**Why does he change so dramatically when he’s with his mate? – Agony Aunt**

**Dear Anne,**

My boyfriend and I have been in a relationship for a year and a half now and I love him a lot. He’s really funny (one of the reasons why I dated him), cooks, cleans and is generally a great guy. I love him a lot but I can’t stand him when he is with his friends. What should I do?

My guy likes hanging out and drinking with his mates whenever he gets the chance, which I’m fine with until he invites them back to our place. Recently, inviting them back to our place has become a little too frequent since moving houses. Now it seems like his mates are over every night getting off of their heads. His lack of consideration is what is really annoying as he never asks me if I’m okay with them staying round getting drunk and being loud, when of course I’m not.

Whenever they are together, my boyfriend is like a completely different person. When it’s just us he always listens to me and never uses harsh language or those typical “guy jokes”. But as soon as he is with his friends all of that changes. I really don’t get why. Yes, I understand if they’ve been drinking but he does this even if we just happen to bump into each other somewhere random in town. Worse still, he will swear directly at me if I’ve done something that has “killed the party”. I know that his mates can’t seem to live without using the “f” word but I know my boyfriend can. So I don’t see why he suddenly feels the need to stoop down to their level of speech just because they’re around. It seems silly to me if you have to change who you are just because of your friends are around.

Not only that but if his mates are over he always ignores me or will purposely interrupt me with some awful, unfunny joke. Like just the other day he asked me in front of his mates “shouldn’t you be in the kitchen?” I was completely mortified and outraged. But I couldn’t do anything because if I embarrass him in front of his friends he gets very mad at me afterwards.

I am getting really sick of his behaviour. Whenever I try to show my displeasure in both his and his friends’ behaviour it never goes anywhere. He just seems to brush it off, makes another joke or says that I’m being too uptight and should try a little harder to get along with them. Believe me, I’ve tried! But his friends are just a bit too much, especially if they’re hammered. I’m not sure just how much more of this I can take and I don’t know what to do. Please help me.

**Alexis**

**Dear Alexis,**

That sounds very tiring and frustrating. It must be very tough having to deal with your boyfriend and his friends every night, especially if they’ve been on the night out. Even one man at times can be handful!

I understand that wanting your boyfriend to be a little more considerate when involving his friends can be challenging, especially if you find it hard to get along with them. However, I believe it is best to be honest and to discuss your discontent about the current situation with him. Be straight forward with him and make it clear that you are unhappy with what has been going on. Remember it’s your house too so you have control over who is allowed to enter and stay.

A possible explanation for the dramatic change in attitude and personality could be due to the type of people he is choosing to be friends with. For example, if he is very understanding when he is with you but completely ignores you when his friends are around then it could be that he feels insecure and feels that his masculinity is somewhat threatened. This is usually common if a man is the only one of his peers in a relationship.

What men fear the most is to not be seen as masculine especially by their peers. This can result in them swearing more frequently and laughing at, what we consider unfunny, jokes. It could be that your boyfriend may be feeling pressured to behave in a similar way to his friends in an attempt to fit in. Doing so can show that your boyfriend is still an available friend and person to hang out with, not just someone in a relationship.

In addition, it is most common for men to swear more amongst themselves as they tend not to feel the need to appear as polite or charming. If the ratio of men to women is high then men tend to relax their language choice and swear more, it is a sign that they are at ease with one another. Although, it could also be linked to the idea that men just aren’t as bothered about swearing as us ladies are.

Furthermore, when groups of men get together and joke it is often their way of showing friendliness towards each other and avoid possible tension. More often or not men will laugh at the jokes being made, regardless whether or not they actually find it funny. In your case, the chance that your boyfriend does not find them funny is most likely and is simply doing his best to fit in and reduce possible conflict. It could also be possible that when he makes a joke when you are trying to explain your discontent with his behaviour he is showing that he is actually uncomfortable with the matter as he may be aware that his attitude is not acceptable. Therefore, by using humour as a type of defence mechanism he is undermining the seriousness of the situation by making a joke. Sadly, this is a result of the peer pressure amongst men and wanting to fit in and be accepted. However, this is still no excuse for sexist comments. This is an issue that must be addressed at once if one is to have a happy and healthy relationship.

Let him know that his behaviour with his friends bothers you and you do not think it appropriate. In the majority of cases, they will often understand and will do their best to try and mend their ways, but this will only happen if you are direct with them. If your boyfriend is constantly avoiding the subject matter, blaming the issue on you and verbally abusing you regardless of drinking it could be indicating a potential serious issue in your relationship. This should be dealt with effectively immediately before it gets too severe. I advise you to quickly solve this dilemma by calmly but firmly talking to him, explain to him that it is never right to treat you in such a manner.

If you continue to be unhappy with his behaviour even after discussing it with him then you are always able to refer yourself to counsellor to talk and get through your troubles. This can either be your local counsellor or you can easily find a private one on [www.yell.com](http://www.yell.com). You can simply find all available counsellors near you by sending an email to admin@ita.org.uk that will send you a list of all possible counsel advisers that are located within your area.

I sincerely hope that all works out for the best. Good luck with talking to him.

**Anne**

**1,215 words**