Widowed Mom to Son: Sleep with Me

August 25, 2009 By Alexander Avila

Q: A college friend of mine, who is a freshman, recently told me that he is at his wit's end. His widowed mother insists that he sleep in the same bed with her. His mother's insistence on putting him in his father's place has him grossed out. She has not made sexual advances, he says, but he wants to know how he can tell his mother that her behavior is inappropriate and makes him totally uncomfortable in the home. What do you suggest?

A: The key here is to understand the psychology of the mother. As a widow, her husband is gone, and she feels the pangs of loneliness. Now, her son is off to college, and, she fears, he will also abandon her very soon. That's why the mother is trying so hard to recapture the old days: by sleeping with her son, like she used to do when he was little. What your friend has mistaken as a possible need for surrogate sex is really a cry for attention, security and comfort.

Your friend can offer the love and security his mom is missing in many ways, without sleeping in the same bed. For example, he can spend some time with her watching TV and talking. He can tell her about his new experiences at school, listen to her problems, and, maybe, give her a neck rub. He can take her to the movies or dining, or, better yet, enroll her in an adult class, singles group or church activity where she can meet other interesting adults for friendship and companionship.

If your friend can offer this type of support and comfort to his hurting mother, not only will he be a wonderful son, but he will also be on his way to becoming a true, loving man.

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