

Dear Titus

I can definitely say that you don't need love potions to get someone to fall in love with you.

It's wonderful to fall in love but you can't force it to happen. It just comes naturally. Some people find girlfriends or boyfriends at your age, but many don't until much later. And even when they do fall in love, it doesn't mean they have to have sex.

Don't worry so much about what your friends say. Remember, many of their stories about sex may not be true. Boys are famous for boasting about sexual experiences they don't actually have.

Also, you don't always have to do the same as your friends. Follow your own feelings and trust yourself more.

So, stop worrying – stay happily single until the right girl comes along. Lack of experience won't matter then.

In the meantime, focus on your studies, find other interests and learn to respect and talk to the girls around you without worrying so much about love. It will knock you off your feet sooner or later.

Auntie Stella

ACTION POINTS

- Make a list of the things you do just to be like your friends. Decide which are good for you and which are risky. Would you like to stop doing these risky things? Discuss with your group how you could do this.
- Give yourself a mark out of 10 for self-confidence (how much you believe in yourself and your own decisions). Ask a close friend if they agree with your mark. If your mark is low, how can you help each other to be stronger? If it is high, how can you be sure you listen to other people's advice?
- Make a list of the good things about yourself. Include your good qualities (for example, *I'm generous, I've got a good sense of humour, I can solve problems*) and things you're good at (*I can dance well, I'm good at farming, I'm a great football player, I can tell stories to young children*). Put the list somewhere you can see it, and add to it when you think of other things.
- Is it usual for boys and girls you know to be just friends? Would you like this to happen more often? If yes, work with a mixed group of boys and girls to decide on two or three fun activities to do together this week. At the end of the week, discuss what you learnt about being friends.