

Lifestyle



MUTIPLE SCLEROSIS DAY. PEOPLE RELEASING THE BALLONS OUTSIDE THE TOWN HALL IN MARBELLA. / JOSELE LANZA

World Multiple Sclerosis Day in Marbella

Marbella participated in World Multiple Sclerosis Day by releasing hundreds of coloured balloons from the Town Hall entrance. There are around two million people affected by the disease in the world and about 45,000 in Spain. It is an illness that first becomes evident in people between 20 and 40 years old, affecting three times more women than men. There is no cure for the illness.

Direct answers

By Wayne and Tamara

Standing in the wings

For the past two years I have been in a wonderful, committed relationship with a great woman and it keeps getting better. When we first started seeing each other, she was seeing someone else. While she initially downplayed the importance of that relationship, I came to learn it was more serious than she led me to believe. This man still contacts her frequently in hopes they can resume where they left off. She replies to him when he e-mails asking how her life is going, and she gives him enough information about where she will be that he shows up to plead his case. She assures me he means nothing to her and is committed to our relationship.

I believe her. Here's my problem. Despite how great everything is, I find myself tormented by thoughts of the two of them together. I fantasize about confronting her, or spend hours thinking about confronting him. So far I've been able to keep these irrational feelings to myself for the most part. I never thought of myself as the jealous type, and I have no similar feelings about anyone she was with prior to us dating.

In your articles on jealousy you take a pretty hard line, saying it is more about power and control than love, and it is the jealous partner's issue to deal with. I agree with that intellectually. My question is, how can I make these irrational feelings and tormenting thoughts go away? They are making me miserable. Several times I have come close to saying things I know I would regret.

Robert

Robert, psychologists believe human beings have two systems of reasoning. One system is rule-based and rational, while the other is associative and emotional. Both systems yield results. The main difference between the two is that one system gives results expressed in feelings, while the other gives results plus a line of reasoning. Most of us, of course, look at this in simpler terms.

Some things we know in our mind, other things we feel in our gut. Intuitively we know that the most reliable guide to action occurs when both systems agree. You see your distress as a clash between rational thought (I shouldn't be jealous) and irrational feelings (but I am). We disagree. We think you've come to a conclusion you would rather not face. Your partner dated you and another man. Fair enough. We understand how that could happen early in a relationship. But, and it's a big but, she continues to tell this other man what she is doing and where she will be doing it. This man is not a friend. He is a past lover ardently pursuing her. She is enabling him. Your rational mind

has drawn a reasonable conclusion: beware. And your other system of reasoning, feelings? Well, feelings evolved for a simple reason: to give us a quick answer to a problem. Are they always right? No. But in a healthy person they can be as reliable as reasoning.

Your emotional warning system went off for good reason. Your gut knows her behavior is wrong, just as your mind reasons it is wrong. If a woman's whole focus is one man, why would she fool around with Mr. Runner-up? Every woman knows not to do this, certainly every woman in love knows this. It would be contrary to her feelings. We don't see you as a jealous man. Instead we see both systems of reasoning in agreement. This "great woman" is acting in a way inconsistent with a "wonderful and committed" relationship. Why are you biting your tongue? Because you fear if you confront her she will leave and go to the other man. She says he's nothing to her, but it's not nothing to him. And it's not nothing to you. It's time for a truth or consequences conversation with your girlfriend, a conversation which will determine if this relationship has a future.

Wayne and Tamara

Everything is fine, but is it?

For months I have known the husband of a friend is battling cancer. Whenever I call and ask in general how they're doing, I hear, "Everything is fine." I respect that. But it's almost a year now, and I feel like saying, "It's okay, I know what he has been going through. You don't have to tell me anything. I just want you to know you are in my thoughts and I wish you well." I can't stand the pretence. Should I say what I want to say, or continue pretending?

Mimi

Mimi, people grieve in different ways, people love in different ways, and people have a right to be ill in their own way. Her husband's medical information is confidential, just like how much they owe on their mortgage or how often they have sex. They have the right not to be reminded of his cancer, and they have a right not to hear trite expressions like "you are in my thoughts.". There is a difference between caring about others and caring about yourself. The true measure of compassion is putting another's wishes ahead of your own. Your right to offer threadbare condolences does not trump their right to privacy.

Wayne and Tamara can be reached at www.WayneAndTamara.com

Lexland Abogados and St James's Place to the rescue

Free seminar providing professional financial and estate advice for UK-expatriates

Due to the difficult economic situation in Spain, it's understandable that there is a lot of hesitation among UK-expatriates regarding their financial and estate planning. In order to overcome this uncertainty, the financial company St. James's Place in cooperation with the prestigious Spanish Law Firm Lexland Abogados will be revealing the most interesting and efficient investment opportunities and estate planning solutions.

As a financial company, St. James's Place manages over 30 billion Euros of investment and offers the reassurance and stability of a FTSE 250 company. The company, set up by Sir Mark Weinberg, Lord Rothschild and Mike Wilson, also gives investors protection under both Spanish and UK law.

In particular, the event will look at investment programmes covering tax planning and pension portfolios, both from a financial planning and from a legal point of view. The two companies can offer ways to give regular, predictable income, as well as an Offshore Trust Review service, which looks at the after-effects of any offshore trusts that you may have.

The legal matters will be explained by Dimos Cuesta, partner and lawyer at Lexland Abogados, one of the few Spanish law firms offering high-quality services in English to expatriates. Lexland Abogados is the only Spanish Law Firm recommended by St. James's Place to its UK-based clients in Spain.

The free seminar will be held on June 1st at the Guadalquivir SPA & Golf Resort, Marbella. They kindly ask attendees to meet by the main reception at 11am.

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