

Dear John,



*My live-in boyfriend of eight years isn't talking to me after accusing me of sabotaging our sex life. He says I bring up unpleasant topics immediately after the act, like complaining about the messy yard or asking if he's played squash lately (something he used to do to keep in shape). I have never meant to sabotage our love life or demean him. If I have done it, it was on a subconscious level. And besides, the only reason our yard is an unpleasant topic is because he never mows the grass! How can I make him chill out and talk to me again?*

*Signed,*

*Cold Shoulder*

Dear Cold Shoulder

Suggesting you aren't responsible for inappropriately-timed conversations or weakly-veiled insults because they were said subconsciously is like a drunk claiming his bad behavior is excusable because he was drunk. If you dig deep, you might come to realize that your "subconscious" innuendo isn't as subconscious as you think. A better definition of it might be passive-aggressiveness.

There is no harm in wanting a clean yard or a fit partner, but you should find a more appropriate time to bring up these issues. I suggest you take a cold look at yourself to understand your role in the sexual sabotage your boyfriend complains about. If he sees you taking ownership of your words, and then notices a change in your tactics, he may warm back up to you.

Thanks for playing,

John