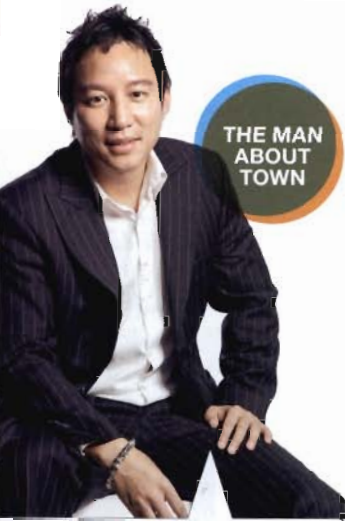


ask the manalysts



FINALLY – THE BIZARRE BEHAVIOUR OF MEN DECODED! OUR WORLDLY-WISE PANEL OF THREE GIVE THEIR OWN UNIQUE TAKE.

Q: My boyfriend of two years and I recently agreed to a separation. I was bored and treated him badly. While apart, I realised that I really love him. But he says the relationship cannot be saved. I want him back but do not want to seem desperate. What should I do?



THE MAN ABOUT TOWN

JEF LIM, 34

Occupation: Vice-president/executive producer, Mark Burnett Productions Asia.
Experience: Has dated and been dumped by a number of beautiful women, most of whom still talk to him.

→ So let's get this straight – you decided that you were bored with your relationship, and that the solution to this problem was to mistreat your boyfriend, in an effort to spice up your life? You then broke up with him and now you want him back but don't want to look desperate? Lady, that option, like Elvis, has left the building.

A relationship is built on a number of things, trust and respect being a major part – trust that each will do right by the other and respect for the other as an individual. How we treat each other is a reflection of the respect we have. It seems you have done damage to both these principles. I suggest you put your pride aside and try being honest with him. If he does decide to take you back, work on being a better girlfriend and realise that a relationship is hard to keep, and easy to lose.



THE GUY NEXT DOOR

CHAN TAU CHOU, 34

Occupation: TV producer-reporter.
Experience: Has met a few girls' mums, and is still trying to figure out why mothers always seem more impressed with him than their daughters are.

→ Did he have a choice in the separation? I suspect not. That's why he felt the damage while you saw it as a time-out you needed. It sounds like he had to go along with it or risk losing you altogether. Rather than ask what made you conclude that you love him, I think you need to remind yourself what made you get bored and treat him badly, and why you don't think that will repeat itself. After all, you are going back to the same person. It's easy to think "oh I love him after all" when you miss him and all the things he used to do for you. If you want him back, you'd better appear desperate. Pull out all the stops to assure him things will be different. I see no other reason for him to give it another go if he can't see that you want it badly enough. But do you? How you can even begin to wonder about saving face is beyond me. Good luck.



THE LOVE GURU

NORMAN LI, 42

Occupation: Singapore Management University lecturer and a "mating research specialist".
Experience: His research has found that attractive women are more likely to cheat, but he married one anyway.

→ Sounds bad for you, but if he took you back immediately, you'd probably find yourself getting bored again real soon. So, given what you did, his reluctance is good for your relationship. To get him back, tell him sincerely how much he means to you, that you're sorry for causing him hurt, but that you really had to be away for a while to truly know he's the one. Get him to take an active step by asking what you can do to make it up to him. Then do just that, but aim to earn his trust back slowly and steadily.

Need help finding out what's going on with your guy? E-mail our Manalysts at magherworld@sph.com.sg.