGHT WANT TO FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO ATTAIN MAXIMUM ENJOYMENT.

ALLOW YOURSELF PLENTY OF TIME. UNDRESS IN THE AREA PROVIDED, TAKE OFF WATCHES AND LOOSE JEWELRY.

ENTER STEAM ROOM. YOU MAY WANT TO STRETCH OUT IN A RECLINING POSITION TO COMPLETELY RELAX.

PULL STEAM CORD UNTIL DESIRED TEMPERATURE IS ACQUIRED. IF BREATHING IS DIFFICULT, BREATHE THROUGH A COLD WET WASH CLOTH. AFTER 10-15 MINUTES TAKE A REST IN THE DRESSING ROOM.

RE-ENTER THE STEAM ROOM FOR ANOTHER 10 MINUTES, REPEATING THE PROCESS. USE ENOUGH STEAM FOR YOUR OWN LIKING.

AFTER REPEATING THE CYCLE 2-3 TIMES END WITH A SOAP AND WATER SHOWER AND RINSE WITH COLD WATER TO CLOSE PORES. DON'T GO OUT INTO COLD OR WET WEATHER UNTIL YOU ARE DRY AND HAVE FINISHED PERKSIPPING, OR YOU MAY GET CHILLED!

WE HOPE YOU HAVE A WONDERFUL AFTER STEAM FEELING! CIGARETTES AND ALCOHOL ARE NOT COMPATIBLE WITH A STEAM BATH.

WARNING: ELDERLY PERSONS OR THOSE SUFFERING FROM HEART DISEASE, HIGHER BLOOD PRESSURE, OR OTHER MEDICAL CONDITIONS SHOULD CONSULT A PHYSICIAN BEFORE USING A STEAM BATH. IF YOU ARE NOT AN EXPERIENCED STEAM BATHER, DO NOT USE BY YOURSELF IN THE STEAM BATH. DO NOT USE THE STEAM BATH FOR AN UNREASONABLE TIME!

BUSINESS HOURS THURSDAY-SUNDAY 4:30-10:30
FRIDAY-SATURDAY 3:30-10:30

Dear Terry,

Doesn't everyone?

I'm sitting on a barstool one night, drowning my angst with Jack Daniels and cocoa, when a stunning young woman plops down next to me. I ask how it's going, she says lousy. On her way to San Francisco, she's been hiccupping (hiccupping, actually) since Seattle.

Ever the good samaritan, I ask if she's tried hanging upside down from an oak branch with a virgin badger strapped to her face with a silk scarf. Clearly in no mood for fun, she asks the barmaid for a paper napkin and a bottle of bitters. She soaks the center of the napkin with the nasty stuff, twists it into a teat and begins sucking on it. "Works every time," she smiled. And for what it's worth, it did.

Dear Uncle Mike,

If a tree falls in the forest and no one is there to hear it, does it make any noise?

Ralph W., Garibaldi

Dear Ralph,

Forget to take our medicine again, did we?

Sound, as your doctor should have explained to you, is energy (or mass, if you count heavy metal concerts and gunshots) made manifest by ripples in the air. While Uncle Mike tries never to laugh at anyone's parade, it may be a tad egocentric to imagine that when your tympanic membranes are elsewhere the universe is reduced to miming.

Just because you aren't there doesn't mean the forest isn't. Bambi and the bunny rabbits are, we would wager, very much aware of large perpendicular plants crashing into the trilliums. One should also not forget that trees biochemically scream when attacked by disease or chainsaws.

Uncle Mike has trouble believing a century old organism could cry out in the wilderness if experience hadn't taught it something was listening.

On the other hand, speaking strictly (and we really should), the answer to your question is yes and no. The mother of all science is empiricism, a belief system which limits reality to that which can be measured. To measure, one must observe. Without observation, there are no events and, therefore, nothing that qualifies as reality. In the equations of quantum mechanics, when you close your eyes, the world goes away.

Uncle Mike senses a connection between this and the recent discovery that watching television uses less energy than sitting on the couch doing nothing.

Bruce E. Nims, P.C.
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