

conduct a self-inventory, as you read, of each of these categories as they relate to you. By the time you're through, you should be fairly certain whether the Sugar lifestyle suits you – or not.

Emotional Snafus

From an emotional standpoint, certain personality types adapt better to the Sugar lifestyle than others. For instance, if you tend to get very attached to someone, to the point where you're clingy and demanding, a Sugar arrangement probably won't work for you. On the other hand, if you're emotionally independent – you like (sometimes even prefer) spending time alone, you don't obsess about where your lover is or with whom, and you don't need to be with a lover in order to feel complete – then this kind of relationship is perfect for you. Between these two poles lie a range of characteristics and behaviors that indicate whether you're capable of separating emotions from intimacy. At first glance that might strike some people, particularly women, as an oxymoron, impossible to achieve and perhaps even undesirable. But let's look at the components of the phrase, *separate emotions from intimacy*, more carefully.

Emotions are feelings that come and go in time: one minute we might feel joyful; a few minutes later something happens to plunge us into depression. One aspect of maturity is the ability to experience a wide range of emotions without allowing them to rule our behavior. When we allow our emotions to define us this way, we're apt to run into trouble. Feelings are transitory and, as such, are not a solid foundation on which to base major life decisions – or even small ones.

I know a woman who puts her beloved house on the market every

time the basement floods; but as soon as the problem's resolved, she changes her mind – once she was even sued by someone who'd put down a deposit in between my friend's shifting moods. When she learned to base her decisions on logical thought instead of on momentary emotional distress, she recognized that she didn't want to sell her house, and resolved the basement problem once and for all. The moral of this story: we cannot base decisions on feelings because they could change at any moment. A mature person knows we don't have to act on every emotion that passes through us.

People often confuse *intimacy* with emotion. Actually, intimacy is a quality, or an atmosphere, of closeness between two people, generated by mutual experiences, or by spending long periods of time together; deep conversation can create intimacy, as can a brief but intense occurrence like a plane crash: we're liable to feel extremely close to a stranger who pulls us out of the wreckage of a plane.

The most common path to intimacy is sex. We frequently find genuine intimacy with sex partners and mistake it for something permanent – but as Susie *Sexpert* Bright points out, we can have rip-roarin', satisfying, and intimate sex with someone without wanting to share so much as an ice cream cone afterwards, much less get married and raise a family. Again, major life decisions based on fleeting emotions can equal major life mistakes.

When we learn to distinguish between intimacy and emotional response, we've gone a long way toward making our relationships calmer and more manageable: we reap the benefits of intimacy without the storms and craziness that often accompany intense emotions.

If you can separate emotions from intimacy, then you've passed an important benchmark in this process. Still, there are yet more