

# Is Flirting Cheating's First Cousin?

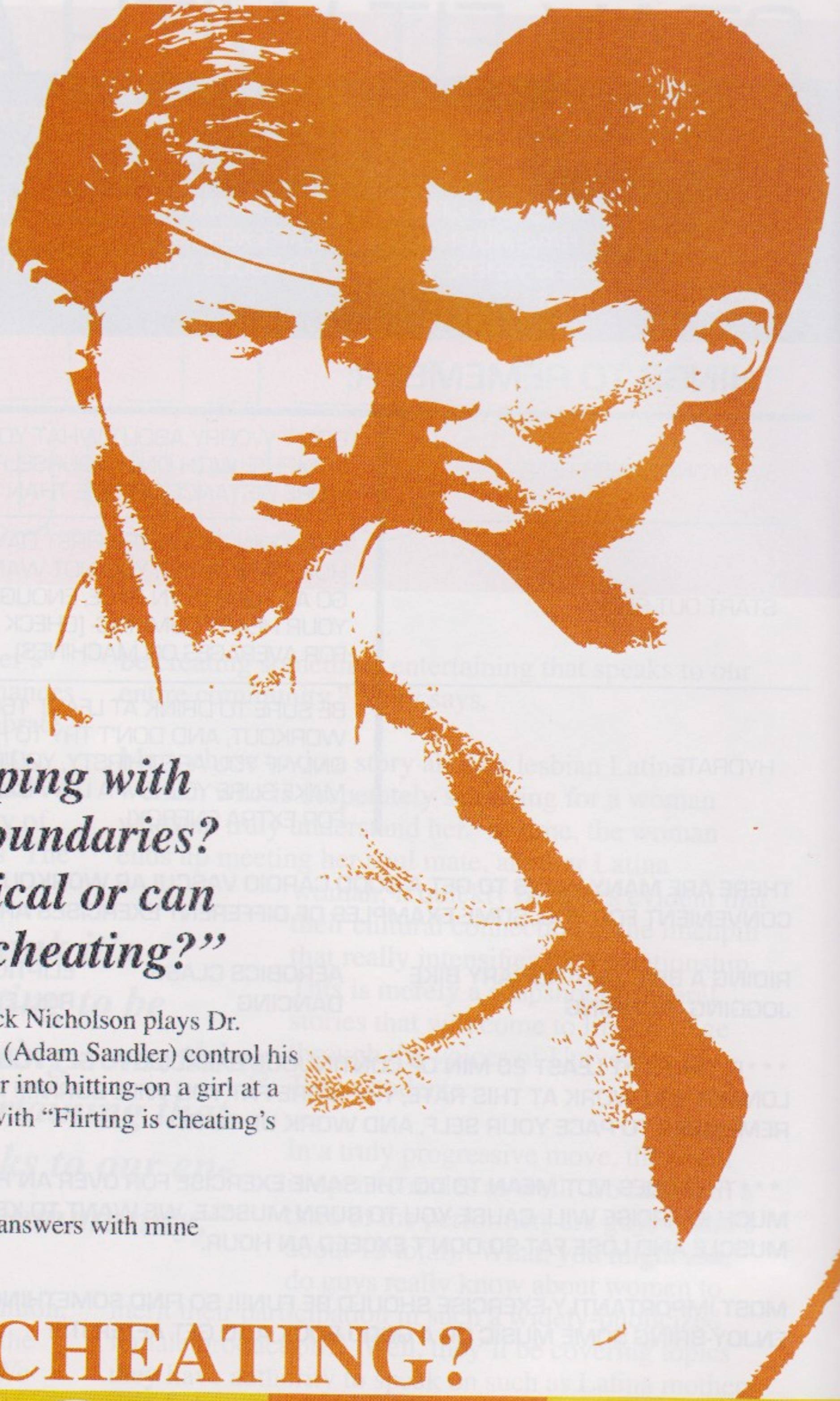
By Patrick Wanis -Human Behavior & Relationship Expert and Celebrity Life Coach

## What constitutes cheating?

*Is cheating kissing or sleeping with someone? What are the boundaries? And is cheating only physical or can there also be, "emotional cheating?"*

In the 2003 motion picture, *Anger Management*, Jack Nicholson plays Dr. Buddy Rydell who is assigned to help Dave Buznik (Adam Sandler) control his anger. In one scene, Nicholson tries to tempt Sandler into hitting-on a girl at a bar. Sandler who already has a girlfriend responds with "Flirting is cheating's first cousin, Buddy!" But is it?

**Take the quiz** and then compare your answers with mine and my explanations and reasoning.



## IS IT CHEATING?

# 1

If you French kiss a co-worker at an office party?

YES

NO

# 2

If you kiss the stripper at your bachelor party?

YES NO

# 3

If you (the woman) kiss another woman?

YES NO

# 4

If you watch adult movies on your own?

YES NO

# 5

If you go out for dinner with someone who you know is interested in you?

YES NO

# 6

If you have phone sex?

YES NO

# 7

If you excessively use MySpace, talking to people of the opposite sex?

YES NO

# 8

If you have sex while on a break from a relationship?

YES NO

# 9

If you are in a casual but sexually exclusive relationship and you date other people but don't have sex?

YES NO

# 10

If you secretly talk to your EX?

YES NO

# 11

If you undress and put to bed your drunk friend?

YES NO

# 12

If you hang out with a friend topless on the beach?

YES NO

# 13

If you go to a nude beach?

YES NO

# 14

If you dirty dance with a friend or stranger – touching and grinding each other?

YES NO

For most people, the term cheating refers to being sexually unfaithful but the dictionary also defines cheating as deceiving someone. In a committed relationship, the definition of cheating needs to be clearly determined and defined by each partner, and acceptable to both. For example, some couples are OK with a partner flirting and even kissing someone else – of either sex. In some of the scenarios in the quiz above, it may not be a case of clear cheating but it might still be wrong and hurtful!

*Now let's explore each of the above questions in detail:*

**1. You French kiss a co-worker at an office party?**

Yes, this is cheating – kissing is not just a physical act, it also creates an emotional response, particularly in women.

**2. You kiss the stripper at your bachelor party?**

The same applies here. Also, a bachelor party does not grant free license to do anything you want because you justify it as your last fling. Commitment begins when you commit to the other person, not just when you sign the marriage papers or move-in.

**3. You (the woman) kiss another woman?**

In my book, "What a woman wants!" (WOW Media) I explain that for most women, they will decide if they will sleep with you based on how you kiss. In other words, the kiss has great significance and meaning for a woman, so, yes, it is cheating.

**4. You watch adult movies on your own?**

Men will argue that sex is sex and it has no meaning for them beyond the physical feelings or attraction. However, repeated fantasizing about someone else,

and repeated exposure to the adult movie world, creates false expectations of one's partner. In other words, the sexual fantasy can be just as damaging to the relationship as the real sexual act. Beware also of how often you are watching these movies. If it is on a regular basis and you are doing it instead of being with your partner – you may need help. Yes, it is cheating.

**5. You go out for dinner with someone who you know is interested in you?**

It seems harmless and maybe your intentions are sincere but it can easily lead to cheating when you need a shoulder to cry-on, you are vulnerable or your partner has hurt you and you want to get him/her back. Remember, spending time with someone and doing things together leads to bonding and thus you are building a relationship – even if it is not at first, a romantic one. Also, if you know that the other person is seriously

interested in you beware that you do not hurt the other person by leading them on. And guys: beware that if a woman wants you, she may use a variety of deceptive practices to win you over – even if you are taken!

**6. If you have phone sex?**

Yes, it is cheating. You are speaking with a real person even if you may have not met them and you are fantasizing and connecting with them – not your partner. You are giving that person energy and attention and taking it away from your partner.

**7. If you excessively use MySpace, talking to people of the opposite sex?**

Why do you need to spend so much time talking to other people online? What are you talking about? It is obvious that something is missing in your relationship. It may not begin as cheating but will most likely lead to physical cheating. Also, it is a form of emotional cheating.

**8. If you have sex while on a break from a relationship?**

Both of you must decide upfront what you expect from each other during the break and the purpose of the break/time apart. If one partner says to the other, “I want to” or “We need to see other people” then it is not cheating.

**9. If you are in a casual but sexually exclusive relationship and you date other people but don't have sex?**

If you both agree to this action, then it is fine, otherwise, yes, it is cheating. You are still looking for Mr. or Mrs. Right and seeking to establish the emotional connection first.

**10. You secretly talk to your EX?**

Yes, it is cheating because you are deceiving your partner.

**11. You undress and put to bed your drunk friend?**

It is not cheating as long as all you did is put your friend to bed – and you didn't climb in with her. (Most guys don't care

about sleeping fully dressed, on the floor, when they are drunk, so this situation usually only applies to women!)

**12. You hang out with a friend topless on the beach?**

This is a cultural issue. In Europe, most women sunbathe topless. In America, being topless is a big issue – to women. It is not cheating, unless the both of you begin to drink and party together on the beach and she asks you to rub suntan lotion on her chest...

**13. You go to a nude beach?**

Most guys don't go to a nude beach – except to watch women naked, so yes, for men, the intention is cheating. In other words, it would be a rare sight to see a group of straight guys naked at a nude beach, just hanging around having a beer or two, and throwing the Frisbee to each other!

**14. You dirty dance with a friend or stranger – touching and grinding each other?**

Women express themselves via body language more than men do. Thus, dancing can be a real turn-on for women, particularly when the dancing becomes sexual, so yes, it is cheating. If you are still not sure, ask yourself, “Would you dirty dance with your mother or mother-in-law?”

**The final word**

Yes, there is sexual and emotional cheating and either one can be hurtful. There are five core emotions that drive our behavior: love, hate, fear, lust and pleasure. In other words, we will at one time or another be tempted to do something based on the above emotions such as express physical anger or hatred or, respond to feelings of lust. And if we gave into every feeling or impulse we were to have, anarchy would rule the world. Decide clearly if you want to be in a relationship with this person or not. If not, walk away. Don't do things that are selfish and extremely hurtful to the other person.

You always have the power to say, “No.” Finally, a committed relationship is about love, honor, respect, honesty and trust. Anything that you do that goes against that type of commitment can be defined as cheating!

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