

Almost Kiss and Tell

Juan and his girlfriend Julia have just graduated from college and have been in a committed relationship for about two years. Their relationship is happy and healthy, characterized by mutual respect and excitement about their future together. One weekend, Juan goes on a trip by himself to the wedding of an old friend from high school. The party afterwards is a fun and raucous celebration. Towards the end of the evening, Juan finds himself dancing with Marcela, an old friend that he has not seen in a very long time. At first the dancing is silly, but soon they are dancing suggestively and flirting with each other. When the party is over, Marcela invites Juan back to her hotel room and he accepts.

When Juan and Marcela arrive at the hotel, they are surprised to find that a handful of their old friends have gathered in the common area, continuing to catch up together. They welcome Juan and Marcela, who end up sitting with different clusters of friends scattered around the room, and they all continue talking and laughing until the morning.

The next day, after everyone has parted ways, Juan feels glad the interaction with Marcela went no further than it did, but he also feels guilty about nearly cheating on Julia. He is not sure about what would have happened had his friends not been present. He is also not sure whether or not to tell Julia what happened. Juan thinks Julia deserves to know how close he came to cheating on her and that it would be disrespectful to her and to their relationship to keep it a secret. Yet he also wonders if telling Julia is necessary since in the end all he and Marcela did was dance.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What constitutes cheating on a partner?
2. Is it morally worse to actually cheat than to almost cheat (but then not do so for lack of opportunity)? Why or why not?
3. Is it morally permissible for Juan to keep this information from Julia?

