

Alexa The Ho: Creepy AI Hits on Hubby

Dear C and Dr. B.:

I wasn't really worried until this morning, but now I'm not sure. My husband Steve spends an inordinate amount of time talking to this speaker thing called "Alexa." It answers questions, it relates news, reads stories, tells jokes, and plays music. What he likes most is when she does sports trivia. Not a problem, right? But today, he asked Alexa to play music. The compilation Alexa played was really him - it spoke to his heart. And it wasn't songs that he had ever specifically requested before. It was like: this thing knows him that well.

They used to say you could pick your partner by mutual tastes in music. Some colleges match roommates by questionnaires, and this is a top question. Has Steve crossed over the line and into an unhealthy intimate relationship with his A.I. device? Should I be concerned or am I nuts?

Dr. B says: Social media, advertising, and all other A.I. devices run by algorithms that track your behavior and collect data on what you buy, your google searches, and the conversations you hold via microphones devices such as Alexa and Siri. Your smart phone and any other smart device you own is an open book, and there is in fact a digital avatar for every one of us. It is a behavioral shadow right out of a sci-fi movie.

In the futuristic film "Her" a writer develops a relationship with a device similar to Alexa and literally falls in love it. The story is fiction, but there has in fact been research which shows that people who spend more time on social media spend less time having sex. Because passion-based love is a reflection of one's own ego projected upon another person, no one is actually more suited to this than our own avatar. So, should you be worried? We all should be. We are living the Narcissus story for the 22nd century.

C says: I was once jealous of the amount of attention one of my boyfriends paid to our new dog - we'd be watching TV and he'd cuddle with the dog instead of me. We did eventually break up. I kept the dog. Make of that what you will.

The fact that Alexa knows your husband that well is worrisome on a security level. Watch for credit discrepancies. But is Alexa a real threat to your marriage? That depends a lot on what kind of man your husband is.

People rely on A.I. for a vast spectrum of reasons. On one end you have high-performing people who can work faster and better because of virtual assistants. On the other end, you have disturbed personalities who are unhealthily attached to the virtual world because they are emotionally dysfunctional in the real one.

Where does Steve fall in that spectrum? One big clue would-be in your own intimate relations and conversations with him. Has he become more distant and detached? Do you hear him whispering and giggling with Alexa, then when you come in the room he clams up like a kid whose mom caught him masturbating?

I suggest you approach Steve with your concerns in a calm and reasonable manner. His response will

speaking volumes. If he acts evasive, gets irritable and accuses you of being crazy, those aren't the reactions of an innocent man. You probably have something to worry about...although god knows what. Let us know!

You can visit Dr. B's blog at drbrilliantcliche.wordpress.com