

teenVOGUE

The Interactive Issue
Tweet! Friend! Follow!

COOL
BEAUTY

54 WAYS TO
ROCK YOUR
OWN LOOK

crushing
hard

HOW to tell him
you want to be
MORE THAN
FRIENDS

TV'S NEXT
IT GIRL

AnnaSophia
Robb is the
new Carrie
Bradshaw!

WHAT
TO WEAR
NOW!

273 fresh ideas for spring
+ KENDALL AND KYLIE DISH
ON THEIR DEBUT FASHION LINE

\$2.99US \$3.99FOR



02>

TEENVOGUE

FEBRUARY 2013

TEENVOGUE.COM

08455

STATUS UPDATE

Falling for your best friend could lead to lasting romance or major heartache. Are you willing to take the risk? *Teen Vogue* reports. Artwork by Curtis Kulig.

Brittany, a 20-year-old college sophomore from Alabama, remembers developing a crush on Taylor back in tenth grade. "He was a close friend, and we talked every day," she says. "I fell for him, madly." Then one evening at a hockey game, Taylor confessed that he was into her. They started dating that night and are still together four years later—"promise ring and all!" she says.

Don't you wish every falling-for-a-BFF story had a happy ending like Brittany's? Unfortunately, as the MTV reality show *Friendzone* depicts in painful detail, having a crush on a close friend is usually much more complicated. Just ask Carrie, eighteen, from Madison, Virginia. She and Nick became best friends in sixth grade, and they grew even closer over three years of middle school, but then she left for boarding school in North Carolina. "I missed him more than anything," she recalls. Carrie began noticing that whenever she talked to Nick, it made her over-the-top happy—even though they often

discussed his love life. "I got jealous every time he brought up his girlfriend, but I felt it was my job to listen to him," she says. She decided to try to fight her romantic feelings for him. "I thought, 'It isn't OK to like your best friend,'" she explains.

There's a reason that falling for a friend is such a common experience. According to Jill P. Weber, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist in the Washington, D.C., area, "Unlike hooking up or even dating, male friendships allow girls to completely be themselves without any kind of sexual pressure. The more girls are themselves in their relationships, the more they feel romantically connected."

That's exactly how Eliza*, a 22-year-old junior at Western Michigan University, ended up developing feelings for her best friend, Kevin*, during high school. "We were on the track and field team together, we had long talks on the phone, we ate lunch together, and he gave me rides home when I didn't have a car," she remembers. "By senior year, I wished every night that he would ask me to prom." ►

LESUE KIRCHHOFF. Details, see in this issue.

Eventually, one of their mutual friends revealed Eliza's crush to Kevin. "When he found out, he told me bluntly that he didn't like me in that way," she says. "I didn't end up going to senior prom, and high school ended on a bittersweet note." She and Kevin still talk once in a while, but they're not as close as they used to be.

The risk of rejection is especially scary when you fall for a friend because "the sting is even more intense when you feel you're being rejected by someone who really knows and understands you," explains Weber.

Sadly, Carrie can relate to that feeling. After seeing Nick over winter break during their junior year, she couldn't contain her feelings any longer, so she wrote him a letter. "I told him that I loved him and wanted to be more than just his best friend," she says. Nick eventually responded, telling Carrie that he loved her but only platonically. "I was heartbroken, and in some ways, even to this day, I still am," says Carrie. "I like to pretend that I've accepted that he doesn't love me back, but I'm not very good at lying to myself. I still listen to his girl issues and give him advice because that's what best friends do. But I hold out hope that one day he will love me in the way that I love him."

Unrequited love is one potential outcome; another is losing the relationship *and* the friendship in a breakup. Kelsey, a 21-year-old senior at Texas A&M University, met Jeremy on Twitter. "We started talking and after meeting in person, we became best friends in a very absolute and intense way ... I felt closer to him than a lot of the people I had known my whole life," she says. When the two saw each other in person for the second time a year later, "all the thoughts and feelings that had been building up seemed to finally make sense," she says. "Everything just fell into place. I think there's something very special about falling in love with someone you already love."

After dating for a year, Kelsey and Jeremy broke up. "We went into the relationship as best friends with certain boundaries already blurred. It

**“HE WAS A CLOSE FRIEND.
I FELL FOR HIM, MADLY”**
—BRITTANY, 20

**“PART OF ME WONDERS
IF I'D TOLD HIM HOW I FELT,
MAYBE I WOULD'VE HAD A CHANCE
WITH HIM. I'LL ALWAYS REGRET
NOT SAYING ANYTHING”**

—EMILY, 18

caused many arguments that didn't need to happen," Kelsey says about the split. "When you know everything about a person, you know exactly what to say to hurt them in an argument." Now, she says, though they're trying to stay friends, they're not nearly as close as they were.

"Sometimes it's sad because I remember the way we were before, and I miss it," she says. "That's one of the big risks when you date your best friend—if things end badly, you essentially lose two people ... but I don't regret anything."

Maintaining a friendship after rejection or a breakup can be tough, but it's not impossible, says Weber. "However, it's important to create healthy boundaries," she stresses, adding that if you're spending a lot of your time listening to his life stories and problems, you should take a step back. "It's OK to be there for your friend, but remember that you need to develop your own interests and other relationships."

If there's so much potential for heartbreak, why risk it by confessing your crush? Emily, an eighteen-year-old college freshman from Boston, says obsessing over thoughts of what could have been is far more torturous than putting yourself out there. She's never



told her friend Brian* that she likes him romantically. "He's cute, he's in the military, and he has an awesome Southern accent. I met him in a writing workshop last year," she says. The two bonded over their shared love of writing, and when he got stationed 3,000 miles away, they kept in touch by exchanging e-mails every day. "He was my best friend, but I wanted more," she says. "I just didn't know how to put that into words, and I was afraid of ruining everything."

Then one day, Brian started dating someone. "It hurt so much. Part of me wonders if I'd told him how I felt before things got serious with her, maybe I would've had a chance with him," says Emily. "My friends think I'm crazy, but I will always regret not saying anything."

Sharon Gilchrest O'Neill, a psychotherapist based in New York, believes that Emily's situation shows exactly why you should be honest with a friend if you have a crush on him or her. "Not being authentic with the person can cause questioning and self-doubt," she says. In other words, if you don't come clean about your feelings, you may never know whether things could have worked out romantically between you. **Caroline Adams Miller, author of *Creating Your Best Life*, adds that "all risk taking results in growth—whether it's reward or resilience." Meaning that you'll either win your friend's heart or learn something about overcoming rejection. "Most regrets come from letting fear run your life," says Miller. "If a friend [you're attracted to] brings you a lot of joy, it's probably worth going for it."**

Before you make a move, though, look out for clues that may indicate whether your friend is interested in you, too. "Notice his social cues: Does he give you good eye contact? Does he seem engaged when you're talking?" says Weber. If so, that's

“ WE HAD A FOUNDATION OF TRUST AND COMMUNICATION THAT WE BUILT AS FRIENDS, AND IT CARRIED INTO OUR ROMANCE ”
—CAITLIN, 23

a positive sign. However, if he frequently talks about other girls or blabs on and on about himself without asking about your life, he may not be into you.

It turns out that your friend does like you back, you could be in for long-term love, like Brittany and Taylor. Gilchrest O'Neill believes that relationships that start as friendships have an extra layer of intimacy that can help them last, explaining, "Friendships typically have a natural sense of team spirit that's essential in romance, too." And Weber agrees: "When it works out, it can be blissful. There is an element of safety and security that makes you even more attracted to your friend-turned-boyfriend. You feel completely known," she says.

Caitlin, 23, a junior at Citrus College, in California, has been with Mark since junior year of high school. They met in seventh grade but didn't start dating until Caitlin asked Mark to go to prom "as friends." After prom, Mark admitted that he had liked her as more than a friend for a while, so they decided to hang out more to see where things would go. "In my head, I knew that he was 'it,'" she says. Five years later, they're still in love. "He'd seen me, my family, and my life at its best and at its worse than worst," she says. "We had a foundation of trust and communication that we built as friends, and it carried into our romance." —MELISSA WALKER
**Name has been changed.*

“ I THINK THERE'S SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL ABOUT FALLING IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE YOU ALREADY LOVE ”
—KELSEY, 21