

**“All his actions suggest he loves me, so why can’t he say it?”**



**R**achael, 26, a teacher from Sussex, and Ashley, have been together ten months. They’re committed and are buying a place together. But he can’t articulate his feelings for her “Everything about the way Ashley is with me suggests he loves me,” says Rachael. “He never agrees to do anything without thinking how it will affect me, and prioritises me above everything else. But because he can’t, or won’t, say ‘I love you’, it leaves me wondering if I’ve misinterpreted us – that he isn’t as serious about me as I’d like to believe he is.”

What Rachael needs, says Bussel, is a reality check: “What would she prefer, that he told her he loved her all the time but didn’t behave like he did? Anyone can say he loves you, but a real man will let you *know* you’re loved.”

“We all have different strategies for showing that we love someone,” adds life coach Seven Suphi. “It’s like a secret language – for some

it’s saying ‘I love you’, for others, it’s about little things you do for each other like buying your favourite biscuits or remembering to ask how an important work meeting went. Ashley is showing Rachael he’s in love with her, rather than merely in lust, by doing the things a serious boyfriend does: practical actions that show real commitment.”

If a year passes and Ashley still hasn’t said he loves Rachael, she needs to ask him where he thinks the relationship is going. She should tell him she loves him but that she needs to know how he feels. Does he love her? Does he think they’ll be together in five years’ time? People answer very honestly when you’re open about your own feelings. And if Rachael doesn’t get the answer she wants? At least she didn’t waste more time waiting for words Ashley was never going to say to her. ▶