How can I control feelings of jealousy?

Dorothy Horton, PsyD, answers your questions in her latest Ask Doctor Dee column.

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Q: How can I control feelings of jealousy?

A: Everyone experiences the sting of jealousy from time to time. But when we're consumed by this complex emotion, the green-eyed monster may become a raging beast that undermines our self-esteem and drives loved ones away. Suspicion, insecurity and bitterness can fan the flames of jealousy in your relationship, unless you learn to recognize and confront these negative feelings head-on and try to learn what's causing them.

Ask yourself some questions. For example, are you jealous because of your own insecurities rather than something your partner has done? Be honest with yourself. If your partner is open to a discussion about how you're feeling, have a talk. Often, giving voice to what's bothering you can help to overcome negative emotions.

This is also a good time to note your positive traits and the successes you've achieved. If jealousy was the culprit in past relationships, reflect on these experiences and use what you learned from them to make better choices and positive changes in your present relationship.

Finally, try to create and maintain balance in your relationship by cultivating a rich, fulfilling life of your own that doesn't revolve around your partner. This can help to ensure that you remain aware of the value that you bring to your partnership, which can help tame and control those feelings of jealousy when they flare up.

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