

# Facebook questions open floor for discussion

If you're friends with Everett Morton on Facebook, you've been answering a lot of questions lately.

Morton, president and chief executive officer of 30something Entertainment, an entertainment and promotions company best known for its open mic events and annual poetry slams, has posted a "Question of the Day" as his status update every day since late August. The questions have covered topics ranging from cartoons to religion, from friendship to spousal fights, from black-on-black race relations to politics, from disciplining children to soft drink preferences and more.

It's all a prelude to "30something Live: Let's Talk About It" Set for 8 p.m. Jan. 22 at Riverbend Winery, Morton's event will be an open forum featuring local celebrities and lay persons answer-

ing some of the Facebook topics live. Panelists will be drawn from the audience throughout the night so that the points of view will change constantly. Morton plans to focus on relationship questions for the premiere and to continue the series.

The event will be co-hosted by spoken-word artist Adrayna Bentley, whose stage name is Sunshine. Bentley has posed her own question of the day on Facebook since last summer, when a random question entered her head one day. Her friends asked her to

continue asking questions.

Similarly, after Morton asked his Facebook friends for advice about a personal situation in July, he became curious as to what they would say about various situations he's considered often. He decided to "just start putting (the questions) out there and see what happens."

Friends also send him questions they want to open up to discussion. One recently requested he ask the question, "What do you do if your mate doesn't believe in God?"

Responses to relationship questions have surprised Morton.

"I'm surprised at what people will put up with in a relationship," he said. "When I would think people would be like, 'It's a wrap, I'm done,' they stick it out for whatever reason."

Relationships and religion, whether part of the same question or asked individually, have been the hottest topics. One responder suggested that the expense of divorce and the joy of love may be reasons a single woman

remains in a relationship with a married man. Morton gets an average of about 35 responses to each question, but the question, "Do you believe Christianity has become more of a fad than an actual lifestyle?" generated 94 responses and started a colorful argument. Bentley's question, "What is one of your sexual pet peeves?"

generated 236 replies, one of which led Bentley to suggest the open forum to Morton.

Morton and Bentley are thrilled that they've found a way to get people talking "because we don't do it anymore," Morton said. "It's either text messaging or Facebooking" or quick notes on Twitter. But the question of the day series has provoked online conversations between responders, and a few people have approached Morton or Bentley to discuss topics face to face.

"People don't get to talk the way they used to, or need to. We thought of the open forum as a way for people to have a conversation, like a group of

friends, would in their house," said Bentley.

"The art of socializing is almost out the door," Morton said, citing the example of the club scene in which men watch woups of women dance together, then join the group of women rather than simply asking one of the women to dance.

"I figured that if we start off talking, when we actually get to the dancing part, you've actually communicated with someone. So (the man) knows, 'If I ask this woman to dance, she'll probably dance with me. I've talked to her. I know we've connected some kind of way,'" he said.

"I like to see people talk. My new motto is, 'You can't fix what you can't talk about. So for us to get over some of our issues, we need to talk about them.'"

*Mariam Williams is a Louisville native who writes about the random thoughts that hold her attention for two minutes or more.*



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