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## Dear Abby

### Teen tired of his ink raising stink

**ABIGAIL VAN BUREN** Syndicated Columnist

DEAR ABBY: I am an 18-year-old man, and every day I face judgment, cruel remarks, disapproving stares and other harassment. The reason? I want to be a tattoo and piercing artist. I currently have one tattoo (which my shirtsleeve covers) and more than 20 piercings. Eight of the piercings are in my face, and most of the others are in my ears. My main ear holes are stretched out to a half-inch.

I can't walk down the street without hearing some comment, or someone stopping and staring, slack-jawed. Even friendly inquiries are irritating. I'm passionate about tattoos and piercings and have been since childhood.

At school I was judged and stereotyped at the beginning of each year and would go out of my way to prove I am a nice, respectable human being with feelings. Now, with a new school term approaching, how can I get people to stop judging me and asking dumb questions like, "How bad did that hurt?" — FUTURE SKIN ARTIST, PORT HURON, MICH.

DEAR FUTURE SKIN ARTIST: You have chosen to look different, so you shouldn't be surprised at the staring and questions. The sooner you realize it and answer the questions without being defensive, the better your chances will be of being accepted.

DEAR ABBY: I have been dating "Daryl" for four years. We're very much in love and usually get along well. The problem is I'm a scheduled-oriented person. I like to plan what we're going to do and what time we're going to do it.

Daryl, on the other hand, hates schedules and sometimes flat-out refuses to commit to something because he "doesn't want to be tied down" to one.

I have tried to be more flexible, and I think Daryl has tried to bend a little, too. However, I'm worried that this issue will eventually come between us. I don't want to break up with him over it because I really do love him, and this seems like a petty thing. Please advise. — CLOCKING IN FROM ILLINOIS

DEAR CLOCKING IN: Your concerns are not petty. I don't know how "loosey-goosey" Daryl is, but men who "refuse to commit" and "don't want to be tied down" are often not only extremely disorganized, but also confirmed bachelors.

You and Daryl have been dating for four years. Give serious consideration to whether this is the way you want to spend the rest of your life.

Write Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.





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