

HowToReadaMan.com
Presents...



HOW TO READ
A MAN AND
INFLUENCE HIM

*A Step-By-Step Guide To Understanding
How Men Think, Act And Behave*

BY: MARK SCOTT

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Introduction:

When it comes to men, do you feel like you've often been waiting for your ship to come in, and then find out he was traveling by train all along? Well, you're not alone.

It's long been commonly thought that just when a man thinks he knows a woman, all he knows is he doesn't know *anything*. You constantly hear guys talking about how women are impossible to figure out. Likewise, you often hear women group *all* guys together because of the actions of a few.

If you're reading this book, chances are that you either feel like you may have made a mistake getting into your current relationship or marriage, or you're simply trying to get some insight into the male mind. I hope it's the latter.

Any relationship you undertake should be taken seriously. Furthermore, it should be taken seriously by both of you! In many relationships, women feel like they do all the "work" or that they're the only ones who care whether or not the two of you are able to work through problems that may arise. I'm here to tell you that this too is not always the case. Although sadly, this is the case the majority of the time.

I'm here to help you to decipher the male mind, and to give you some insight into the various types of men and how they think. Contrary to popular belief, not "all men are alike." Just like women, they vary widely. Some just prove it better than others.

If you're reading this book, then I already know a few things about you. Does any of this sound familiar?

▶ You're afraid that you're on the cusp of losing him to some younger, better-looking bimbo.

- ▶ You feel as if you have a ton to offer him, but that he doesn't take you seriously or he sees productive communication as unneeded drama.
- ▶ You're everything a guy describes when he says or writes what he's looking for in a woman, but you are worried that since you've gained a few extra pounds or some other perceived "flaw," he'll run for the hills at any moment.
- ▶ All you want to do is be happy with your man and die happily ever after, but you fear that you're the only one that feels that way.
- ▶ You cannot, for the life of you, figure out what the hell is wrong with him...or yourself!

Well, as I said, you're not alone. Furthermore, men go through the same thing. I'm not saying this to make you feel better. It's painfully true. Ever heard the adage, "Nice guys finish last"? It didn't come about from thin air. It's based on extremely common behavior.

What most of the men in the world don't realize is that women go through it too! Not only that, but most women won't admit it either (at least not out loud.)

This Program is NOT About Changing Your Man

If you are hoping that you will be able to magically change your man overnight, you are only daydreaming. Fact: People don't change when we want them to change. If they're going to change, it's because they *want* to change for their own needs, wants or desire to get out of a certain pattern in life.

This program will teach you how to change yourself in a way where it benefits both you *and* your man.

Soon, you'll realize that changing yourself isn't actually outright change, but growth. A relationship takes two, and when you're committed to someone, each of you must conform and compromise a bit. Successful relationships are about adapting to each other. You'll notice a marked improvement in your relationship automatically.

In order for things to improve, you have to realize that there are things that you've always assumed or thought you knew, but were just flat wrong. You will have to do things that seem to go in the face of the person you've always been. You have to be open to new ideas and concepts.

You have to go into it with an open mind; a mind that accepts change and diversity; a mind that seeks opportunity to evolve and realize its potential. Succumbing to change isn't a weakness; it's a strength. It's a strength that proves you're in it for the long haul and you truly care about your mate. He, in turn, should have the same devotion to the goal.

You must first acknowledge that you can't and won't change your man. Sure, he may evolve and grow alongside of you at the same time, but one thing that has always driven men mad? The fact that women get to know us, develop feelings for us, date us, and become committed to us, only to spend the rest of their days trying to *change* us!

You can't make a man do certain things, nor can you make him follow certain habits. All you can do is communicate your views, wishes and desires, and hope for the best. You also can't control the thoughts that go through his pretty little head, regardless of how hard you try. Like I said, you *can* make requests of him, but you can't expect him to automatically go along with those requests with little to no changes.

It's extremely important that you realize that if you fail to understand what I've said, and *will* say, you run a very real risk of

falling into the category of a manipulator. And that's most certainly *not* what you will learn in this program.[\[1\]](#)

What You Will Learn With This Program

You'll learn smart, productive ways of handling various situations with men. You'll learn ways that will almost always get you the result you seek. In other words, this program will reveal ways that will inspire your man to put his best self forward around you. They will *make* him want to be the man that you desire.

After going through this program and applying it, you will discover what truly goes on in the often-misunderstood and confusing mind of a man. You'll find that most of his peculiar ways have good reasons behind them. You'll realize where you've mistakenly assumed something far less meaningful within your man, and you'll appreciate and understand his depth to a much higher degree than you ever thought possible. You'll know what makes him tick.

A Subtle Warning: There are exceptions to every rule. There are men out there who are simply genuine jerks who want to make your life hell. There are guys out there who will be forever trapped in their childish or stubborn ways, refusing to change. If you're currently stuck in a dead-end relationship with such a guy, then get out of it now. He doesn't deserve your devotion and hard work if he won't react and reply in kind. At the very least, by the time you've finished reading this program, you'll have a much better idea which type your guy is.

Why Do I Have to Learn About Him? Why Can't He Learn About Me?

Men attempt to learn about you, but this doesn't mean that you shouldn't try to learn about him as well. Women as a whole tend to be more emotional and thoughtful. This often drives you insane

from over-thinking things and getting nowhere, correct? That's where this program comes in and saves the day. You will finally *know* what he's thinking, and more importantly, why he's thinking it. You will likely come to know him better than he knows himself.

Figuring your guy out will no longer be work or "drama," but interesting and insightful. You'll find yourself becoming fascinated at just what makes him tick.

You essentially have two choices:

1. Be forever confused and befuddled about men, becoming irritated every time you witness one of his "Why does he behave like that?!?" moments,

or

2. Stock your arsenal with the tools and equipment to learn and understand him, and then start using them to your advantage.

Just try and imagine a life where you understand him so well that you actually come out ahead. You'll be so familiar with what's going on in his mind that you'll always know how to approach him, regardless of the reason for doing so. You'll be able to be more confident heading into those moments and have a better idea of how they'll end than ever before.

You'll see how you have the power and the advantage over your man. You will be astounded at the levels to which he will then start to *want* to please you and keep you happy and drama-free. It will actually give you an upper hand in the relationship.

Trust me, I know what it's like to have frustration along with complete and utter ignorance about how a mate thinks. It becomes a burden that is too much to bear, and this can severely

overshadow your enjoyment with him. Not knowing how your guy thinks leads to painful feelings. This is why I'm doing this. You deserve to be happy and content.

What Happens When You Don't Understand Your Man?

What happens when you simply don't get him? Your frustration turns to resentment. This resentment starts to contaminate the air between the two of you, which will eventually drive him away. The very man you're trying to figure out and become closer to will run for the hills when it seems you've turned into a crazy woman over the slightest hiccups and bumps along the path of your journey together. It turns your warm and happy intentions into something that's more comparable to contempt. It sours you.

Answer me this: How many times have you tried to pour your heart out to your man, only to have him almost immediately get defensive and act as if you've accused him of something? He then accuses *you* of over-thinking, over-analyzing and/or living in the past, right?

He basically tells you to build a bridge and get over it, and then less-than-respectfully suggests you get a grip? You don't have to answer. I already know the answer is a resounding "Yes!"

That resentment I spoke previously is the result of having "built that bridge" long ago and crossing it countless times, only to realize that every time you got across, you've never left! You're trapped in an endless loop caused by your buildup of negative feelings. The longer you go without understanding, the more tiring the mere thought of crossing that bridge becomes. You start to develop a "why bother?" attitude whether you realize it or not.

You've officially developed a state of mind called Negative Emotion Overload. No, it's not a personified version of a computer virus. It's when your buildup of anger, frustration and pain in dealing with your man starts to override any and all pleasant thoughts about him.

Think of your brain and emotions as a computer's hard drive. As you surf the World Wide Web that is your "happy place" and come up with more and more with pages and pages of irrelevant results, your hard drive begins to fill up. Eventually, the pleasant thoughts are overridden with disdain and heartache, and your positive outlook becomes replaced with negative emotions and thoughts. Like a hard drive, recovering that replaced "happy data" can be done, but it takes work. You've taken the first step.

Once this occurs, you lash out for what seems to be no reason. *You* become the one who has the problem. Alternatively, you may put up an emotional road block, no longer letting him in. You may find yourself becoming mentally unbalanced. You become extremely emotionally distant. And you lose him in the process.

Why Did This Happen?

There's a very common misconception that the way one shows and proves their love for another is the way that everyone should show and prove it. In other words, they expect that the way they themselves, show love is the "normal" way. This is where everyone misses one of the main points: Men and women are different! This makes neither right nor wrong – just different.

Just as you may regard the way your guy shows his love for you as lacking or odd, he may well think the same thing of your way. You simply have to embrace the fact that you're two different people that react and behave differently. It's what the two of you choose to do with those differences that matters.

If you hope to make your relationship work, you need to acknowledge and accept these differences for what they are.

I'm sure you've noticed the fact that anytime you're in a relationship after a few months or years, the magic or newness wears off. No longer is he as patient, loving or understanding as he once was. You may not realize it, but you usually aren't either, at least not like in

the beginning of your relationship.

Why is this? It's simple, really: You become familiar with each other. While we all wish that this new, breathtaking feeling could last a lifetime, men and women both begin to expect certain behavior from the one another. When they don't get what they expect, they begin to see it as an annoyance, even if just a small one. We expect someone to act in the the way that *we* deem normal.

In a relationship's beginnings, we're all "guilty" of being exceptionally polite, patient and more easygoing than usual. We do this as a way to get to know each other and accept their differences and quirks. Over time, we give more focus to these differences and quirks, and some of us seize on them. Others accept them for who they are and build from it. It is those that do the latter that succeed more often.

Section: 1

Why Men Don't Express Themselves More Clearly

Since the beginning of organized cultures many, many moons ago, men were leaders, organizers, providers, warriors, hunters and fathers. From the start, men have had a certain level of expectations waged at them. Because of these expectations, any perceived weakness in a man could be detrimental. This basically sealed away the average man's emotions.

When you try to get to those emotions, most men instinctively keep their "weaker" emotions tucked away behind their proverbial shields and swords. Sure, blaming this on our ancestors may seem like a cop-out, but it makes it no less true.

For many generations, men were raised with different standards. Some were raised to show more mental strength and emotional stability, while others were raised with the lion's share of the focus on being a provider. And others were raised to never trust a woman or anyone else for that matter. Each man has had his own set of rules and expectations taught to him through generations of men.

Think of it this way, for example: Let's say there was a tale of an almighty conqueror of armies of men. His legacy was shared for eons and included brave deeds such as leading 200 men into battles against 20,000. His reputation for facing adversity head-on and with his head held high regardless of his chances of success is what made him the man that all sought to become.

Now, imagine that secret writings surfaced that shed light on the fact that this mighty and brave warrior absolutely and unwaveringly feared spiders. Imagine documented stories that proved that he would often fall into a quivering mass of tears and shrieks at the mere site of one. Would that tarnish his image? You bet it would.

Well, men will take some emotions (such as sadness, fear, etc) and see them as weaknesses, treating every last one of them as possible threats to his honor and legacy. Some would rather risk being seen as an uncaring and unfeeling brute than a sensitive, thoughtful, less “manly” man.

Besides upbringing, society is often to blame as well. An emotional man is seen as less stable and less dependable. He’s seen as someone who may crack under pressure and severely lack as a provider or protector.

Take it from a man: Men hurt. Men can crumble inside and face the greatest adversities with fear and dread, but if he dares to show it on the outside, he risks his reputation and his standing in the community or society as a whole. Rather than risk this, many men simply try to block things out and shut their emotions down.

Back to upbringing for a moment: What happens when a little girl cries? Hearts break and people rush to their aid, scooping them up to cuddle and reassure them. What happens when a little boy cries? More often than you realize, they’re told to grow up, man up, or walk it off.

From a very early age, our emotions are stifled. Can you see how this may create some adverse and relationship-affecting traits?

We’re taught time and time again to be emotional, but to most certainly not show it too often. Rather than try and blur the line between normal and “too often,” many men will simply err on the side of caution and not show any emotions at all.

Now, imagine you and your guy just had a particularly heated argument. You both said things in the heat of the moment that you didn't mean, and the argument finally reach a moment where he just walks off. What usually happens once the anger subsides?

I'll answer that for you: The guy usually tries to act as if nothing much has happened and goes on to work or about his business or pleasure. It's either that or he stays angry longer. Now, what do women generally do? Women usually want to pull their hair out, have a damn good cry, and possibly even contact close friends or family for a support system.

Conflict generally weighs more on women and sticks with them longer. Does this make them weak? Hell no! Not one iota. But try to imagine a man doing that.

“Bob? Michelle and I just had a big fight, man. Can I come over and cry on your couch?”

What was your first reaction reading that? You likely rolled your eyes. You most likely thought, “Oh, geez. Get a grip, dude!” Right? Well, welcome to the everyday life of a man.

While the above scenario is purposefully blown out of proportion, you can see my point. If the roles were the same after a heated discussion, you'd probably see him as a wuss. Women claim that they want a man who isn't afraid to show emotion, but many often shudder when they see them.

The key is a delicate balance of emotional strength and real, human, honest-to-goodness release. But, when? Where? How? How much? Herein lies the problem men face every single day.

This is why many men don't just relax and share every facet of themselves. When they do, they risk overdoing it and being seen as weak.

Contrary to Popular Belief - Men Do Have Emotions

Many believe men are emotionless, unfeeling beings. This simply isn't the case. Men can feel and experience just as much fear and uneasiness as any woman. They can feel heart-wrenching loneliness just as often. The difference is that we aren't raised to show it as openly. Doing so sends us back to the days of our childhood and running to a parent to doctor us.

Furthermore, more often than not we're geared to be the ones doing the comforting, not the ones needing to be comforted. Generations of men have been raised and wired this way. We simply can't help it.

There are absolutely exceptions, but the problem lies in trying to be one of the exceptions without being judged or seen as less of a man. It feels like a can't-win situation, regardless of which we choose. Do we become the man you deserve and long for or do we do what's expected of us by the majority? The answer isn't as cut-and-dry as you think. It sounds as if this makes you "just another pretty face in the crowd," but I can assure you that this isn't the case.

For the most part, women tend to be far more in tune with the emotions of those around them. You can usually tell when someone is hurting, angry or otherwise not themselves. Most men, on the other hand, are likely notice it, and tune it out rather than face it.

What usually happens when there's a problem? At the very least, you take some time to gather your thoughts and create some semblance of coherent thought. You then usually want to sit down as adults and discuss everything in a calm and collected manner. What does he usually say? "Not now, honey," and gives some excuse as to why he can't.

Men generally feel that if they avoid dealing with or discussing a problem, it will just die down or go away with time. In other words,

they feel the exact opposite way that women do! Being a man myself, it can drive me just insane to see such behavior, but I, like you, have to realize that I'm in the minority. It also doesn't help ease the frustration one bit. But stick with me here.

Open Women vs. Internalized Men

Whether it's good, bad or indifferent, if a woman is feeling an emotion, she's more likely to show it than a man.

Let me give you another example.

Let's say a woman worked hard for a company and thought that, at long last, she was going to be recognized for it and rewarded with a promotion to the new executive slot that just opened up. The pay is twice her current salary and she feels that she darn well earned it. She towers over and above the qualifications that the position requires, and her results far exceed those of her coworkers.

Now, imagine that woman not only didn't get that promotion, but was she laid off too. The job was given to someone from the outside, and the years she devoted to the company seem to have meant nothing. What do you think her reaction and behavior would be? Half devastated and half livid, most likely.

Now, imagine a man in the same situation. What would his reaction and behavior be? Probably exactly the same as the woman. The man *and* woman would likely take it the same way, except one for one difference: the way in which each of them moved on from there.

The first thing they'd each do is drive the seemingly never-ending trip home. Their minds would be numb and racing with thoughts of panic at the same time. When they get home, however, the difference would then become clearer.

The woman would normally get home and immediately tell her mate, or call a dear friend or relative to seek emotional support. She'd vent her anger and release her sorrow onto the willing shoulder of someone who cared.

On the other hand, a man is more likely to get home, grab a drink and act as if everything is normal. He's more likely to try and actually hide the fact from his wife, girlfriend or roommates. He won't seek out that moral support, and he will try to deal with it in his own little way in his own time.

In his eyes, however inaccurate it may be, he, feels like he failed as a man, and furthermore, a human being for not only losing the promotion, but his job. To seek the same emotional support from those caring individuals around him would be openly admitting to himself and the world that he is – gasp – human! Most men would rather die (figuratively, of course) than admit this.

On the same token, as with the child scenarios earlier, most people are far more comfortable with trying to console and nurture a woman, while many feel too awkward and helpless when trying to lift the spirits of a man. Should they hug him? Should they simply stay quiet and let him get it out? Most don't know, and sadly, the men themselves don't normally know either.

Men Don't Want to Appear Vulnerable Or Weak

Men just downright wait until they don't have any choice but to seek support or help before they will look for it. By this time, it's usually a lot more difficult to help him. He's gone so far downhill in his emotional tailspin that he doesn't have a clue where to start. Furthermore, while he's in this state, what may have worked to help him in the early stages of his dilemma may not be as effective now, if at all.

Men just do not want to appear weak, so they shut down almost completely a lot of the time.

How Men Express Their Emotions

If you have a pulse, you know that we humans have four basic emotions: joy, anger, despair and fear. What separates the sexes is how these emotions are shown.

For the average man, it's only socially acceptable for him to show two of the emotions: joy and anger. Despair is seen as a weakness, and fear isn't even in his vocabulary, at least not outwardly. Almost anything outside of happiness and anger are considered less masculine or even feminine traits.

While they are extremely common for all of us to feel, sadness and fear are deemed acceptable behavior by women, but when a man shows signs of these two emotions, he's seen as weaker than his more stable male counterparts.

Because of this, most men will decide consciously or subconsciously to show their emotions in a nonverbal way. A frightened or worried man will likely get extremely quiet. He's most likely trying to calm himself or rationalize what's going on. He's trying to come to grips with the situation and find a way to resolve it.

On the other hand, when it comes to sadness, the male role in society is usually that of the protector and comforter. For example, at a funeral it is usually the man who is consoling the mourning relatives and friends.

The men the pallbearers and funeral directors. They are the ones trying to take control of the situation and keeping emotions in check for both themselves and others.

So if your man suddenly gets very quiet or changes between harsh and mellow emotions, he's sending you a message. He's just doing it in a nonverbal way.

Right about now, your likely asking, “Well, then how the heck do I know what he’s feeling if he won’t talk about it or express it more openly?”

Well, to that, all I can say is keep reading!

Points to Remember:

- ▶ Since the beginning of time, men have been bred to “man up” and take charge.

- ▶ Most men would rather be seen as uncaring and thoughtless than weak and vulnerable.

- ▶ Men will more often err on the side of not showing *any* emotion, rather than risk showing them too often.

- ▶ When dealing with a problem in a relationship, most men will normally shut down or act as if nothing is wrong. They think time will fix the problem.

- ▶ Women are more apt to outwardly show their emotions, while men will usually internalize them.

- ▶ When a man does ask for help, it’s likely that he has needed it long before now, but didn’t want to admit it. He simply didn’t want to appear weak.

- ▶ Men are less likely to use words to show their emotions. Rather, they tend to use nonverbal means.

Section: 2

Men Don't Have a Clue

How many times have you felt a certain way or wanted to reach a certain goal, only to realize your guy doesn't have an inkling of an idea about what you're trying to say, imply, or accomplish when you attempt to talk with him about it?

Sometimes it's hard to differentiate between sheer stupidity, utter lack of caring, and just the fact that he's a guy. Some would argue that it's a mixture of all three. But that would be making a blanket statement about all men which is precisely what we're trying to change here.

What may be extremely important to you may be less than trivial to him, and vice versa. How many times have you heard the words "I'm not a mind-reader! You have to tell me!"

Sadly, this makes us seem like the thickest, most out of touch beings on the planet, but it's simply because we think differently. Again, there are many types of men, and some notice and care more than others. But if you had the kind that understood everything, you probably wouldn't be reading this, would you?

True, there are men out there who simply don't care and are only out for themselves, but the majority of guys really do care,. They just aren't real adept at showing it.

Guys do things all of the time that they don't even realize they're doing. Many times they can't see how their words hurt, and it

seems as though they aren't acknowledging your feelings.

The issue here isn't always the man, though. What is obvious to one person isn't necessarily going to be to another person. The issue can be either how it's being conveyed or how the other is responding to it, or *not* responding to it.

There may be times where he sees you as just as clueless as you think *he* is. That's the difference between men and women rearing its ugly head. Men and women tend to convey feelings and thoughts in different ways, and one always thinks the other's way is idiotic.

For example, men tend to explain every detail as if you're clueless about everything. On the other hand, women, tend to give men the benefit of the doubt and simply imply some things, assuming he knows the rest. She won't outright say everything, just some things. Can you see how this might puzzle a guy?

Just because something is obvious to you, doesn't mean it will be clear to him. You also may be expecting him to understand something that men as a whole may not be as familiar with. It doesn't make him stupid or uncaring, just uninformed.

Let's try another scenario here. Let's say that you had a particularly bad day at work. You come home and really want to talk about it with him. All you want him to do is listen and pay attention. The problem is that he won't take you seriously, and won't turn the TV off or get off of the computer. And all this only makes you feel more frustrated neglected.

Relationships become more tense the less we are to able make our significant others understand our plights. It's a human trait to want others to understand each and every detail of a tough situation.

If your man seems to not care enough to give you his undivided attention, the tension rises even more. If he is paying attention but

isn't comprehending or feeling the way you want the situation to *make* him feel, more tension builds. Your first reaction is likely to rip him a new one or simply judge him or his actions internally.

Here's the thing, though: You *can* make him not only listen but understand as well. A common mistake women make is to immediately assume the worst case scenario with him/ They don't give him the benefit of *that* doubt. This happens many times a day in many relationships.

Assuming the Worst

Let me use another example:

Let's say you asked him to pick something up for you while he was out shopping. He agrees, but then comes home without it. Almost immediately, you'll probably assume he's selfish or just didn't care enough. The fact is, his mind was likely elsewhere, either when he agreed to grab it for you or once he got there. Maybe he's having an issue at work. Maybe he's worried about something in his life. Maybe he's just plain forgetful. You do more harm than good by always assuming the worst or that he's careless.

Never, ever make automatic negative assumptions about your guy. More times than not, you'll assume incorrectly. You'll likely read far more into it than is reality.

While he'll be wondering why you've made such a big deal out of it, you'll be wondering why he thinks it's nothing whatsoever. See how different the two sexes are? It's rarely the case that he simply doesn't care. It's almost always something else on his mind. It doesn't make your situation any less important; it's just that his issues are at the forefront at the moment.

If you jump to this negative conclusion, he'll sense that negativity, and he'll deem all of your attempts at making him understand you

to be a waste of time. Once you reach that point, he'll be less likely to even *want* to understand your situation.

Men think like men. There are some things a man simply will not understand simply because of the fact that he *is* a man. Again, this doesn't mean he's stupid, just uninformed.

When I say men can be clueless, I'm not exaggerating. But he may not necessarily be the problem here.

Unrealistic Expectations

A trait among many women is compounding the issue between the sexes. Women often have unrealistic expectations of their man. Women will meet a man, begin to like him, start dating him, fall in love with him, perhaps even marry him, and then attempt to change that very same man into another man altogether.

Women rarely realize they're doing it. It's unrealistic to get to this point with a man and then expect him to change into someone else, especially since he has been this way from the start. So often, women try to begin molding their man into someone he simply isn't. This is not only unrealistic, but it's unfair to the man.

Women have the vision of their leading man dancing around in their pretty little heads from an early age. Obviously, this image changes over time and with different life experiences, but all women have an image of the "perfect man."

You create this dream guy through your past dealings with men: the good times as well as painful times with men, and the men you were raised around. Furthermore, the guy you long for contains all of the things past men have lacked, and *none* of the things the men in your life have driven you insane with. He is the perfect man in your eyes. Oh, and one more thing: He doesn't exist!

No man, or human for that matter, is perfect. You're setting your man up for failure by giving him standards to live up to that can't be reasonably achieved, at least not by one person. Not only does this put a ton of pressure on the guy, but it furthers your disappointment and frustration when he falls short of the dream mark.

Another example: You recently got out of a relationship with a guy. That relationship was filled with amazing times, but also painful times. The main problem was that you never felt truly loved or appreciated by him. As a result, you then expect your current guy to make up for what the last guy lacked. You want him to be full of outpouring love nearly 24/7. This just isn't realistic or fair. Not only that, but when there are men out there who seem to fawn over women, they're seen as lacking confidence or that they're "trying too hard."

While you don't necessarily *consciously* expect these things in your guy, your subconscious shoots these expectations to the forefront, frustrating both of you in the process.

Because of this, the frustration heightens within you as you witness the relationship withstand normal, everyday hiccups that everyone goes through. Your mind blows them out of proportion at times and makes things worse than they actually are. Relationships never, *ever* go 100% smoothly. Not even the most successful relationship made up of two relationship gurus is going to go smoothly for eternity. But, it can go smoother than average.

It's vitally important to realize that no two people have the same moods at the same time, which can cause some friction in a relationship. If you're feeling particularly intimate and he's not, or he wakes up feeling frisky and intimacy is the furthest thing from your mind at the moment. There's another possible source for friction. If there are days where he looks at you like you hung the moon with a wanting look in his eye, and then other days where it seems he barely acknowledges your presence, this will cause friction.

There can and will be times when you're not both feeling affectionate. It's important to realize this. It doesn't make you unattractive or unappealing. It just means the mood isn't there at the moment. It's as simple as that.

And then you have specific needs in the relationship that you want him to fulfill that he doesn't. You feel like he should attempt to fulfill these needs at all times with little or no words from you. He should just know. Answer the door. It's disappointment.

A man cannot and will not ever read your mind. He can and will acclimate to your ways of thinking and slowly learn your desires, but he will never reach a point where he, beyond all doubts, knows just what and when to do or say the perfect thing. Not gonna happen! Trust me. Men wish they could read your minds. It would take a heck of a lot of pressure and fears of rejection away if we could.

A majority of the pain and struggling through the ups and downs of a relationship are because of these unrealistic expectations. It's vital to recognize and acknowledge this in the beginning.

An Important Lesson

Don't let those high expectations cause you to jump to those conclusions that will sour the relationship. They will indeed sour it because you have a negative perception of the your man and the relationship as a whole. In this state of mind, you will see things as much worse than they actually are and you will make bad decisions. Not only that, but you will likely have rushed into making these bad decisions as well.

Believe it or not, having these unrealistic expectations is a form of abuse. What you're expecting from him without having divulged to him what the heck it is, is asking someone to bend to your will without question. That is seen as controlling, which is a form of emotional abuse. He will feel like he has no voice or any say at all in

the relationship.

Never assume. You have to communicate. Not only do you have to talk about everything, but you then need to ensure that he understood everything afterward. No, I don't mean a pop quiz. I mean be sure that you've said all that you wanted to say, and then ask if he has any concerns, thoughts or questions.

It's also vital that you don't act as if it was a test either. If you went from topic to topic with little downtime in between, you may have overwhelmed him. He may have been trying to comprehend what you just said or preparing questions when you moved on to the next topic.

Remember, this is a discussion, not a list of do's and don'ts. Discussions require two people. Allow him to take in all that you've said and to come up with possible areas that he needs you to elaborate on. Be sure that he realizes that his questions show interest, and won't be seen as not having paid attention. Let him know they're welcomed with open arms.

Use empathy at all times during this delicate learning process. The first step was finding a good time to communicate with him, and then doing it. Continuously put yourself in his shoes, and adjust your approach and methods accordingly.

You also can't expect your man to be your solution. All you can do is convey your thoughts, wants and hopes. You want to absolutely avoid making them sound like must-haves or an ultimatum. Giving that impression will do little more than set him up for failure and you for disappointment.

Stay calm throughout the conversation, and be sure to allow him to "interrupt" with requests for clarification or to throw an opinion in. It doesn't mean he doesn't care or isn't listening. It's quite the contrary, actually. It means he *is* listening and wants to make sure he understands you. See him as making progress, not as a slow-minded, thick-skulled guy trying to take over the conversation.

Now, it's also *extremely* important that you understand that no matter how hard you or he tries, he can't and won't fulfill every last one of those desires. Expecting that is like expecting to win the lottery without buying a ticket. It's a no-win situation where he is destined for failure. What matters is the degree he in which he *tries* to fulfill them.

Through every bit of the frustration and tension between the two of you, just remember that you love each other. Remember what made you fall for him in the first place and don't let go of that!

He Usually Says What He Means

This next bit of advice will be easier said than done: Don't over-analyze what a man says. When a man says something to you, 9 times out of 10, he's saying exactly what he means. Men use less analogies and symbolism when they're trying to convey their thoughts. Do yourself a favor and don't assume he means something far deeper when he says something. While men are capable of deep thought, they don't normally go that route when trying to explain something.

When you try to figure out what he's trying to say, even though he's already saying it clear as day, you put unneeded stress on yourself as well as him. If you think he's hiding something and trying to beat around the bush about it, you're doing him a disservice and showing a lack of trust. Often, he'll be "in trouble" with you based on mere suspicion, when in reality he hasn't done anything wrong.

The tone of his voice, the look on his face, what he's doing with his hands—Ignore all of it! Simply listen to what he's saying. Doing anything different is essentially ignoring him and making things much more difficult than they need to be.

This is one situation where the path of least resistance is actually the best choice. Fighting for what you want isn't always the best

way of going about getting it.

Points to Remember:

- ▶ Men can't read minds. Say what you mean in a clear manner. Imply nothing.

- ▶ Never assume what your man's words or actions mean. Ask him instead.

- ▶ Be realistic in your expectations of him. Give him time to act on them after he knows them.

- ▶ Don't expect him to be able to fulfill every hope and expectation you have.

Section: 3

How Men Operate

Okay, so now we've established that men don't actively *try* to get on your nerves or make your life a tangled web of chaos, confusion, and frustration. It's all because of their basic make-up. They're wired differently, and no matter how frustrating this fact is, it remains true. The same comes back on women, so don't think I don't understand your plight too.

The bottom line is they aren't usually aware that they're driving you up a wall. No man takes pride in creating pain and frustration, at least not the ones worth your time.

All of this is why understanding him and moving forward is so critically important.

As I said earlier, guys are taught from an early age to "stay tough" and turn the other cheek in the face of adversity.

Guys are typically portrayed in society and the media as the one that brings home the bacon, puts food on the table, makes sure the bills are paid, as well as a whole host of other "manly responsibilities." Not only is this somewhat intimidating and daunting for a guy, it's also a somewhat dated way of thinking. For instance, there are very, very few households where only the man works nowadays. It's simply not usually an option anymore.

More and more women are earning a lion's share of the money as well. Not only does the "old way" of thinking fail to give you ladies enough credit, it becomes additional weight on the man's shoulders. Even if he knows that the household can't get by on his paycheck

alone, it doesn't make him feel any better. Yes, he's putting the pressure on himself, but that is how he's bred. It's been programmed into him since his inception.

Let's say a woman makes more money than the man in a family, and you get yet another societal norm thrown in his face. He's automatically seen as less of a man in the majority of society's eyes. This weighs on him. Even if he says it doesn't, it really does. And even if it doesn't bother you one iota, it still bothers him. It's not a competition or "women aren't worthy of equal pay" thing. It's simply pride, plain and simple.

Now, I don't mean to imply that it bothers him that you make more money than him. It bothers him that he will automatically be judged as a result of it. This is another outside factor that can affect a man and by proxy, the relationship and levels of tension therein.

Another factor affecting how men behave is the way in which a man witnessed his parents communication and how they dealt with things when he was growing up. As a man, he subconsciously pays more attention to the ways of his father when gauging how men behave toward and communicate with women.

Let's say his father was extremely quiet and reserved around his mother. He seemed to do nothing but go to work, come home, sit and watch television, and then go to bed. Hardly a word was ever said between them.

Now, imagine his dad often berating his mother and asking where she put something of his as he got ready for work. Imagine that he came down for breakfast every morning and complained about what was on his plate and how poorly it was prepared. Then he'd come home from a bad day of work and take it out on his mother for the rest of the night. He'd then shut down and go off grumbling and muttering to himself as he went off to bed.

How do you think this would affect your guy and his growing, learning mind at the time? He'd start life out with a skewed image

of how couples correspond and communicate. When someone learns something from a very young age, this is their idea of normal until they witness something different, even if that idea of normal is extremely *abnormal* to the rest of us.

It can understandably make your task of understanding him quite daunting, but at the same time, it can exponentially explain a lot of his ways. This will give you much relief. You'll finally at least know *why* he says and does some of the things he does.

The way in which his father dealt with conflict influenced your man, flying off the handle at the slightest thing may well have been cemented that into him. A father who rarely talked would gear your man for a life of keeping things inside instead of expressing them. Having a father who never cried, never said "I love you," or otherwise expressed affection will have a direct effect on how your man expresses his emotions.

The words "I love you" will often seem like enough to this man. Alternatively, actions that show his love instead of words may be his "normal." He may walk off to be by himself far more often than most men you're used to.

Fathers like the ones described above tend to use what's called tough love in raising their little men. They teach them to "suck it up" and move on, never let a woman see you cry, never let someone disrespect you, etc. All of this would become part of his very being and be quite difficult to change. But it's not impossible. You just have to see your guy as worth it.

This is why men in society have these habits:

- ▶ They never show weakness, even when they're hurting.
- ▶ They must always be in control.
- ▶ They must dominate or lead.

- ▶ They must remain self-sufficient and independent.
- ▶ They must be strong and be brave.
- ▶ They must be the provider and protector of loved ones.

Of course you're going to be confused by your guy's actions, in-actions, behavior and words. You long for him to open up and feel comfortable expressing his emotions and feelings to you. But because he is a man, he sees these as signs of weakness. More often than not, he's oblivious to these views. They're just engrained into him. This is why he seems to get defensive when you ask him to "let you in" and open himself up further.

Let's say something's bothering him. Logic and experience tells us that opening up and talking about it helps alleviate the hurt. Yet he remains quiet and seemingly cold as ice to the thought. However beneficial opening up and communicating about the problem will be in *solving* the problem, the sad fact remains that it will likely make him feel too vulnerable and weak. So here we are, back at the conundrum: The man locking things inside while you try to help with zero assistance from him.

The result will usually include thoughts akin to, "*Well, if he doesn't want help, he can't be helped.*" He does want help, though. That's just it. He just has no idea how to go about getting it. He normally wouldn't be caught dead asking for it.

See the problem here? No wonder men and women have such difficulty trying to figure each other out!

Men want women to just accept them as they are and deal with it, while women want men to be the polar opposite of the way he's wired to be.

What's the big deal, right? Why can't he just stop worrying about what society thinks, open up and be productive! Society isn't sitting there trying to help him – *you* are! Well, that's where his engrained upbringing and wiring complicates things yet again. Whether the

outside world sees, hears or otherwise witnesses his “weakness” or not, it will be his perception of *himself* that stops the progress cold.

As I said, men do want to open up and become closer to you. They do want to connect with you emotionally and strengthen their relationship with you. It’s just not that easy for us. What seems like a simple case of “just doing it” to you, is a major internal struggle for us. It almost always comes back to how men were raised and the culture we live in. We’re damned if we do and damned if we don’t.

Keep reading and you’ll learn how to tear down these confounded walls and get him to effectively communicate and garner the results you’re dying to achieve.

Points to Remember:

- ▶ Men don’t actively try to get on your nerves.
- ▶ Men normally watch and mirror their father’s behavior from an early age.
- ▶ Men are taught to lead, protect and provide from a very early age.
- ▶ Men want to open up and communicate, but fear their self-worth will suffer.

Section: 4

What Respect Means to a Man

To a man, respect is more desirable than love. Respect is what a man will hold onto the longest in his life and be the least willing to let go.

The absolute fastest way to have a man turn cold as ice toward you or avoid interaction with you at all is to disrespect him.

The main thing to remember here is that if you want him to treat you like royalty, then you'll have to give him that same treatment. Most people's mantra is "treat others as you want them to treat you" with varying degrees of compromise. But with a man, this is not a gray area at all.

The fact is, if you're ever going to get love and affection from your man, you're going to have to respect him at all times. Alternatively, the less respect you give him, the less he'll give to you. Love, communication, affection, willingness to work through conflict—these will be pipe dreams from that time forward.

Women will open up their hearts more to a man that loves and appreciates her. A man that takes the time to notice the little things and goes above and beyond to show his affection for her, to communicate with her, cuddle with her, and make her feel like a beautiful woman—he will satisfy her to the hilt.

The way to satisfy a man to no end is to give him the utmost respect. A man constantly gauges his standing in society and in relationships, whether he realizes it or not. In his relationship, which

is the last personal frontier, this is especially true. If a man doesn't feel respected in his relationship with you, he won't be there long. Even if he is, he won't be truly happy.

A perfect example of a vicious cycle is this: A woman who feels no love from her man feels disrespected and meaningless. On the other hand, a man who feels that his woman doesn't respect him will feel unloved. See how that works?

The majority of the time, women put love first, while men put respect first. A man needs that respect to feel desired. To him, that's a *sign* that you love him.

Here's the thing about respect, though. Women believe that respect has to be earned rather than having a clean slate from the start. Men tend to be the opposite. They begin a relationship with a full arsenal of trust and respect that she can only take away from or keep at the full mark.

This is likely due to the fact that women tend to hold onto contempt for past lovers and carry those past lovers' faults as expectations for almost every man after him.

This is why you hear terms like "typical guy" so often. Women tend to group all men together when one or more has hurt or betrayed her in the past. If one or more guys has done something in the past and a new guy starts even showing hints of the same behavior(s), her mind subconsciously jumps right to the conclusion that this current guy is headed down the same road.

The most common method of a man's operation is that believing that the past woman who hurt, betrayed or disrespected him was a woman with issues. Even when there is a specific negative pattern in the behaviors of women in your man's past life, he still tries to see each new woman as a step up from the last.

This isn't to say that he won't become defensive in some instances,

or that he won't blow some other situation out of proportion due to his dealings in the past. But the frequency tends to be far less, and he becomes defensive far less consciously.

Here's the sad reality: Even if the reason you're disrespecting your man is justified, you're still damaging the relationship's future exponentially by taking the disrespectful route.

You're probably thinking, "But there's times when I just *can't* be respectful when I need to express _____!" (Fill in the blank) If this is the case, welcome to the hypocritical side of the tracks.

What do I mean? Well, it all goes back to treating others as you want to be treated. Don't gauge whether or not a man *deserves* respect; just give it to him. This is how you would want him to treat you. Don't think for a minute that I regard this is an easy task. I know darn well there are times where you want to just slap him to sleep, but you have to resist the urge and take the high road! Ever heard the adage, "kill 'em with kindness"? Well, replace kindness with respect and you've got the message I'm trying to convey here.

Why is this important? Because relationships that turn into determining a winner in each and every argument or heated discussion, is not a relationship at all. It's a competition.

Zero good will come out of conflict if all the two of you are doing is seeing who can give the harshest emotional blow to the other. It solves nothing and does little more than make you feel superior for a few moments. In reality, however, you took the low road, and you have absolutely nothing whatsoever to be proud of. Obviously the same thing goes if *he* chose that route.

Showing That Respect

Here's something you probably never thought of, but rather than

show respect for your guy's behaviors or actions, try more to show respect to the man himself. Try to see what characteristics about your guy lead him to do what you're praising him for rather than what it is he actually did.

What do I mean? Let's use another example. Let's say he helped you cook a huge meal, serve it, clear off the table afterwards and do the dishes down to the last spoon. The two of you worked side-by-side the entire time. Your first instinct is to thank him immensely for doing all the he did and praising him for all the actions he took to help you.

You might say something like, "Thank you so much for helping me make this huge meal for our guests, and for helping clean up afterward." That is praising his actions. It's also how most people would go about thanking someone. The difference in the approach comes when you praise what it is about him as a person that you're thankful for instead.

In other words, you'd change what you said to something more along the lines of, "You don't know how much I appreciate how much you take into consideration the workload I sometimes have when we're entertaining guests. You were extremely selfless and chose to help me rather than try and get in on the guy talk. I love that about you. You genuinely care and I consider you a blessing in my life." See the difference? You praised him as a man rather than as a helper.

The bottom line is, make him see how you appreciate him as *your* man, not just *any* man.

Is it coddling a delicate ego? Perhaps. Does it help in a relationship to do this kind of thing? Absolutely. As long as you aren't doing it in a condescending way, it will make him proud to have been the man you desired. Above all, he will begin to seek out ways to make you feel this way again! **BINGO!**

So, what should you do when you know that your man is absolutely

and unequivocally wrong? I can tell you what *not* to do: Don't tell him how wrong he is and that he needs to get a clue. Instead, you should respect and acknowledge his behavior, and then calmly give your opinion.

Acknowledging his view is not the same as agreeing with him. You're also not suggesting that he's right and you're wrong. Two people can disagree without making one of the parties seem like an idiot. All it simply means is that you understand and respect that he's had different personal experiences.

Instead of making him earn your respect, be respectful. Then watch as he becomes the man you dream of.

So How Do I Show Him This Respect?

Here's a list of ways to make him feel respected:

1- Show Faith and Give Him The Gift Of Trust.

Showing a man that you truly believe in his judgment, decisions and abilities as a man is like turbo-charging his inner self. Nothing makes a man feel more like a man than being with a woman who trusts his abilities and places faith in him. Because men are primarily bred to lead, be strong, and provide and protect, when you trust his judgment it shows that you are completely willing to let him have that desired role in the relationship. This takes a ton of pressure off of a guy. You're helping fuel a need in a man's life that he can't always find.

Now, it would be insane to expect you to always agree with his decisions, but there are times and places for discussing those you disagree with. I know some things a guy comes up with may seem crazy, but for now, focus on listening and letting him share it. The more you allow him to share, the more willing he will be to continue sharing openly throughout the relationship, which is something

many women want in a man.

When the time does feel right to discuss the fact that you possibly feel he needs to rethink something, the key is to do it in a gentle way. There's not much worse than making him feel like an idiot for a decision or decisions he made. The best way to gauge this is by putting yourself in his shoes. How would you want him to put things if he wanted to convey them to you?

Many don't think of this before diving right in and giving their opinion. Contrary to popular belief, words can be hurtful, even to a guy. Not only that, but telling him in a less-than-sensitive way that he made a stupid judgment call is hardly going to benefit either of you. It will likely create more emotional distance and cause him to start questioning whether or not he should even bother opening his mouth or make anymore decisions.

You should never take it lightly when a man needs you to trust his decisions. Often, when a woman starts thinking she can do a better job with her own decision-making abilities, she tends to tune out or disrespect her boyfriend's or husband's decisions, and she ends up all but ignoring them. This can have somewhat adverse affects on his male psyche and ego.

Yes I admit, women usually are better at making logical and multifaceted decisions in a relationship and they are often right, but this doesn't mean that you should challenge his decisions or discount them and force your own onto him. A woman's mind has subtle differences that make her better at multitasking, for instance.

You have to let him learn for himself and make his own mistakes. Try and respect his decisions and let them ride if no severe consequences will come about as a result. It's important to never say "See, I told you." Even if you choose to let his decision blow up in his face, don't use non-verbal cues to give any indication that you expected the failing results.

Also, it's better to have a man who made less-than-perfect decisions than a guy who never even bothers trying to make them at all.

Respect his decisions enough to avoid bringing up how wrong he was about something in the past each time a similar decision has to be made. Treat his decisions with proper consideration, or at least show a good level of respect, especially when they turn out to be wrong and you really want to let him know how wrong he is again.

I know it's confusing to make a man feel looked up to and treat him as a protector and provider, only to turn right around and often be worried about his seemingly fragile ego too. But you have to remember: Men are human too. They do make mistakes.

2- Respect His Reputation.

Don't go around bad-mouthing him when he's not around. You never know who will hear you and you may not be thinking completely through about whom you're saying it to.

Women often talk smack about their men or men in general, even in jest. It seems to come as natural as breathing to some women. Male-bashing is extremely common, and sadly, socially acceptable. That doesn't make it right, however.

Another habit some women have is jumping in and correcting her man when he is telling a story. Maybe your guy has a habit of exaggerating things a bit. Just let him. Never, ever berate a guy, especially in front of friends, family or colleagues.

Or, let's say the two of you are out with another couple or two and he accidentally spills a drink. Resist the urge to call him out and treat him like a fumbling idiot for it. He's going to be embarrassed enough as it is, and you can rest assured his male friends will give him enough grief about it without you piling it on. Be where he goes to get away from such treatment, even if just in his subconscious mind.

Disrespect is the single fastest way to make a man feel unloved

overall. Not to mention the fact that many men's shortest trigger for their tempers is tied directly to disrespect directed towards him. Do it in front of others and the results are even more negatively compounded for the both of you.

If you have any desire whatsoever to take good care of your husband or boyfriend and you want to make him feel loved and respected, do not ridicule him. Do not correct him. Do not overrule him, and never dismiss him in front of someone else. It's bad enough when you do it in private, but throw in an audience and you're going to have a heck of a hard time coming back from it.

You should never use degrading and cruel means to convey your thoughts and opinions. Find another way. Doing the opposite, especially in public, and you might as well slap him right across the face. The feeling will be the same to him. Remember: Treat him as you'd like him to treat you, even in jest.

3- Ask For His Help.

Men are naturally attracted to solving problems. Many women complain that they simply want to vent to their man and tell their problems, while the guy is too busy interrupting with possible solutions. Women want guys to be willing to simply listen, but a man is deeply programmed to try and find a way to fix those problems. Remember this and you'll better deal with it when he does.

Ask for his advice on how to fix something, how to solve a problem or how to deal with an emotional issue you're having. Asking him for help shows him that you value his opinion and respect his fresh perspective.

If your knowledge meets or exceeds his on any particular subject, ask him anyway. Often a fresh set of ears and eyes, not to mention an outside perspective, can indeed help.

If you're too confident in your own experience and knowledge to take seriously the advice he may offer, he'll sense it and take it as disrespect and belittling. He'll wonder why you even bothered asking him in the first place. Oftentimes, he'll assume that you did it just to have something to berate him for.

As a result, he dreads the act of talking with the woman in his life, and slowly but surely shares less and less. You'll notice over time that the more and more that you interrupt him after asking for his help, or the more you belittle the possible solutions he offered or quickly cut him off while he's trying to help too often, he'll stop the conversation altogether and start the shutdown process. This is extremely bad for a relationship.

Remember, men are naturally inclined to try and solve problems. Asking him for his help appeals to his masculine side and his intelligence. But know that there are right and wrong ways of going about asking.

Here's something else you've likely given little thought to: Ask a man to do something rather than insisting he do it.

Let's say you want the trash taken out. Instead of saying, "Honey, come grab this while I finish up supper," say something more like, "Honey, would you mind helping me with this trash while I finish up supper?" Note the difference. It's very subtle but surprisingly effective.

Men are more eager to help and more eager to please when they're given the choice to do so or not. Don't order him to do anything. You're equals, remember?

At other times, you'll actually witness a possibly dumb decision being conceived in real time in his pretty little head.

Suppose he begins talking about wanting to take up an expensive hobby which won't add any value to his life, and you know it's going



to be a poor decision if he went ahead with it. Instead of outright trying to stop him from doing it choose to gently remind him about possible negative consequences or a need that you currently have that he may not be considering when deciding whether or not to go for it.

Men are logical, and they understand things better when a good amount of logic is applied. It's possible to present him with logical, clear evidence of why it's going to be a poor decision. Rather than going postal on him, gently remind him of the possible family time he might miss out on and show him where and why you believe it won't be a good decision if he went ahead with it.

Let him see what he may have to do without if he chooses to go for it. Show him how tight it will make things. Doing all of this in this manner will make him come around to reality when the facts speak for themselves.

4- Give Him His Space.

There are many men and women alike who feel that if they're not near their partner, they're either lacking a connection or feeling like their partner's going to feel that way. This isn't usually the case.

Like you, men often need down time and alone time. It's a sort of reset for his mind and body. It allows him a sort of "freedom" without being single or living alone.

The goal here is to let him acclimate to you being in his life more and more without his subconscious rushing to the conclusion that you're dominating it. You'll find that you'll often need this "you" time as well, so take the time to make "away" time both for him and from him.

For example, take the way in which the two of you unwind from a long, hard day at work. More often than not, women want to come home, relax a bit and tell their significant other about their day. On

the other hand, men generally just want to come home, relax, and let it soak in, or make it go completely away and just hit pause on life.

Even if he doesn't necessarily want to be alone during his downtime, this is the time he wants to devote to unwinding. If he comes home, grabs a beer and plops down on the couch to watch TV, then that's the way he chose. It's not likely that he'll outright seek to be away from you. He just may not want to discuss his day as much as you may yours. It's just his way of unwinding, and it shouldn't be seen as anything more serious. I promise you that if and when he wants to talk, he'll talk to you.

Some women are under the impression that in order to be close as a couple in a relationship, the two of them should do everything together as a couple.

This simply isn't the case. To put it into perspective, if you have children, everyone knows you love and adore them, but there will be times when you are watching the clock, waiting for their bedtimes or that sleepover this weekend.

It doesn't mean you love them any less. It just means you need down time. Your relationship is no different except for the fact that the feeling will be mutual most of the time. He'll need a break just as much as you will.

To further drive this point home, let's say ol' Bob and his live-in girlfriend Linda both get home from work. Linda has a habit of rushing to Bob's side, which is normal and expected, but after the traditional hug, kiss and "How was your day?" hypothetical question, she proceeds to ask him every little detail about it.

"What all did you have to get done today?" "Did you get it all done?" "Was your boss pleased?" "How's David's wife doing?" "Was lunch okay? I tried a new recipe."

In Linda's eyes, knowing everything about his day is kind of sweet and romantic. It helps her know how his everyday matches up with hers. She means well, but it makes Bob want to tear his own hair

out and eat it.

It's considered suffocating, especially when done all at once very soon after getting in the door. He won't and doesn't love her any less. He just wants to take it slow and unwind from his day.

Being in a relationship means you share your lives, but it doesn't necessarily mean that you share every facet therein.

Allow him that space for a while. He'll give you the same respect and will open up and share it all in due time.

Doing any differently puts pressure on him and he'll enjoy his time with you less and less as time goes on. He won't always make it clear that this is the case, but it happens to both men *and* women.

How healthy will a relationship be if you start to notice he finds anything and everything else to do rather than spend time with you?

Points to Remember:

- ▶ Respect is generally more important to a man than love.

- ▶ Don't try to gauge when he deserves respect. Give him the respect you want him to give you, automatically.

- ▶ Show faith in his judgment and decisions. It makes him feel more loved and respected.

- ▶ It's not necessary to always agree with him. It's how you disagree with him that matters most. Do so with respect rather than belittling.

- ▶ Respect his reputation. Don't badmouth him, even in jest. It will



distance the two of you over time.

- ▶ Ask for his help, even if you don't outright need it. It's the valuing his opinion or perception that does the trick.

- ▶ Give him his space. He'll give you the same respect. It doesn't mean he loves you any less; just that he needs to unwind and not feel suffocated.

Section: 5

Are You His Mate or His Mother?

I'm going to start this section a little bit differently. I'm going to show you one of the most common scenarios women face in relationships. At first glance, it's going to be difficult to "choose a side," but it's important to realize the other point of view here.

I recently received an email from someone I'll call Michelle. Michelle has reached a point in her relationship where it's both painful and frustrating. Sadly, however, her situation is an extremely widespread occurrence.

Here's the email she sent to me:

My husband can be amazing but only sometimes! We're up on our 7th wedding anniversary, and I can't help thinking of all the changes.

It's gotten to the point that I do all the things he should be doing. The fact is that I am sick and tired of doing everything all the time! I didn't want a husband who sits around expecting me to do everything he is supposed to do.

On top of that, he doesn't ever stick around. He is always looking for a reason to be by himself and doing his own thing. It's like he wants to be married but wants to live like a single guy.



He isn't even interested in spending any time with me. And if I beg him to, it ends up in an ugly argument. I've tried really hard to make him see what I am going through but does he even care? No. All he wants to do is watch TV. It's like I am there physically but completely invisible to him.

I try to talk to him about it, he just zones out. It's like he's not even listening. He says he'll spend more time with me, but it hasn't happened yet! It's driving me nuts!

I told him I can't stand being alone all the time. I told him I can't cope with it. Does he care? What should I do? How do I get him see the point I am trying to make? I'm sick and tired of waiting for him to change.

As painful as that is for you to read, especially if you're in the same situation, it makes it clear right away that Michelle likely committed a cardinal relationship sin: She went from the role of a mate to the role of a mother without even realizing it.

Now, as anyone can plainly see and understand, she isn't comfortable with where their relationship is headed. The problem is that when you do things his mother probably did for him while he was growing up, you push him away without even realizing it. Most women mistake doing these things for their man as showing more love or just simply doing the "right thing." They think their man loves to be taken care of, so because of this, they are only doing what makes him feel good. What's the harm in that, right? Lots!

It almost always starts with small things and then grows into something gargantuan. Even though you have a well-intentioned desire to show affection, mothering him is something that can slowly and dangerously develop and become second nature to you over time. It's much like a lit cigarette being tossed into drought-stricken woodlands; it will catch something on fire, it will spread

quickly, and it will destroy everything in its path.

For example, what started out as picking his clothes up off the floor as he got ready for work in the morning, developed into picking up his shirts from the dry cleaners while he was out watching sports or ladies at some club or bar. Or maybe you started out bringing him a cup of coffee each morning and now he sits and moans when you've yet to do so this morning. All of these things are inexcusable to any normal human being, but it doesn't make them less apt to happen. You'd be quite surprised. You may be doing some form of it now.

Now, there's absolutely nothing wrong with wanting to be helpful or doing particularly sweet things for him, but it's important for *both of you* to keep some semblance of independence and responsibility. Leave some things for him to do for himself. If he misses dinner, then he misses dinner. He's known for ages when it's served. There are makings for sandwiches if he gets hungry enough after having ignored the clock yet again.

The Adverse Effects of Mothering Your Man

As each day passes, you subconsciously "teach" him to become more and more useless in your relationship. He becomes practically incompetent. You're actually turning him into the exact type of man that you will eventually despise ever being around.

When you constantly do all the things for him that he should be doing for himself, you're treating him like a baby and not a man. And what happens when you treat him like a baby? He ends up behaving like one. He comes to expect you to do all of these things from that moment on. He'll likely develop attitudes when they aren't done. Is that what you really want?

Here are some common ways that mothering rears its ugly head:

- ▶ Doing things that that he may do wrong or that you think may be hard for him to do himself.
- ▶ Reminding him what time meals are over and over again.
- ▶ Picking up his clothes and shoes, and cleaning other messes.
- ▶ Concerning yourself with how he might do things wrong if you don't remind him the correct way to do them.
- ▶ Constantly looking for things he is doing wrong, and then correcting him on them time and time again.

If any of this sounds familiar, it may be time to take a few steps back and ask yourself, "*Is this really the relationship I want in life?*"

Healthy, meaningful relationships are about two responsible adults who **perform their respective deeps in the relationship**. This also means that your partner has the same responsibilities as you, and that both of you will equally do what's needed in the relationship. Whenever you feel there is an imbalance, it's important that you address it especially when it's affecting one or both of you negatively.

Women often say that they only do these things because they love their man and care for him so deeply. The problem with this is that while their intentions were good and honest, this only causes unneeded tension in the relationship.

Here's why:

- ▶ Even if this is only done subconsciously at times, he will feel disrespected and neglected as a man, and he'll believe that you don't have faith in his abilities.

- ▶ You essentially render him useless because you're doing all the things that *he's* supposed to do.

- ▶ He already has a mother and he doesn't need another one. In other words, he won't see you as his lover anymore, but as his new mother instead, which will absolutely destroy the passion in your relationship.

If you don't allow a man to *be* a man, he won't act like one. You don't want him depending on you so much that he can't do anything for himself. A man needs to be independent to some degree in order to keep his identity. Anything less and he becomes dependent and lazy – or lazier.

In every relationship, there are roles that each of you plays, and mothering him should not be one of yours. If you take on that role, you're putting unnecessary pressure on yourself as well as him.

Why do women so often adopt the motherly role in so many relationships? It's usually for one of these two reasons:

- 1.** You fear he'll abandon you and you do all that you can to prevent that from happening. Therefore, you give far, far more than you receive in your relationship. And this is where the label of mothering comes into being.

- 2.** You feel a pressing and innate need to assist, help, and rescue him, and you get a feeling of happiness and satisfaction from mothering him even though you may not realize you're actually doing it.

It's vitally important that you understand that taking care of a man is a good thing, but you should do it as a lover and not like his mother. Remember earlier when I mentioned that sometimes you may have to coddle his ego a bit? The key word there is "ego" – not his entire being. Even then, you should only do it sporadically.

Mothering generally shows an indirect need to have things go your way in a relationship. This is a roundabout way of showing a need to control your partner. If you do all of these things out of an honest-to-goodness concern and respect for your guy's well being rather than out of an inherent need to control him or have things your way, then that's fine. But any other motives mean you're just mothering him, and that needs to stop immediately.

You can't exactly blame him for being the way he has been since you're triggering that behavior in him. I know that feeling unsatisfied and unloved and going through the same motions day after day is no picnic. But you have to understand that, unfortunately there are things that you've done to put yourself in this position. If you truly do want this relationship to work, you need to be as honest as possible—with yourself *and* him—but starting with yourself.

First and foremost, you have to stop giving into the urge to mother him and control yourself.

Here's a list of things you need to do:

- ▶ Stop doing the things that you *know* he needs to be doing for himself.

- ▶ Make him/let him take responsibility for his own needs and wants when he needs to.

- ▶ Stop doing everything for him, but be there to offer advice if he needs it.

- ▶ At all costs, resist the urge to correct him. Let him do it himself and allow him to make whatever mistakes he's going to make.

- ▶ Make yourself understand that it's all going to be just fine if you simply let him do what he needs to do.

- ▶ Talk to him like a man and not a baby. Babies need mothering. Men don't.

Let me guess: Right about now you're saying, "*But he won't do anything unless someone's directing him!*" You *have* to realize that the very reason he won't do things is *because* you're trying to direct him. It's because you feel the need to push him into doing these things that he has chosen to no longer do them. You've essentially wired him to be this way, so it's your job to "*re-wire*" him.

Let him make his own decisions. Let him act like an adult in the relationship, and then sit back and watch how things begin to change exponentially for the better.

Points to Remember:

- ▶ You can go from a lover to a mother in no time if you aren't careful.

- ▶ Mothering him teaches him to be useless and incompetent.

- ▶ Any differences between the two of you should not only be acknowledged, but also appreciated.



- ▶ Mothering him will make him feel neglected and disrespected.
- ▶ Allow him to make his own mistakes.

Section: 6

Understanding The Male Language

Megan and Robert have been dating for 6 months now and things are awesome! He loves her to death and she simply *adores* him. They both believe they're soul mates. But when they fight, look out! They don't fight all that often, but when they do, it's a knock-down drag-out that some would pay to watch it!

Here's what Megan has trouble with, in her own words:

Sometimes when Steve and I are talking, I bring up something he's done that hurts me. Instead of listening, he acts as if it's no big deal. He tells me that I overreact and blow it out of proportion. Recently, he talked about taking me to Las Vegas to see the sights and do some gambling. You know— normal Vegas stuff. Yet, he hasn't even bothered to check prices.

He says he wants to know what I am thinking. But when I start to say something about, he cuts me off and won't let me finish — completing my sentences for me. He thinks he can figure out what I am going to say even before I say it.

I've gotten to where I don't want to talk about how I feel. Then he gets angry! I honestly dread talking to him! It all seems like a huge struggle all the time.



How do I get him to just really listen to what I have to say without cutting into my sentences? How do I get him to understand that I just need him to pay attention to what I am saying?

Or how about this one? It's from another of my readers. Her name is Melissa:

Maybe I'm being overly critical, but I can't have a decent conversation with my boyfriend. We've been together for 9 months and he doesn't listen to me.

Every time I try to say something that's important to me, he just says something odd and tries to change the subject. I feel so disconnected when I try to talk to him, it's like he wants me to speak but isn't ready to listen.

He even tells me that I am a drama queen and I over-react a lot. He knows I don't like being interrupted while I am saying something, but he doesn't really care. It feels like he wants me to hear and agree with him all the time but he can't collect the patience to sit there and listen to what I have to say.

It's getting to a point where I feel either something is horribly wrong with him or that something is actually wrong with me. Sometimes I do feel that maybe he is smarter than me and that is having a very negative effect on my self-esteem. I haven't been feeling good about myself lately.

If I was to be honest with you, I get very angry now and he can clearly see that. What should I do?

Do these ladies' stories sound familiar to you? Here's how it normally works with most couples:

The woman has a rough day at work. She has had an argument with a coworker, and she heads home, eagerly awaiting her husband's return so that she can talk to him about it and give him all the details. When he finally gets home, she starts letting it all out, little by little.

While she's giving him all the details about how the argument started and whose fault it was, he jumps in and says, "You should have just kept your mouth shut. It's a waste of time arguing with someone at work who just doesn't have a clue. You never listen to me. You should just let it go and stop getting yourself involved, especially when it's happening at work."

Now he's done it. Now she's upset. All she wanted was for him to sit and listen to her let out her feelings. She sure didn't want him to try and give solutions to the problem. She just wanted a smooth, hassle-free flow of information to get out the pent-up emotions. She just wanted to let it all out, and she *thought* her husband would listen quietly.

The problem is, ***he chose to offer solutions***, and he didn't even allow her to finish what it was she was trying to tell him in the first place.

Right then and there, the day's conversation ends. She's upset and she's feeling rejected and even more frustrated now. Her husband is pretty upset too, because he can't understand why she is so upset. He wonders, "What's wrong with offering solutions to problems? People talk to each other to get help with their problems, don't they?"

And *she* wonders, "Why can't my husband ever hear something I tell him without interrupting and without offering a solution? The reason I talk to him is not to get a solution, but to just get my emotions out so that I can see some sort of light at the end of the day's tunnel. I mean, all he has to do is sit there quietly and keep listening to me. Why can't he just do that? Why is it so hard for him?"

Do these feelings of upset, frustration and pain seem familiar when it comes to you and your man?

Why can't men have the patience and understanding to genuinely sit and listen to a woman when she is trying to express something? It's because men are wired to solve problems. Merely talking about a problem without taking action and looking for a solution to it seems unproductive and meaningless. They almost always think of ways to fix things.

So if you discuss an issue or a problem with him, his natural urge is most often going to be to offer a solution to it. While women usually just express their feelings and want to be heard, this just isn't realistic, and it makes no sense to a man.

So, to sum it up, in *his* eyes, if you're going to tell him your problems, you should not only accept his trying to offer you solutions to them, but be touched and happy with him that he is doing so. He's just trying to help, after all.

Let me try to put it into perspective with an example:

Woman: I'm having a hard time dealing with my boss at work.

A typical man's reply: Well, have you tried talking about it with him?

The woman describes how she is feeling about a situation with her boss at work and the man immediately gets to work on coming up with a solution. He gives her an action to take to solve her problem. He feels like he just took some emotional weight off of her shoulders while *she* thinks he isn't listening and doesn't care.

Now let me try another, more detailed example:



Woman: I hate it when Melissa discusses her ex-husband with me. I think she still hasn't gotten over him.

Man: Why don't you tell her to stop talking about him?

Woman: Because she's having a hard time getting over him.

Man: She's never *going* to get over him if she doesn't stop talking about him. How could she? Just suggest she stop thinking about him for a change.

Woman: Yeah. I guess it's just too hard for her.

Man: Well, then just ask her to stop mentioning it to you.

Woman: But that would be so rude. I don't want to be rude to her. I just wanted to tell you how I was feeling.

Man: Then what do you want to do?

Woman: I don't know.

In this example, the only thing the woman wanted was to have him listen to her. But instead, he as a man, did what he's wired to do naturally: He offered advice and help on what to do to solve her dilemma.

Any time the woman described a feeling she was having, he immediately came up with a plan of action for her. He assumed he was helping her, not hurting or frustrating her.

Something many men simply don't understand is that women get rid of their stress by talking about it. They're merely venting and getting it out of their systems by sharing it and talking about it.

Most of the time, they simply want to be heard, and aren't actually looking for a solution.

As a matter of fact, this is how majority of arguments and fights come about in a relationship. Here is how the typical cycle goes:

A woman shares her feelings and wants to be heard.



The man gives solutions, assuming that she wanted them and needs them.



The woman ignores those solutions and continues to talk about it further.



The man feels frustrated, and gets angry or impatient.



The woman feels ignored and misunderstood, and complains that he never listens.



The man feels like she simply wanted to create unnecessary drama, and then begins to tune her out.

Do you see how the cycle works? Under these types of circumstances it's completely normal for a man to:

- ▶ Begin to take you for granted.
- ▶ Either avoid the subject altogether, or ignore you, directly or

indirectly.

- ▶ Get angry or defensive to keep you from talking about it further.

- ▶ Focus his mind or eyes on other things while you talk to him. (Watching TV, thinking of something else to do, etc).

- ▶ Become completely uncooperative, making you reach a point where you feel like he doesn't care about you very much anymore.

What is it Like to Think Like a Man?

Most of the time, a man wants a woman to just get to the main point since this is the main purpose of having the conversation. They like to know where the conversation is headed and what conclusion (or solution, in his mind) that you are looking for. This is why you will often hear a guy say, "So what's your point? Get to the point. What are you trying to say? What are you trying to accomplish?"

This is kind of his less-than-subtle way of saying, "I don't understand where you're trying to get or what end result you're looking for. So, in other words, it would be better if you just talk about the objective. Tell him ahead of time that you are venting. This is also probably a lot of the reason why you often hear men say that women use two to three times the amount of words necessary, when a guy can say it far less time and with a lot less confusion.

In his testosterone-filled world, unless you seek a productive outcome from a conversation, then it's kind of pointless to talk about it. Kind of like cooking a hearty meal and you're not even hungry. Why bother?

And this is where things get even more complicated between the two sexes. The two most common complaints women have with men are: "He doesn't talk about his emotions," and "He doesn't want to hear about my emotions." Men just aren't known for their tendency to be emotionally open or open-minded.

As I've pointed out in some of the earlier sections, men are pretty poorly trained in how to openly show emotions, and it's society's fault. Men simply don't understand why women so often feel the way they feel. They honestly believe that they can help the woman come up with a much better way to handle the problem(s) that created the feelings in the first place.

They also try their best to help the woman understand that her feelings are useless in resolving the stressful situation. Why? Because in *his* world, that's what it looks like. As a result, the woman usually sees this as very wrong.

Men feel like they're responsible for taking care of your problems, therefore, they feel a need to "rescue" you.

Whenever you mention a specific issue or a problem you're having to him, his first thought is to ask himself, "How can I solve this for her? What can I do to help her get rid of this issue?" And as I've mentioned multiple times, he blurts out solutions which, when they're not followed or accepted, will make him want to pull his hair out. Why? Because deep down in his instinct, he feels like he shares the burden of your problems.

Unless you have some way to "fix" your problem, he will always feel as if it's his duty to either do it for you or help you with it. As a man, he subconsciously feels it's his duty to take care of it.

Men tend to withdraw or become extremely emotionally distant when they're dealing with a particularly difficult emotional issue.

Men want to avoid conflict at all costs when dealing with women. They will do all they can to distance themselves from whatever is causing an issue with you. As I've made clear, a *lot* of men are severely out of touch in dealing with their real needs and feelings.

This is why their methods (or lack thereof) of dealing with them can sometimes seem so illogical and random. This emotional disconnect from their inner beings makes it difficult for the man to understand even their *own* behavior, let alone be able to express emotions to and with the women in their lives.

On the flip-side, most women have almost zero problems dealing with their emotions and don't usually have any problems openly expressing them.

Men have a sometimes-bad tendency to over-analyze everything for logicity and practicality, and if they can't find a logical way to solve it, they avoid the issue like the plague. If he can't solve it for you, then he definitely wishes to avoid the subject altogether.

It pains him tremendously to see a pressing issue at hand but no real solution. He either tries to fight it, and if he knows, he can't win, the next best solution is to flight. Thus, he distances himself from the issue at hand.

This illustrates the ways men and women deal with stress differently.

Here's the amusing part, though. When a woman is going through a

stressful situation, she wants to talk about it and find help from others. She freely expresses herself. Now, she isn't necessarily looking for solutions to the problems as I've said, but she just simply by venting, talking and sharing, she's comforting herself. She's actively making herself better whether the problem is actually solved or not.

Men have a much harder time letting their feelings out in the open easily and they tend to feel that if they can't fix it, then why bother trying to express it and risk opening up "too much." So they internalize it and keep it all locked away inside. And they'll do it by keeping their mind away from the problem.

This happens because, sadly, men tend to practically fear their emotions.

Men are genuinely leery of their emotions because the second they're dealing with something considered emotionally heavy, they feel as though they're no longer in control. And being in control is one of the most important things for a man. So, during that stressful time, they take action and do any and every thing to feel the return of that sense of control. This is where men usually start to show the signs of becoming emotionally distant. They withdraw from you, don't talk to you much, or avoid you altogether.

Therefore, during an emotionally pressing situation, men act while women talk.

How do I Talk in a Way Where He'll Get Where I'm Coming From?

You have to come to his level of thinking. Whether that is up or down in your intellect depends on the man, but you have to talk in a language he understands. If you truly want to get through to your

man every single time you speak to him, then it's vital that you follow these steps:

Step 1 - Tell him, before the conversation even gets good and started, what you expect from him. Tell him what you hope to accomplish by having the conversation you're about to have.

Step 2 – Make sure that he knows you'll be able to handle it, no matter what it is. Also, that you'll greatly appreciate it and that you'll respect him for it afterward.

Step 3 – Maybe above all else, keep an eye out for how he's handling all of it, and then adjust your approach accordingly.

Let me emphasize and elaborate:

Step 1 - Tell him, before the conversation even gets good and started, what you expect from him. Tell him what you hope to accomplish by having the conversation you're about to have.

Since we've already clearly established that men are end result-driven and tend to analyze anything and everything for logic and practicality, it's important to let him know the purpose of your conversation. What I mean is, make clear what you will or won't want from him as a result of it; what you'll expect from him.

Let's say you want to discuss with him how life is going at work and how it's truly bothering you. Before you get into the substantive part of the conversation, you need to let him know, and clearly, that you don't necessarily expect him to come up with a solution, but that you just want him to listen to what you have to say because it makes you feel better. I promise that if you take this approach, he *will* understand.

An example:

You: Hey, honey. I'd like to talk about some things that are causing me a lot of stress at work. Do you have the time to talk right now?

Him: Sure, honey. Go ahead.

You: Thanks a ton. Now, I also want you to know that I am going to be talking about a lot of problems I deal with on a daily basis there. And it may make you a little uncomfortable, but I need you to know that I can take care of it and handle it on my own. I just want to talk about it with you because talking to you like this just makes me feel better about all of it. Okay?

And there you have it. You've made it 100% clear what the conversation will entail, as well as what you do and don't expect from ol' George there. He now knows ahead of time that you aren't expecting him to "fix things" for you. He also knows now that you are looking for nothing more than his time and attention without having to think above and beyond, trying to come up with solutions for you. When you make it crystal clear what you do and don't want or need from him, and do it so early in the conversation, things go a *whole* lot more smoothly.

Step 2 – Make sure that he knows you'll be able to handle it, no matter what it is. Also, that you'll greatly appreciate it and that you'll respect him for it afterward.

It's vital that you make clear to your man that, regardless of what you're going through, you'll be able to handle things on your own, and that his support and help, while appreciated, isn't needed or even wanted in this case. Again, you need to make it perfectly clear to him very early on so that he knows the primary purpose of all of it.

It also sort of emotionally releases him of the possible burdens it would normally cause for him, because he now knows what role he's expected to take in the conversation. He will be far more open

to hearing other issues that may arise in the future as a result of how you started this conversation.

Some good practice would be using examples like these in your talks:

Honey, regardless of how this seems, I promise you that it's not that big of a deal. I just need to talk about it to get it out.

or:

Honey, this isn't something I won't be able to handle. I just feel like discussing it with you.

or maybe:

Honey, I'm going to be completely okay. I just want someone to listen to me right now.

If you happen to feel like you are too emotionally weighed down by a problem, then it is probably a good idea to let him know ahead of time that you might get angry, upset or whine incessantly about something, but that it does *not* mean that you won't be able to handle it yourself.

For example, you may want to use words like the following:

Honey, I'm having a problem with a person at work that is really bothering me and I want to talk about it with you. I want you to know that I might get angry and maybe even whine a lot because this person gets on my last nerve, but I also need you to know that I'll be able to take care of it and handle it by myself. I just need you to hear me out, okay?

Things become so much easier when you make every single detail

absolutely clear to him. As a result, you will usually get him to listen intently to you without ever interrupting or offering solutions.

Step 3 - Above all else, keep an eye out for how he's handling all of it, and then adjust your approach accordingly.

This step is extremely important. If you fail to follow it, then you may once again find yourself struggling during the conversation. Sometimes, even after letting your man know the role you want him to play in the conversation, he may still act a bit troubled while you're talking to him.

It's truly important to keep an eagle-eyed focus on his body language to see if anything you might be saying is making him uncomfortable. If you happen to sense he isn't doing too well or looks to be slowly starting to tune out while you're talking to him, then use something like:

Honey, I'm sorry if what I'm saying is too much to handle right now. Maybe we can talk about it some other time.

And then watch and see if he is okay with it. If he is, he will immediately tell you to keep going. But if he still seems uncomfortable, then you may wish to leave him alone for now. He may just be being polite.

What you *don't* want is for the conversation to get to a point where you're wishing hard for him to listen to you while he's steadily looking for a way out of it while you're talking.

The best thing to do if you get this feeling is to give him a break when he shows signs he's starting to seem upset, because that's really the only way he'll be able to deal with his own feelings in an effective manner. He'll come back to you at another point to let you finish the discussion. I promise you that he will be thinking about what you've said up to that point.

Be sure to let him know how his actions or behavior are
affecting you.

There will likely be times during the conversation when you will feel that he's being a little unreasonable and that his behavior is kind of hurting you. Typically, most women feel like a man should *know* that what he's doing is hurting you and should change it immediately. But as I've mentioned several times in earlier sections, men are usually clueless when it comes to these things. It will work out much better if you point out exactly what it is he's doing that's bothering you. BUT, it's important to do it in the right way!

Your approach needs to be made gently yet firmly, letting him know the way in which his specific actions and words are hurting or otherwise affecting you.

You need to give him specific examples of the ways and times his behavior negatively affected you. but do it in a way that is not so much like complaining and isn't "pointing a finger" at him. Don't be highly confrontational about it. Simply say it in a way that gets your message across to him without necessarily offending him.

Let's say you are fed up with him leaving a messy bedroom for you to clean up every morning and night, and you want him to clean it up himself from time to time. You could say something like the following:

Honey, I know you work really hard for us and that you're usually in a rush every morning, but can you please pick up your clothes and maybe organize your closet sometimes? I try my best to get to it every day, but sometimes it gets really hard and frustrating for me to tackle with my other housework.

The key here is to **be gentle, but firm at the same time**. It's also very important that you never "order" him about what to do or berate him into doing it. Doing it that way will only make him feel like he's being attacked. You have to understand that you don't have a problem with *him*, per se, as much as what it is he's *doing* that's driving you batty! It's also important that *he* knows that; it's not him, but what he's doing—or not doing.

So, it's important to **only talk about what he's done or not done**, and not blame him as a bad person.

Points to Remember:

- ▶ Men are wired by nature to solve all of the problems they're presented with.
- ▶ Women tend to find comfort in venting or otherwise sharing their problems. Men do not.
- ▶ To men, talking about a problem without looking for or being open to a solution is like cooking a three-course meal and never bothering to eat it.
- ▶ Men usually need a conversation to have an end purpose. They simply aren't used to hearing about problems *just* to hear them.
- ▶ Men feel an instinctive need to "rescue" you.
- ▶ Your approach to a conversation makes all the difference in the world.
- ▶ Make sure he knows going into the conversation what it is you do



or don't want or need from him afterward.

- ▶ Make sure he knows you can handle the problem and that you just need to get it out.

- ▶ Keep an eye out for how he's reacting.

- ▶ Let him know when you're hurt by things he says or does.

Section: 7

How to Make Him Open Up and Talk About His Problems

If you're a normal woman, then I know that you can and do become extremely frustrated and hurt, when your guy shuts down emotionally.

Not only that, but seeing him showing signs of obvious hurt and choosing to deal with it on his own rather than trust in you enough to allow himself to appear vulnerable, can make you feel like you aren't good enough.

You may find yourself wondering, "If he can't trust me enough to just be himself around me and open up to me, then there's no one on earth that help him. Am I that uncomfortable to be candid with?"

Trust me, I get that. It's not easy and I won't even remotely pretend that it is. The key here is patience. As you well know by now, relationships aren't easy. Rough patches in those relationships do little more than exacerbate the problems, and you just wish that you could knock some sense into his head and make him feel comfortable letting his guard down and "letting you in." But it takes time, ladies. It takes time, patience and perseverance.

Here's another scenario for you:

Let's say we have a couple sitting at a dinner table having dinner quietly and peacefully. The woman quickly notices that her boyfriend is unusually quiet. She knows this isn't his usual chatty



self. So something must be wrong, right? Who wouldn't assume as much?

She asks him gently, "How are you feeling today, honey?"

The man does little more than shoot a quick glance at her, and with a nearly emotionless look on his face, says, "I'm fine, I guess."

And then she, as most people would when hearing a presumably false answer, seeks verification. She asks, "Are you sure?"

With this, the man starts to show signs of getting a bit upset and more firmly replies with, "Honey, I said I'm fine. Okay?" He wasn't yelling, per se, but he wasn't as warm and calm as he usually is either.

Still not believing him, the woman says, "Well, honey, you look stressed about something. Talk to me. If not me, then who?"

Now his anger is barely restrained, and he says, "Look! Can we not just sit here and have dinner quietly? Is that too much to ask? Why do you constantly feel the need to slam me with twenty questions?!"

To this, her face starts to heat up with restraint, but she remarks, "Well, you don't ever really talk about what's bothering you anyway."

And with that, the man slams his hands down on the table, gets up, pushes his chair back with force, and storms out in anger.

So, what the heck could we just witness? What on earth could be going on here? Why is it that some men so often simply and flatly *refuse* to open up? Why do they insist on keeping everything to themselves? Why on earth are they so afraid to open up? What

are they so deathly afraid they're going to lose by doing so?

Well, quite a bit, actually. Well, to him anyway. Men have several insecurities and road blocks that they've built up over time. They, as you well know by now, deal with things far differently than women. And when confronted with things like this that they can't (or won't) talk about, the mere thought of appearing vulnerable and weak cause them to hit the button.

What button? The one that immediately causes their emotions to slam face-first into a wall. Anytime they're asked, or worse yet, prodded to open up about something—then BAM! Right into that barrier they've dealt with their entire lives.

You see, to a guy, putting a feeling or a want out there all by itself is akin to jumping off of the edge of a cliff with no safety net or parachute. It's pretty darn scary. Women often feel that when they tell their guy everything, it's proof to him that they trust their man to the ends of time and want him to know all about them and how they tick.

But with men, on the other hand, it's a whole other ball of wax— a frustrating, no-holds-barred, frustrating ball of wax! They feel that when they're openly talking about what's going on in their lives and sharing their deepest darkest emotions and secrets, it mean that they're seeking some sort of approval and justification from the woman. This is considered to be a pretty darn sizable weakness in the often misunderstood world of the man.

The last thing a man will ever want is for his entire being and his innermost feelings, to be out in the open in front of their partner, or anyone else for that matter. In his mind, it's like taking a vacuum and sucking every last ounce of his testosterone out of him. While it's not true in any sense of the words, it's an indisputable, verifiable, cold, hard fact in his mind.

You also need to understand that most men feel that women are extremely critical and judging of them. They hear women talk

amongst each other about what they love and hate about their men and they worry that if they *do* open up, someone's just waiting in the proverbial bushes to jump out and laugh at them. This would immediately leave them rejected and humiliated. They would sooner take the chance of slapping a bull squarely across the face than deal with this fear.

Men *and* women either fear judgment or they could care less what others think. There's not usually much of a gray area in between. They either do or don't, but the majority usually cares far more than they'll admit. As a result, some would prefer to be seen as closed-minded and distant rather than risk appearing weak and less than expected on society's eyes.

Here are just some of the fears that many men have when they even *think* about opening up:

- ▶ What if I don't get the desired result from her?
- ▶ What if she completely rejects me after this?
- ▶ Won't this make me seem entirely too needy or otherwise lacking in her eyes?
- ▶ She could completely dismiss it or utterly humiliate me afterwards.
- ▶ She might see that I'm not near as strong as I often appear to be. Do I want to risk that?
- ▶ What if she takes it the wrong way and it blows up in my face?

It's no surprise, therefore, that many guys would much rather take on a world of pain and heartache than open up to their woman.

Now here's what most women usually do in similar

situations:

Women generally have a “fight or I’ll just leave it” mechanism that they use to deal with these types of situations. When a woman chooses the “fight” way of dealing with it, she will stay on the topic with him continuously and endlessly. She’ll “argue” with him quite a bit and try to show him that she is absolutely not okay with him being this way.

She’ll make it undeniably clear that he needs to change, and he needs to do it pronto! But, even worse than that, is when she uses manipulation to make things go her way. Know this: This will only make the entire situation much, much worse.

Now, let’s say she chooses the “I’ll just leave it” way of dealing with it. When a woman takes this route, she tends to, herself, kind of mirror the guy’s actions. She begins to use his methods of dealing with things and his reactions to all of it. So, if her guy is being particularly emotionally distant and totally withdrawn, she starts to see turnabout as fair play and does the same thing to him. As is often said, two wrongs don’t make a right.

Women usually hold it all in and become very hard to read when they choose this route. They won’t share a thing. Many times, they will act as if nothing in the world bothers them. But in all actuality, they usually end up even more bothered over time, as their emotions begin to pile on top of each other. This is why so many women appear to blow up on guys over “nothing.” It’s most assuredly something. It’s a culmination of all the times she held back and held it all in.

The truth is that men do want to talk and they do want to open up, but only when the conditions are perfect. Sadly, they’re much like a tornado and certain conditions have to be present in order for them to rise to the occasion.

If you want your man to open up completely, then you have to

follow certain steps and do so in the right order:

Step 1- It's really hard for a man to open up about his problems because he fears coming across as weak. Your job is to let him know that you aren't there to judge him in any way whatsoever.

It's important for women to realize that, surprisingly, a man's ego and sense of identity are generally weaker and is more easily threatened than hers. That's especially true when he's in an intimate relationship. He desires constant understanding from your end; he wants you to understand his world. So if a man feels that you are going to judge him or look at him differently as a result of what he might say, you can be darn sure that he won't risk it by talking about such things. In his eyes, there's no going back after being humiliated.

Not judging your partner means allowing him to say what is on his mind, and simply being willing to hear it. That's all.

In order to reassure your man that you are going to listen to him without any sort of judgment or interruptions, you have to choose your words carefully and explain it to him in a way that proves how serious you are about it.

Even resorting to writing things can sometimes make the message come across more clearly and in more detail, because the tone of your voice, the look on your face, and other things can influence how he perceives the overall message.

Here's a good example of something you might say:

David, I know you're going through something and I know it's hard for you to discuss it with me, but I just want you to know that I am here for you if you ever want or need to talk about it. Also, please know that I won't judge you



for whatever it is you aren't sharing with me, and that you can trust me completely with it. Whenever you're ready to talk about it, I'll be here for you. If not, well, that's completely okay too, and I hope you find a solution to whatever it is soon.

If you say something like this, he will naturally feel a sense of inner comfort and safety and will be far more open to sharing it with you.

Step 2 - Tell him how his silence makes you feel so that he clearly understands your point of view as well.

Your man may not even be aware that you get worried when he chooses to bottle things up and remain silent. It's very likely that he has no clue what effect it has on you since he is completely consumed in his own thoughts. Don't let it affect you. I know that's much easier said than done, but I promise it's really not about you.

Therefore, the best way for you to approach your partner when he's quiet is to say, "I get worried when you don't talk to me, but I hope that at some point you feel like you can."

Again, it is key to approach him cautiously and gently. As long as your partner knows why you are concerned about certain things and how his actions are adversely affecting you, he will always understand you and will likely be far more open in his future conversations with you.

Step 3 – Give him enough time to think.

You must understand that your man won't suddenly rush right to you and start talking every time there's a problem, even if you have made progress in the past. He might take his sweet time. Sometimes it can be quite a long time, so make sure that you don't ask him about it a lot. Whenever he is ready, he will come to you on



his own. The key with this step is that the more often he is given this time and respect in order to open up at his own pace, the more he'll choose to do so. This will show the fruits of your "labor."

Don't ask him how he's feeling about things, and then sit there waiting for an answer. It's not going to happen. That's normally a woman's way of "sharing feelings." When you get the usual one-word responses, don't push him or he'll see it as nothing more than you nagging him.

Tell him you'll you will be okay to talk about it some other time. And then give him some more time to think. This will allow him to sort through his emotions and prioritize them. He needs to do this before he can share or act on his feelings.

Oftentimes, men need to be left alone to come to terms with what it is they're going through, sort through their thought progression, and try to process their feelings better.

Step 4 – When he does talk, actively listen to him.

Simply listen without trying to correct him or make assumptions. Don't try to guess what he means to say; what comes out of his mouth is usually what's on his mind. The key here is to just let him finish. Let him put it all out on the table before you add your feedback to it.

Be a good listener. Pay attention. Even if you aren't completely sure why something like that would be bothering him, take the time out to listen to him anyway. You don't necessarily need to comment or offer an opinion.

What every man needs, especially during a period of seeming defeat, is to be convinced that his partner loves him and is going to be there to support him no matter what. The fact that he's even talking about it with you is a *huge* step.

Step 5 - Offer what you think he should do, but never tell him what

to do.

One of the most sought-after human needs is approval. Everyone needs some level of it, whether they openly admit it or not. Respect helps fulfill that desire for men on a very deep emotional level. But very often when a man is discussing something, it can be very difficult to not tell him what to do. After all, it's human nature to assume that our way is the best way and that the other person ought to take our advice. But you need to understand that it's usually a big mistake on all counts.

There are times when it may be crystal clear to *you* that what he's doing is completely wrong, and you wish to correct him. But it's never a good idea to tell him what to do while he is opening himself up to you. You'll find yourself understanding what he goes through when trying to deal with your problems and how he's supposed to "just listen" without offering help.

As I've said repeatedly, the reason why you should never tell a man what to do is because it will make him feel that he is not good enough or up to the mark. When you tell him what to do, he feels that he isn't good enough to fill the role of a provider anymore, and he experiences a strong sense of inadequacy as a man.

In your world, you might feel that by offering support, help and suggestions, you're doing a great deed. But in his world, he feels that you're doing this because on some level you don't believe he can do it himself and that he is inadequate.

So what should you do if you really want to help him?

Yes there is hope! You can get a man to listen to you, take your suggestion and even act on it, once you understand how to do it the right way.

The secret is to make it sound like an option rather than something you absolutely need him to do. Instead of pushing it on him,



present it to him in a way where he would feel comfortable with it. In a nutshell, instead of giving advice, you should to suggest something and let him make his own mind up about whether or not he wants to follow it.

Here are a few examples:

He Says	Wrong Response	Correct Response
<p><i>- I feel like I am not being recognized enough in my career. I feel like I deserve a promotion, but my boss is such a clueless jerk.</i></p>	<p><i>You won't get anywhere unless you tell your boss about these issues you're having. You need to talk to him tomorrow.</i></p>	<p><i>I know it's really hard for you. I know you work really hard at this job and definitely deserve a promotion. I hope you talk to him some day about this so that he can finally see that he is ignoring a deserving candidate.</i></p>
<p><i>- I think I am about to lose my job, but I don't know what to do.</i></p>	<p><i>I told you that this job wasn't going to last long. There have been multiple openings at my office recently. You should try and come and work there.</i></p>	<p><i>Honey, I am so sorry. It must be really hard for you. But I need you to know that I completely trust your abilities and know you will find an even better job. Also, if</i></p>



- I find our relationship very hard to deal with at times, but you just don't seem to get it.

Why do you always blame me? How about this? Maybe it's you who is making it hard to deal with.

you think you might be interested, there is an opening at my work. I just wanted to let you know about it in case you feel like it might be the right match for you.

I am so sorry that you feel that way. But I need you to know that it's never been my intention to make things hard on you, even if it might sort of come across that way at times. I would love it if maybe you could take some time out and talk about this issue further with me. I would like to clear up a lot of our misunderstandings and be able to move forward. How about we do this at dinner time tonight?

Step 6 - Reassure him that he can expect unwavering support from your end, no matter what.

If you sense that your man is beginning to get disturbed during the conversation or is taking long pauses while talking, then he is struggling with something emotionally. During such a phase, reassure him that you are there for him.

If your man does become unusually quiet, do not approach him with an angry or confrontational tone. Don't force him to talk more when he is in this phase.

You can simply say, "Well, I'll leave you alone for the time being, I'm around in case you wish to speak. He has to know that you are on his side.

Step 7 – Do not take anything personally.

Now this is a very important step during the whole situation. Even after going through all of the steps above, your man still might not take your suggestion(s) and you might see that he is still stressed over the same problem or similar problems.

If this is the case, you still have to keep your mood calm and collected. Most women tend to get a little upset when things aren't going their way in this type of situation. It's completely understandable, but you have to also understand that you aren't his therapist and that it's not your job to rescue him.

Your man is telling you something indirectly. He is letting you know that your help isn't needed for the time being, and that he will deal with it better if he is left alone for now.

Your “job,” as a caring and loving mate, is to give him enough space whenever the need arises so that he can self-negotiate and come to an emotional point where he is feeling at peace again. Until he’s completely comfortable emotionally, he won’t be anywhere near ready to be open with you.

All you have to do is follow step 6 (unwavering and unconditional support) in such a situation and let him know that you will be around any time he needs you, and that he can expect unwavering and unconditional support from you at *any* time.

Treat him the way that you’d like to be treated. It’s a slow, methodical training of not only him, but yourself as well. You’ll be surprised at how well all of this will help your levels of patience in the relationship too.

Points to Remember:

- ▶ Women usually see sharing of themselves and their emotions proves their trust and respect. Men see it as one of the most vulnerable things he could ever do.
- ▶ Women generally use a fight-or-flight mechanism when dealing with this problem with men. It’s important to choose the correct one, or your attempts will fall flat.
- ▶ Make him aware that you aren’t there to judge him in any way whatsoever. This is vital.
- ▶ Tell him how his silence makes you feel, but be very cautious and gentle about it.
- ▶ Give him sufficient time to think.



- ▶ When he does decide to talk, just listen.

- ▶ Offer suggestions cautiously; never order him what to do or berate him for not having done something (or done something better) about it.

- ▶ Reassure him that he can also count on you to support him, no matter what.

- ▶ Don't take anything personally. He's working through this the best he can.

Section 8:

Why does conflict happen and how to tackle it?

One of the biggest problems that couples encounter in a marriage or other relationship, regardless of the time line of the relationship, is the fact that they have to deal with certain issues over and over again, which in turn would drive both the partners towards perpetual phases of frustration.

When a couple keeps facing conflicts, resolving them only for the time being, only to find it come back as a seemingly new problem time and time again– This causes both involved to lose patience with the core problems, and as a result they never get resolved.

Conflicts have the capability to literally ruin an entire lifetime. It can turn a peaceful life into a hellish existence where each day could seem worse than the last.

On the exact opposite end of the spectrum, conflicts also have the potential to teach us how to truly love, respect and support each other. It can be used as a stepping stone to grow together as a couple. This is by far the best road to travel. But it all boils down to how you act or react when there is a conflict.

Successful couples see conflict as a way to embrace their differences and come to a mutual understanding, while unsuccessful couples use conflict as a way to win from their partner.

Why Some Relationships Slowly Diminish or Fall Apart

Life is a series of ups and downs. Sometimes things are great, while other times things are difficult, yet we still learn something new every single day.

As we sail through the time line of life we are constantly turning into something new each day. We are all constantly changing beings. Whether we realize it, appreciate it, or even acknowledge it, it doesn't matter. We're changing, whether we like it or not.

The point to be strongly noted here is this: Most relationships dwindle or fail because couples develop differences which never existed during the initial phases.

It usually happens when one of the persons involved in the relationship has changed with time into a completely new being, while the other person remains the same. Then you have one person who is still his or her old, outdated self and one who is growing exponentially day after day.

In time, the partner who has constantly changed, evolved, and hopefully improved, develops into a completely new person. As you may well imagine, this can create severe conflict. One seems to be doing all the growing from conflict while the other appears to be satisfied with how things are. And satisfied does *not* equal happy.

And since two completely different human beings will differ in opinions, arguments become an everyday phenomenon. Under such a situation, couples begin to find faults with each other.

Of course, it begins by their becoming disrespectful of each other's differences which they *see* as faults, but it then soon develops into disrespect of each other as people, mates, or possible life partners.

Eventually it reaches a point where couples do nothing but point out how wrong their partner is. Both partners want the other to change their ways, and this leads to an overall downfall of the relationship.

In order to do some damage control and some semblance of repair, most couples will end up in counseling.

The reason why most couples end up in counseling is usually because one of them feels like he or she is not getting their needs met in the relationship.

It is extremely easy to assume that more often than not, couples grow apart because of a big fight, but the majority of the time, people ignore that relationships slowly decay through a plethora of rather minor acts and events which are usually ignored.

In other words, two people don't start hating each other simply because of one thing; it's usually a collection of events over time which causes them to grow apart.

Whether they are aware of it or not, a lot of women expect their partner to provide them with a sense of security, in other words, they bank upon their partner for it. Upon reading that, half of you are nodding your heads in agreement while the other half probably doesn't see it. When they don't see their man providing them with the very thing they need most— security in the relationship— they will complain resentfully that the man utterly failed them.

The problem begins when you feel the need to change your partner so that your needs can be met, and it's nothing but a long uphill struggle when you feel that your partner needs to be fixed. A relationship is not a relationship anymore when you adopt this attitude of selfishness, and at that point it becomes a transaction

since you want your partner to give you something before he can expect something in return. Sadly, this format is practically the sole foundation of a relationship for millions of couples around the world.

Most women have the wrong definition of what a relationship is supposed to be. It's *not* about just getting what you want. It's about freely giving without expecting much in return, that's when you will truly have your needs met. Confusing, I know! But this formula works every single time.

When relationships or marriages fail, the first cause usually is the coldness displayed between couples, lack of concern for each other becomes a daily norm. Eventually it turns into two people just living together like roommates rather than lovers. And thus it only goes down from that point.

How it Should Be Instead

Relationships should be based on unconditional acceptance, which means you see your man as he is, not as you wish him to be. It's important to allow him to be the way he is, and it's even more important to understand that he has his own ways which might be different from yours.

This does not mean that you won't have conflicts or disagreements. It only means that you embrace and accept the fact that your partner has an alternative view on things, and you are completely okay with it.

Total acceptance is the key to a successful relationship. Not only will it keep you at peace with yourself and with your partner, but it will also help you grow together with time. When you accept your partner the way he is, he will return the favor. As a result, you will have two human beings who understand how to love each other unconditionally. This is how a relationship should be.

How Men and Women Usually React Differently When Things Go South in a Relationship

When a relationship is on a downward spiral, men tend to talk about feeling discarded, insufficient or no longer worthy and an utter failure on their part. Women, on the other hand, generally talk about feeling abandoned, isolated, and tossed away like last night's garbage.

Here is a list of things that many women do when they're angry with a man which essentially ruin their chances completely in a relationship, and make things go from bad to worse:

- ▶ They begin the habit of talking down to him or disrespecting and berating him over and over again.
- ▶ They start to totally disregard any of his needs, wishes and desires.
- ▶ They compare him to other men and inform him of every one of his various faults.
- ▶ They become extremely cold and sarcastic in their daily conversations with him.
- ▶ They stop having sex with him altogether.
- ▶ They begin to speak badly about him behind his back and in front of mutual friends.

Every couple has moments where they will always disagree, but it's when you deal with those disagreements in the wrong way that it can literally crush your relationship to pieces. And if you have done any of the things mentioned above, then you may well be leading *your* relationship to a possibly disastrous and catastrophic end.

If you often complain and push hard on things until he gives in to your way of thinking, then you aren't actually winning. Sure, you're winning the battle, but you've destroyed your chances of winning the war in the long run. Over time, you'll realize that *no one* has won and that everyone lost in the relationship.

Here's the thing about couples: When a woman is complains, she is usually sending a hidden message. She is trying to say, albeit in a roundabout way, "I need your affection and acceptance!"

And when a man is yelling and showing the same types of behavior, or sometimes not speaking at all, he is saying in *his* roundabout way, "You are disrespecting me, I need respect!"

But the primary problem here is that women often want their man to completely understand their needs without really giving much importance to his needs. She wants to receive first and *then* give. That simply doesn't work.

This is the reason why it's so extremely important to know how to handle conflicts with your man effectively and in a way to where you won't find yourself in even *more* difficult situations. This is because you want to have your needs met without having to pressure your man into doing it in the end,

Here's a list of things you simply have to do in order to properly handle conflicts with your man:

- 1.** Take time out, if possible, before or during your argument. Use that time to gather your thoughts, calm yourself down, and prioritize your concerns.
- 2.** Figure out what it is you will get out of it or what the end result you seek actually is.

- 3.** Resist at all costs the urge to play the blame game.
- 4.** Do *NOT* bring up issues from the past. You don't want to belch forth a laundry list of his faults that has been building up over time.
- 5.** Don't accept all of the blame for the issues at hand yourself either.
- 6.** You *must* let go of your urge to win. Fight for the relationship and for victory over the fight.
- 7.** Do not try to make him feel guilty.
- 8.** Choose to accept his weaknesses.
- 9.** Do *NOT* compare him to other men. He will tune out everything said afterward as a result.
- 10.** Regardless of how much you may want to, resist the urge to say anything disrespectful to him. Take the high road.

Take your time

Whenever you feel that burning and churning urge to say something extremely hurtful that will cut deep into his soul or cause a more heated argument, try to think in a rational and positive manner. You want to make thought-invoking points, not stinging ones.

The primary attitude in managing arguments and conflicts should be to make sure that rational thinking always wins out and that negative emotions are kept well in check.

Sounds simple, doesn't it? It's much, much easier said than done when in the heat of the moment. Keeping a cool, methodical and rational mindset during an argument is one of the most difficult

things that we can possibly seek to undertake.

Making sure that our clear-thinking minds control the directions of our arguments without letting our superheated emotions lead the way requires great emotional depth, strength and self-discipline. It can be quite the daunting task, but it can be done, and if the relationship is to have a chance of being salvaged, this will prove a very important and meaningful skill to have in your arsenal.

What is the Specific End Result That You Seek?

Ask yourself this question: "What outcome do I really want for myself and my guy?" You'll need to choose one issue at a time to discuss, gauging the importance of each issue. Then you'll need to prioritize them, putting the most important either first, while all of the openness is present, or dead last; after everything has hopefully become amicable and both parties are listening and giving good, productive input. Then you need to decide on whether or not your proposed solution to the issue at hand is practical and realistic.

But entirely too often, even productive argument can become clouded with a lot of small problems and unresolved past conflicts thrown in. This can make it nearly impossible to stay on topic and the main point is often ignored.

If you have issues which cause negative reactions from your partner, then they should only be brought up if the desire to discuss and resolve it is mutual. You also have to realize that it generally makes no sense to argue about something which will make things even more difficult.

Resist the Urge to Assign Blame

Take steps to calmly and productively discuss the issue. Resolving



an issue requires a special attitude. It requires one of modesty and of making the relationship a much higher priority than the issue itself. It's vital that you place more value on your relationship than winning, losing, escaping or feeling comfortable.

When you make it a point to be patient, you behave in a positive way during a negative situation. When you aren't quick to show negative reactions, you choose the path of least resistance rather than showing instant anger.

Rather than being demanding, you realize that the emotion of the moment will only do more harm than good, so you stay calm with your composure. Being calm during a conflict makes you think more clearly, and above all, more productively.

Try to take on a "no fault or blame" outlook on the situation. See it as the fact that it was a *mutually* destructive path that has led it to this point, and not the path of one partner being any more destructive or productive than the other. The idea is to quash any negative emotions and only focus on the positive. You don't want hold your partner responsible for whatever has happened so far.

Entirely too often in relationships *and* conflict, we focus on our own needs and simply dismiss the needs of the other person and point fingers at the other person for not pulling their weight in the relationship.

It's also important to note that when a woman is feeling unloved, she might say or do disrespectful things around her man, but she probably doesn't know that she is doing it.

Similarly, when a man is being blamed, his natural reaction is to become distant and withdraw. He doesn't realize it that this very act makes you feel more unloved and agitated.

The main issue here is a little misunderstanding mixed with lack of proper communication, which can be fixed. But it all has to start

with adopting the no blame, no fault attitude towards your man.

Once you break through the communication barriers, it will make both of you see each other in a whole new light— one that shines bright with appreciation rather than darkens you with disdain and frustration at the mere thought of talking to each other.

Issues from the Past - Leave Them There

The next mistake that women often make is to constantly bring up issues from the past. They say things like, "You just have a habit of doing this."

What you're doing is letting him know that you keep a record book of all his past mistakes and want to make him feel bad about it, at every opportunity you can find.

Most women who do this believe that it will make him alter his ways, but we all know what usually happens. The guy shuts down, avoids you and gets super defensive. And this is because he feels attacked.

You can't expect him to applaud you for it. For the sake of all that is important to the two of you, don't bring up the past.

You're not each other's enemies who are out to do nothing more than hurt each other in the fastest and deepest ways possible. You're a *couple* and you're trying to solve problems *together*. Digging up issues from the past only makes everything a whole lot more complicated, frustrating, counter-productive and more difficult.

Trying to bring up the past will do no good, and now you've thrown gasoline on the argument and will have a much harder time bringing it back to any semblance of "under control." The past clouds the issue and sends every single productive step the two of

you have made forward *back* 10 steps.

Don't punish him today for the mistakes he made yesterday. Let events or actions of the past stay in the past.

Blaming Him for the Problem(s)

Whenever there is a problem, our first reaction is to figure out who's to blame for it. More often than now, the blame might fall upon your partner. But it takes two to grow and it takes two to have a disagreement.

In certain circumstances holding your partner responsible might be justified, and that is when facts state that he has truly done something wrong.

At other times, you might be blaming him unfairly. For example, let's say you always tell him to take out the trash after dinner and it angers you to see a huge pile of trash still sitting there. You have one of two choices: You could either have a huge argument over this and blame your man, or you could rationally think it through and work on finding a solution.

The smart thing to do is to accept your role in the problem as well. Maybe he is too tired after work and finds it difficult to take the trash out every single day. Therefore, you also need to admit to the fact that you are probably pushing him a bit too much.

So often times it's both the partners that actually have a problem. The second that you assign blame to him alone for the problems you're having together, it will only make it 10 times harder to solve the problem together. And together is where your focus needs to be.

Be willing to claim your responsibility and role in the ongoing

problem as well.

Always be willing to acknowledge any role you may have played in the issue arising and do not be afraid to admit to both yourself and your man, when you, too, may have made a mistake along the way. By admitting your role and accepting your involvement in the problem, you show your partner you are willing to work *with* him and not against him. Remember, it takes two to make a relationship work, so any problems therein also require two people. But luckily, it only takes one to lead it down the path to resolving it.

Give up the burning urge to "win" and acknowledge your partners point of view

It all has to start with acknowledging your partner's point of view. Try to see things as he would see it. In order to do that, you have to be a lot less defensive and a bit more understanding.

It means you truly hear him out and take his concerns into consideration without feeling the need to correct him or presenting your side of the story when he is telling you his.

You have to give up the need to be right; it's not a competition of who's right or who's wrong. It's important to take notice when you are slipping into a critical mindset while listening to your man. Learn to stop yourself there and then.

The urge to tell him how wrong he is can be very strong and often hard to control. But if you wish long term peace then you have to give up short term gratification.

If you do find yourself in a difficult situation with your man and you can see that things are going from bad to worse, take a pause right there and say: "*We both are grown adults, so let's please deal with it like adults. We owe ourselves that much, right? I am sorry for*

behaving like this, this isn't me." And then watch how quickly things start to work out.

Don't play the attack and defend game. Be open about your thoughts and feelings but do it gently and in a calm tone. Even the most pressing issues can be resolved when you follow this approach.

Try not to do the ol' mind-reading trick or automatically interpret everything he says negatively. Just because you think you know what he means, the reality is that you might not. Never, ever assume the worst. This clouds your judgment from the outset and gives neither of you a very fair chance to succeed at what you're trying to accomplish here.

Instead of focusing on your personal benefit, try to focus on what will benefit your relationship as a whole. With that kind of mindset, you will diffuse arguments quickly and will have a better overall relationship.

Do Not Try to Make Him Feel Guilty

It's a regular occurrence in our society, and we see this all around us every single day. The woman pooches her lower lip out, snuffles, and pleads her man until he does what she wants.

Having certain needs and expectations from your man is understandable but when you get sneaky and adopt methods to use guilt as a way to get what you want. You have crossed the line.

It is bad for more reasons than you can count. Reason number one: If you get accustomed to using guilt and always end up getting your way, then you are bound to use it more and more with time. Unconsciously you are turning a small act into a permanent habit.

The consequences of this aren't immediate but surface with time. Your man will always feel helpless and powerless around you over time. He will feel pushed and pulled into things he doesn't wish to do. Eventually he will not be able to tolerate it anymore and would seek to get out of the relationship.

Another reason why it's harmful is because it would make your man hold grudges against you. Even if things get better with time, in the back of his mind he will always remember how you used to manipulate him to get your way.

This heavily shakes up the trust factor in the relationship, which is like the fuel which keeps the vehicle of a relationship running. Without it you'd make no progress with each other.

Accept His Weaknesses

There isn't a human being on this planet who doesn't have a weakness, and this goes for your boyfriend or husband too. Nothing hurts a man more than his wife or girlfriends trying to either exploit his weakness or point it out to him time and time again.

Sure you might be better than him in certain areas and maybe you can do things which he can't. But this doesn't mean that you should make such a thing obvious to him.

Not only is it disrespectful, but you are also hitting a man where it hurts the most. You can't expect him to give you the love and affection you desire if you are not willing to accept his weaknesses.

A healthy relationship is about accepting the person as a whole with all their weaknesses and shortcomings. So understand that there are things which he can't change, therefore accept his weaknesses.

Do Not Compare Him to Other Men

This is by far one of the rudest things you can do to a man. No man wants to be compared to another man. And it's even worse, if you compare him to an ex boyfriend or husband. Especially when you know that your man doesn't have the qualities your ex had. You've just taken one of the lowest roads possible. You just multiplied the current problem at *least* tenfold, if not far more.

You are disrespecting him by pointing out what he lacks to begin with, but if you throw in the fact that he sorely lacks something an ex boyfriend or husband had, you just shot yourself in the foot and ruined any progress you may have made.

You have to understand that as humans, we see ex lovers as exes for a *reason*. By getting with your current guy, you automatically told him through your actions that he is better than the men before him. And according to you, they severely lacked something that he apparently has. That's just begging him to bring up negative emotions, and he'll always associate them with you.

Don't Say Anything Disrespectful

There will always be times when you won't like certain things your man does. You will even encounter times when you absolutely hate your partner and will try to argue a point till he finally agrees with you.

That is all understandable, but no matter how heated the situation gets, one thing you must keep in mind: Never ever say anything disrespectful to him. You can say instead: It's alright, our opinions differ, and it's understandable.

There is nothing whatsoever wrong with that. And this way no one

is wrong. If you're both convinced that *you* are the one that's right and neither party seems even close to conceding, just agree to disagree. It's an amicable end to a possibly distracting hurdle in the conversation.

No matter what, never ever say anything disrespectful. Doing this will just make the entire situation get blown entirely out of proportion, yet again.

Creating a Win-Win Situation During a Conflict Using the "Everyone Wins Formula"

At this point I want to share a formula which I call the "Everyone Wins Formula". The theory behind this is to communicate with your man in a way, where both him and you get your needs met while you effectively diffuse arguments.

Before I tell you the formula, it's important that you know exactly what your partner wants or needs. Most women don't really listen to their man; in fact, while their man is talking they're rehearsing what to say next in their heads. This will always keep you stuck.

Listen to your man, do not interrupt him, and let him say everything he wishes to say. And when he is done talking, ask him questions in case you didn't understand what he meant. It's important to know exactly what he is trying to convey before you use the "Everyone Wins Formula".

Here is how the "Everyone wins formula" works:

Why is it called the "everyone wins formula"? Well, when you put this hot little number into action, everyone involved will win. In

other words, you and your man will *both* find yourselves in a win-win situation.

Step 1 – Keep your eyes and ears open and your mouth sealed. Listen to your man’s point of view with extreme patience and let him finish. Do not interrupt. Wait until he asks you something specifically or makes it obvious he wants to hear from you.

Step 2 – Acknowledge his point of view. This means you accept what is being said without discarding it or disagreeing with it. You are understand the fact that your partner has concerns he wishes to address, and you are open to hearing it without prejudice.

Step 3 – **Once** your partner is done speaking, gently suggest your point of view. The keyword here is to suggest, not enforce. Just as you acknowledged his point of view by being patient while he spoke, he will return the favor. When you give attention, you are very likely to have it returned too.

Step 4 – Ask him to give further input. After you are done presenting your point of view, ask him what he thinks about it or if he has any alternative solutions to the issue at hand. What you are doing here are two things. Number one: Since you are catering to his needs, he will feel a need to cater to yours. And two: Because you are not forcing him to do something rather gently asking, he is very likely to say yes to it.

According to this formula, both you *and* your partner win because you are trying to understand his point of view first without prejudice and acknowledge it, even if you might disagree with it.

To make this more clear, here is an example:

Let’s say your guy is tired of having to miss weekends with his friends to take a look at and try to repair a problem with something at home. He’s telling you to do it. Instead of blaming him for it and

telling him that it's unfair to spend time having fun with his buddies when there is an issue at the house, you could try the following approach:

Say something like, "It sounds like you're overwhelmed with all the stuff there is to do. I know it must feel really bothersome and frustrating, but please understand that I need your help with it. I won't be able to do it all by myself."

That's it! Anyone that can help a person feel respected and understood is someone who will always be very successful in dealing with others.

And by telling him that you won't be able to do it all by yourself, you *gently* suggested and asked him to join in, which is a very effective way to let him know what you truly need.

By taking this approach, you will always successfully find a solution to the problem at hand, and you will save yourself a lot of pain.

There is absolutely no reason to argue when there are better ways in existence to deal with the same. The key is to always effectively communicate with your man. Follow the correct approach and you will always find yourself turning impossible situations into possible ones.

Points to Remember:

- ▶ Conflicts are the perfect opportunity to either rip the two of you apart or bring you closer together. Deal with them wisely.
- ▶ Conflicts generally arise when one person evolves faster than the other.

- ▶ Relationships start to diminish and decay when the same problems are brought up over and over again. Don't save them for later to try and resolve them.

- ▶ During a conflict or argument, take time out to calm down, gather your thoughts and prioritize them.

- ▶ Figure out what you want the end result of the discussion to be.

- ▶ Resist the urge to assign blame to him.

- ▶ Fight for the relationship, and not to win the argument.

- ▶ Don't compare him to past men.

- ▶ Don't lower yourself by disrespecting him. Always choose the high road.

- ▶ Always try to communicate in a way in which both of you win if, at all possible.

Section: 9

What to Do When He Withdraws from You

Like warnings in those little new product booklets, what I'm about to tell you bears a similar preface. You know what I mean. Those little blurbs you get when you've just purchased a new hair dryer or some other appliance: "Don't use this near water." Duh! You have to read them anyway, because some people actually do those things!

I'm going to tell you about men, why they withdraw sometimes from their better halves (girlfriends or wives), and how you wonderful, beautiful, intelligent ladies can tackle it.

After all, in some ways a man is like an electrical appliance, and all you need is to know what to do so they can function at their best and continue treating you like the queens you are. There are times that following these guidelines won't work, just like an appliance that's miswired. I'm talking about a man so self-centered that the only word for him is 'narcissistic.'

Perhaps you already know this type. When he doesn't get his way, he pouts like the grown up little boy that he is. He punishes you by ignoring you; disagreeing with you; criticizing anything you do;; and not wanting to do anything with you. He's ready with flowers and sweet talk to get what he wants, and if he doesn't, he can be hurt and even mean to still try to get you to give in.

Either way, the only thing that matters is getting his way. He's shallow and has no empathy for your own feelings or opinions. In fact, his sole purpose for hitching up with anyone is to please himself. If it doesn't fit his plans, it won't happen.

He pretends to be interested in you, but really doesn't care about your interests, or your friends, or anything that doesn't belong in his little isolated cubicle of a world. He's the one you want to avoid, since I'm sure you can find someone who is considerate and wants to actually share life with you for the adventure it truly is.

This man is hardwired and you can't change him. It's like trying to mix oil and water. Just won't work. Now that we have that understanding behind us, let's start.

What we're talking about here is the average man who really loves you and cares, but all of a sudden you realize that he's stopped sharing as much as he used to. All your inner alarms go off, and you find yourself in that 'fight or flight' mode. You feel he's distancing himself from you.

He's not being rude, disinterested or nonchalant to your inquisitiveness. Perhaps he answers with one word, or even a grunt or two, and sometimes the answer may not even fit what you asked. You feel like strangling him, or even worse, banning him from the bedroom to get his attention. Let's not go there, please.

Now, there are two things, in general, that a woman says in such situations:

1. *"Honey, are you mad at me? Did I do something wrong?" (Paranoia)*
2. *And when he still doesn't respond, "Fine! Don't tell me then!" (Attitude)*

As I'm sure you've guessed, or even know from experience, neither of these help the situation. I said you're smart, didn't I?

Let me tell you what's exactly going on:

Men may actually withdraw when a woman is steadily reaching out. I know, that's a shock, isn't it? "What?" you're saying, "Doesn't he want to know I care?" Actually, he does, but let me explain. The worst thing you can do is try to change him. Instead, learn *why* he withdraws and know that it isn't always a bad sign if he does.

Don't take it personally, even if it's something he's doing because of anything you might have said or did. This will help you to get through these times without making things worse, and that's what you really want, right? I know; this is something that's easier said than done. It flies in the face of everything your mind tells you to do.

So Why Do Men Really Withdraw?

Simply put, it could be something you did. Then again, it could be that he has some sort of problem he's trying to cope with internally. It might be something with work, the finances, any one of a billion different things. Heck, it could even be he's worried about something concerning you, but he's not ready to approach it with you, at least not just yet.

The fact is that men are physiologically more reactive to stress than women. For them, conflict is something they don't handle well, because of their higher levels of emotional provocation. They will do anything to avoid conflict. They recoil from it and want it resolved just as quickly as possible. To them, it's like a hotwire they shouldn't touch.

Now, let's understand something else:

What Works for You, Might Not Work for Him

Face it, as a woman you're wired differently. What works for you when faced with a problem or issue doesn't necessarily work for him. You tend to take it more personally when the man you care about withdraws and won't share with you what's going on in his head. All you want to do is help him. It feels right, but he won't let you.

It's crucial to come to terms with this fact: what works for you as a woman, doesn't necessarily help him, as a male. For a man to deal with issues, he has to retreat in silence to his inner sanctum, where he can gather the calm that steadies his emotions.

How Women Usually Handle It When Men Withdraw

What often happens when a man withdraws is that a woman becomes aggressive. She wants to help, protect, and heal the man she loves. She just *knows* something's wrong, and she wants to fix it *now*. She has no bad intent at all. When he takes a step back, she'll take a step forward. She wants to be close; he needs distance.

The dance begins. What was initially his problem that he could work through on his own in a short while becomes more difficult because she's demanding his attention. All he needs is to be left alone. Is it any wonder that he becomes angry?

Sure, she sees he's dealing with something, yet he doesn't want to talk about it. Yet, here she is, trying to force him to handle it in *her* way and at *her* pace. Now that you think about it, doesn't it sound a bit selfish? That's not something you want at all.

Understanding Your Role in All This

To be honest, most women don't realize what's going on. The reason your man starts to withdraw and distance himself might be because of what you're doing and how that affects his thinking.

Instinctively, he draws back from what he feels is desperate clinginess and neediness that overwhelms him! He needs emotional distance, and instead what he's faced with is someone trying to intrude and control things in a way that threatens his ability to feel safe and comfortable with you.

He can't enjoy spending time with you, because he's busy protecting himself from your expectations. And the best way to really push him away is to get angry. Nothing could do more harm to hamper his ability to cope than that.

What you don't want to do is make him aware of your emotional needs in all the wrong ways. Whether or not you realize it, as a woman, you can come across pretty darn strong even if you don't mean to.

If you're dumping your emotions all over him in the form of lectures, teaching moments, and complaints, it's never going to help. Instead, without even realizing it, he's instinctively trying to escape, shrinking from the stress. Think about it. Wouldn't you do the same?

Face it, trying to get what you want by pointing out what he's *not* doing right will most likely hinder rather than help you get where you want to be.

How to Fix the Situation the Right Way

Now comes the crux of the matter. You need to deal with this in a healthy way so that all returns to the open and loving place it was in the first place before he began his withdrawal. This is something *you* can fix!

First off, you already have the advantage that you're already the most important person in his life. Well, maybe next to his mother, of course. By working to understand the well of emotions inside you, you'll be able to express them in such a way, and he'll be completely mesmerized.

So read carefully, because here are the steps you need to follow:

Step 1 – Recognize When He Starts to Withdraw

Develop the ability to see when he's beginning to feel overwhelmed to the point that it's triggering his innate need to back off and distance himself from you.

This is vital in order for you to understand and see what's going on when it happens. By doing this, you won't be caught unprepared and get caught up in any sense of panicky fear. You'll recognize it for the normal stage it is.

Here are the signs:

1. When he responds with one-word answers or indistinguishable noises in a way you know that he's focused on something else.
2. When he's drowning in work in such a way that it consumes him.
3. When he's constantly aggravated and rude with you, and overreacting to every little thing, no matter how trivial.

4. When he constantly turns every conversation into a totally unrelated subject, and you're left wondering. "Where did that come from?"

5. When he specifically avoids the usual times he spends with you, whether watching TV, or whatever, and does stuff he hates or dreads, such as fixing the dry wall in the garage, when he's shown no interest whatsoever in doing that before. That's a good sign it's time to give him some space.

You need to realize what's happening when you see these behaviors. In this way, you can recognize what's going on and be prepared. It's terrible to be caught unaware and unable to quell your instinctual behaviors that you *think* can help but actually work against you.

What Not to Do When This is Happening

Don't, on the pain of death, try to reason with him or barrage him with questions about his behavior. He's already feeling stressed, and this could add fuel to the fire, making him retreat even further into his shell, making it harder for him to deal with whatever is troubling him.

What You Should Do

–Simply put, give the man some space. Back off. Stay in control. Don't let yourself get caught up in an emotional or mental tangle just because his behavior's different. He's in his shell because he *needs* to be there in order to recover emotionally from whatever he's struggling with.

Men spend a lot of time in their own heads, thinking. It could be anything from stuff that he knows needs to get done, like the 'honey do' list you've been reminding him of lately, proposals, appointments or goals at work, or up the ladder to more major things.

Perhaps he's obsessing about whether or not he can afford of justify a new vehicle (hey, men are car minded, you know) or whether to let go of a good employee, because the company's finances need it, or their behavior (maybe they're dealing with stress of their own!) is off lately.

Granted, these are wide examples, but the point is, anything might be weighing on his mind. Don't assume it's you or that you *know* what it is and act on it. If you get it all wrong, you can make things much worse.

I know it's difficult, and no doubt you'll struggle with some hurt feelings and maybe even insecurity in these unknown waters. In the end, though, these are effectual ways to bring everything back into a semblance of balance again.

Even men would feel the same if the situation was reversed, but hey, this isn't a guide for men. It's for you throngs of women out there who are unnecessarily feeling hurt, frustrated, angry and perplexed as to what in the world is going on with your man and his relationship with you.

Step 2- He Doesn't Always Know it Affects You Emotionally, So Train Yourself Not to React Negatively

It's been said that men are sometimes clueless. Well, in this case, it's true. Often, a man literally has no clue that you're hurt when he emotionally distances himself from you. He doesn't even remotely realize what he's doing while he's in the middle of it.

That's why he gets so agitated when you try to reach out to him at the time. He honestly expects you to understand and accept what's going on, no matter how impractical or illogical or feasible that is.

To him, it's not a big deal.

Whereas in your world, you can't understand why your man doesn't see how hurt you are. At the time, he's the most uncaring person in the world, and it hurts. This can cause deep emotional scars if you're not aware of what's truly going on. This is why I want to educate and empower you. As if a woman needs more power, right? Well, in this case, more is definitely better, for the both of you.

So, the next natural step is to control your reaction(s). Take time to outline how you usually react to him when he emotionally withdraws from you. Do you frantically try to reconnect with him? Most women do so out of a sense of panic. They freak out, making it difficult to control themselves. Right then it becomes the "make it or break it" moment in what they are certain is an already damaged relationship.

By recognizing your patterns to see if you get all worked up and are in a habit of obsessing the entire day when your man withdraws, you can recognize that you're putting out a negative vibe that pushes your man away rather than draws him closer to you. At that point, if you fail to realize what you're doing, it can lead to hurt at your *own* expense.

Realize that his withdrawal may have nothing to do with you. Things will return to normal. It just takes time. A man's negative or distant emotional state may not be about you at all. If he seems remote, but otherwise loving in a way that you're confident about, he may just need time to unwind. You'll only make it harder on yourself if you jump to the wrong conclusions and make it about you or something you've done. You can't afford to take this personally or

see it as anything negative or else it's going to lead to a conflict that puts you in a defensive and **reactive** state. Instead, you want to be productive and **proactive**.

- Let him have his space. We all need it. I'm sure you've even wanted it at times from him, even when everything is fantastic. It's

something healthy for us all. Try to use your natural gift of empathy and put yourself in his place, imagining the emotions he may be experiencing. If you are overwhelmed at times you would probably seek a way out, too. Taking space is a man's way to relax, emotionally.

Don't start a conversation with him, unless it's absolutely necessary. Believe it or not, most of the time, it can wait.

Wait and let him come to you. When he does, be ready. Be relaxed, open and inviting. Greet him with a genuine smile, knowing that he's working hard to make progress. At least he's no longer catatonic! But remember, there's *no* room for accusations! Chase away any desire at all to "put him in his place." It would ruin any progress, and he'll just digress back into his shell, probably even worse and for longer.

Focus on yourself. Do, or find things to do, that you love and enjoy. Get your mind off *him*. Go out with friends; try something or someplace new that you've wanted to do recently. Better yet, pamper yourself. Go to a spa, go shopping, and spoil yourself. Get a massage and relax.

Maybe you'll finally start up the project you've been passionately thinking about forever. Now's the perfect time. The point is, do anything to take your mind off the problem. It'll be an immense benefit for you, whereas dwelling on things at home can make a mangled mess of both of you.

Step 3 - Give Him the Gift of Space – the *Other* Gift That Keeps On Giving

Remember, when a man is avoiding, arguing and emotionally distancing himself from you for no apparent reason, he's saying, "Please give me space. I'll be back soon, when I feel better." Don't interpret this to mean, "I'm sick and tired of you and want to leave!"

It's this exact misunderstanding that causes women to struggle with giving the man the space he so desperately needs. And why? Because, it's hardwired in a woman's DNA to fight to keep her man and to keep him from abandoning them.

How Long Do I Need to Wait?

Here's another tricky part. It's natural to wonder how long you should wait for your man to get over what seems to be an apparent never-ending withdrawal.

There's no simple answer. Every man is as different from other men, just as every woman is different from other women. Ultimately, the decision is yours. His withdrawal could last days or months. Surely you won't put your life on hold, and if that's true, it really doesn't matter how long it takes.

If you're confident in your relationship, you'll stick by it and be the rock he turns to when it's time. Sure it's daunting, but you're strong. This is where the fight to keep him belongs. This is how'll you'll get back what you want. So, don't give up. He'll love you all the more for it. And hey, isn't that why you're reading this? As I said, you're an intelligent woman.

Should I Say Something to Make Him Return Faster?

Absolutely! You're not blind, you can see that something is wrong and he's not dealing well with it. And now, you want to feel better about giving him the time and space he needs to recover from whatever that is. By saying something, you'll release him from any emotional burden he might carry about his treatment of you and he'll recover much quicker.

Here's an example of what you might say to him:

Honey, I see that something's bothering you and it's really difficult. If it's because of something I've done or said, you can always say anything to me, honestly, without worrying that I'll take it negatively.

If it's anything else, I hope you'll find a solution soon. In the meantime, I'll leave you alone, knowing things will get better soon. Just know that I'm around anytime you need or want me for anything. I don't want to bother you with my own issues. Love you.

And When He Comes Back and Things are Normal Again

When he crawls out of his shell— and he *will*, since you're allowing him his time and space— I'm sure you'll be thrilled and ready. Whatever you do, though, don't have an attitude with him as to why it took him so long.

In fact, the best way is to act as if you barely noticed he was "gone," never in an uncaring, dismissive sense as if you didn't even realize what was going on, but as if it didn't weigh heavily on you.

That way it'll help relieve him of any guilt he might still feel for having possibly hurt you. And that's where you have the power, really.

Points to Remember:

► Men can withdraw at the most inopportune times, but try not to take it personally. It isn't about or because of you.

- ▶ Men withdraw when things become difficult for them to handle emotionally.

- ▶ What normally works for you during similar times, may not necessarily work for him.

- ▶ Women tend to come on even stronger when their man withdraws. Avoid this like the plague. It will do more harm than good. It will possibly overwhelm him or could cloud his already chaotic thought process.

- ▶ If you seem to try too hard and become clingy, this can overwhelm him and may well have been one of the root causes leading up to his current condition.

- ▶ Look for the signs that he may be starting to withdraw and adjust your behavior accordingly.

- ▶ Under any circumstances whatsoever, do **not** try to reason this with him or ask him endless questions about his changed behavior towards you. It will just make things much worse.

- ▶ Try to back off and let him come to you when he is ready.

- ▶ A man doesn't always realize that his shutting down is affecting you emotionally. Try not to react negatively when he does. It will likely only exacerbate the situation.

- ▶ Keep your focus on you until things are clearer and "safer."

- ▶ Give him as much time as he needs. Both of you will be thankful for it later.

- ▶ You *can* say things to possibly hasten his return, but choose your words wisely. It can be a double-edged sword if you say the wrong thing, say it in the wrong tone, or say too much at once and overwhelm him.

- ▶ Be pleased when he returns to his usual self and returns to you rather than react with the possible negativity you may have been holding in.

Section: 10

*Things about men you always wanted to know
but never understood...*

Let's face it: the male creature is baffling. That's why it's so hard to understand them. Can you honestly count the times you've asked, "What in the world was he thinking?"

To better prepare you in your venture of a relationship with this strange creature, this section will cover all those burning questions you've had about why your man does what he does.

All is explained in a nutshell, and since you've already gone through the other sections of this book and have a fair idea about what makes a man tick, you're well on your way to being prepared to tackle the world of maleness in a way that leaves you undamaged and unscathed by their "weirdness." So it's on to a whole new level of understanding!

Now let's address some of the most pressing questions women have.

“I feel like a horrible nag or needy when I ask him to pay more attention to me, but I need to know why he’s stopped paying attention to me like he used to?”

To put it bluntly, men can be totally oblivious to the fact they’re ignoring you. They often take you for granted. And you’re left with finding some way to communicate that need to him, or he’ll never figure it out on his own. As stated previously, men can’t read your mind anymore than you can theirs, so if he isn’t made aware of these things he can’t be expected to change them.

But if you’re not careful and don’t know how to approach him, you’ll end up pushing him away, which is totally the opposite of what you want to do. Unintentionally and unknowingly, you do this by sticking to him like glue every chance you get, while expecting him to do the same with you.

After all, that’s what the both of you did in those early days of getting close. You couldn’t get enough of each other. Everyone looked at the two of you and smiled knowingly, while you were oblivious to anything and everyone else. But it’s been a while, you’re settled in, and things change.

There is a saying that applies here, and that is there can actually be “too much of a good thing.” A good analogy might be something like this: You have pancakes, bacon, eggs and fruit for breakfast – great! Then again for lunch. Ok, it’s still good.

Then for dinner. Umm, excuse me, honey, but is this all we have to eat? Now imagine that goes on for every single day for months, or even years. After a while, you’d still eat out of hunger, but you sure wouldn’t enjoy it!

Now, don’t jump to conclusions! This doesn’t mean that a man can’t

be happy with you for the rest of his life or that he might need another woman now and then.

It does mean that you're crowding him. What you see as a loving gesture and a show of your fidelity and adoration is something different to him. You don't realize that what he needs is space. He doesn't want or need a woman to take over his life or to smother him. It's important and will go a long way into keeping your relationship solid when you can recognize what's taking place, and ease off. Don't give him the chance to get tired of you. In fact, the trick is to leave him wanting more and wanting to be with you.

Clinging to him triggers him to withdraw from you and actually push away, whereas you're just trying to get him to meet your own emotional needs. No wonder you're confused!

Another fact – Men have one-track minds. They're not good at multi-tasking.

Ok, let me clarify something right away. "One-track" minds here do *not* mean what you're thinking! Now that's cleared up.

You walk into the room, and he's watching football. You attempt to tell him something important or just get his attention, and maybe even walk invitingly between him and the TV. Now, this can happen whether he's watching TV, doing something on a computer, or working on a project. It can be anything he's intensely focused on.

He may not only ignore you, but actually get angry. The reason behind this is that men can't multi-task near as well as women, who often juggle things like talking on the phone, cooking, caring for children, and any number of other activities. Then again, if you think about it, when you're watching a movie that you're *really* into, you don't like being interrupted either, right? With a man, it's a physiological difference.

So if you're trying to get his attention while he's busy doing

something else (and the attention doesn't involve something like, say, the house burning down), your best bet is to wait until he's done with whatever has his mind in a vice-grip at the moment.

Possible Solutions:

▶ When you sense that your man is getting distant for no apparent reason, just let him have that space instead of trying to ask him what's wrong or why he's avoiding you.

▶ *Never demand* his love or attention. Instead *try to do things that will naturally attract it*. You're a woman; you're intuitive and creative. Just think of the things you did that attracted him to you before. I'm sure that you didn't crowd him, right? Most men don't stay with women who do. There's a fine balance between letting him know you want to be with him, and pushing to let him know to such an extent you're literally hanging all over him at any given moment. Try and imagine a leech. That is not something you want to be seen as.

▶ The best way to let him know you feel hurt by some of the things he does is to do so gently, and even indirectly. Don't indicate that you're frustrated angry, or even lonely. When he looks at you, smile, but don't do anything overtly, and control your expression and body movements so it doesn't indicate extreme need. You want him to know that you want to be close to him without making him feel you're desperate and can't do anything without him. You might even say something like:

“Honey, just wanted to let you know that I feel hurt when you're avoiding me sometimes. However, I also want you to understand that if you need space, it's ok. I don't mind giving that to you.”

Note: Don't say this when he's actually busy, because it will be just

another interruption.

▶ The time to really catch his attention is when he isn't busy. Remain pleasant, and pleasing. Wait until the time when he's done with whatever it is he's doing.

How do I help him understand and fulfill my needs?

Learn to understand first if you want to be understood. A lot of women want their man to understand their situation without giving any focus to his situation first. Understand him as a man and how he works first. Once you do, you will realize that he will naturally try to meet your needs.

It's only when your insecurities get the upper hand that you're prone to thinking he doesn't *want* you at all and that he is ignoring your needs. It's your nature to nurture and love and give, more so than his as a man, with the exception that a man will go to the ends of the world to protect and take care of the woman he loves, and his children.

All it takes is an understanding of how to keep being that giving woman in a way that doesn't undermine you. The formula is very simple yet it's extremely difficult to implement because, being humans, we naturally want our own needs met first.

Understanding him and using your innate skills as a woman to deliver concrete expressions of love without expecting anything back immediately is the golden key that guards the solid core of the life in your relationship.

If you can't give without expecting something specific in return, then you'll never be really happy. That's just manipulation. Relationships are indeed give and take, but not every "give" necessarily warrants an immediate return on that investment.

And it shouldn't. If changing diapers and taking care of a child demanded an instant return for that care, all parents would give up long before the baby could crawl let alone walk. There are times when you just do something because it's right, and may never get what might be considered a return for it.

Loving and productive communication involves knowing how to talk about things that are difficult to say and difficult to hear and doing so without making each other miserable. Both of you have to be able to share hurt feelings without creating *more* hurt feelings.

There are times when you have to literally bite your tongue (you might want to have lots of pain meds nearby) and listen, even while you're bursting to make yourself heard. There are times when you continue to talk in order to help him understand, even when you're tired of talking. Basically, it's learning when to speak, when not to speak, and how to speak. Sounds a lot like "hear no evil, speak no evil, see no evil" doesn't it?

For a man and a woman to meet each other's needs, it takes a deeper understanding of one another, as well as understanding of what their relationship is based on. There are needs a woman has that a man must meet and should want to meet out of his love for her, and the same goes for a woman.

This journey of self-understanding and understanding the other to the best both can muster is a life-long adventure. As long as you understand that, and where you're coming from, as well as where he's coming from, it will all work out.

Why does it seem that he never does what I tell him to do?

This usually happens when you demand your partner to do something instead of requesting him. This is where our human frailty comes into play again. Think about it. Do you prefer that

someone *demand*s something of you, or that they ask? The same goes for a man, and maybe even more so. So, remember, always ask and never tell.

And watch that tone of voice! It matters. Men are super-sensitive to tones, inflections, body movements, glances, and even the words used. Men don't want to be married to their mom, and women don't want dictators. When it comes to being intimately close, it's *always* best to ask, never tell. Intimacy requires trust. Demands kill trust.

Requests show caring and respect, demands indicate that the trust of a loving relationship has died. Essentially the person making demands is saying he/she can't trust the other to meet the request. You want to affirm your man's worth and abilities and not be a drill instructor. (Are you listening? No place for a bullhorn here.)

You want him to know he's worthwhile to you, that what he does or can do is something you value. Only a dictator demands, not a lover. No man wants the woman he loves and feels safe with to be a dictator. So, instead of treating him like a slave (put away the shackles, girls) treat him like the man you fell in love with in the first place: a man who has choices and makes good ones, especially with and for you.

Why does he keep getting angry with me?

A man's anger is often a response to feeling disrespected by his wife or girlfriend. He may not come out and say, "Stop it, you're disrespecting me!" But, there's a good likelihood that he feels hurt by something that you have done or said that has humiliated him or left him feeling like you see him as "less" than the man he is.

Let him cool off while he's angry. Once he's calm, you can try approaching him. Be sure you're calm and reasonable as well. Apologize, and say something like:

“I’m sorry if something I’ve done makes you angry. Could you please tell me exactly what it is that bothers you? I’ll do what I can on my part to make it better.”

Note: if you notice him start to become agitated when you approach him, wait. Maybe he’s still working it through inside himself.

Do unto him, as you would have him do unto you. There’s that Golden Rule that we often forget in our closest relationships. We all want to be treated with respect. Most of us don’t believe we are respected as much as we deserve. If you’re ever the parent of a teen, you’ll *really* understand that. The best way to change that is to start treating him with respect in everything you do and say. You can still let him know if you’re feeling hurt, but the way you do it will make all the difference.

Why are men so afraid of intimacy and commitment?

It’s not that men can’t commit, although there are some that can’t. We won’t discuss those. Men can and do commit in many ways. They commit to their jobs, their parents and other family members, and to friends. And they actually crave intimacy; it’s a driving force in them to do so.

Men don’t fear the idea of commitment, what they’re afraid of is making an exclusive commitment with a shrew of a woman, a woman who, because of her extreme unhealthy neediness, can drain the life out of them. It’s much like spiritual vampirism, if you can picture that.

If he thinks you’re a woman like that, it’s going to be almost impossible to convince him to commit no matter how many tricks you use to convince him. The best thing is to stop trying. Stop beating him up emotionally about what he’s doing or not doing that makes you so miserable. Stop being miserable in the first place, at least not without a really good cause.



If it's come to the point that he already thinks you're the wrong woman, then he's right. You *are* the wrong woman, and the same goes for you. If you have reached a point where you feel he's not the right man for you, then he most likely isn't. If he's decided you're the wrong woman for him, then he's *clearly* the wrong man for you.

Why does he never remember the mistakes he made?

This has to do with the actual differences in a man's and a woman's brain. Women will often hold onto the memory of an emotional event, while men tend to let it go. This is also why women can multi-task better than men. It has its pluses and minuses.

Men often move on less scarred from a traumatic event and more readily forgive when it comes to something a woman might say or do that has hurt them. On the other hand, women unless they're careful to understand and not do this, hold onto offenses and hurts way beyond what may be necessary.

Why doesn't he give me a clear answer when I ask him something regarding our relationship?

Here's where it may be important to exercise patience. Many guys have difficulty expressing their thoughts and emotions. Have you ever watched two men who are very close friends? If so, have you noticed that they joke around a lot, maybe even commiserate a bit with each other about whatever it is they're experiencing in their lives, which can include their wives or girlfriends as much as difficulties at work?

But you'll rarely see them crying on each other's shoulders, and you'll never see them sharing their most intimate thoughts or feelings like women do. This is why he needs you. Guys want to



share their feelings but need more time to actually find words to express it better. Guys think one thing through several times over before they express it to you. So it's important to be patient in this regard.

*I show lots of love but he doesn't seem to be happy
around me.*

One of the best ways you can show love is to be on your guard to find ways to encourage and support him. You should be his best admirer, over and above anyone else. It doesn't take a lot for a man to feel belittled, especially in a relationship. He is on the lookout about how she sees him or what she is thinking about him, even when he's distant from his partner.

Without even realizing it, he is on the constant search for instances which might indicate that his woman doesn't think that highly of him. A man can think internally talk himself into feeling miserable unless you give him constant re-assurance and a lot of encouragement that he is doing a great job in the relationship as a man.

Vocalizing how you believe in whatever he's working to achieve as well as showing it in your attitude and actions works as the most powerful aphrodisiac you can imagine with him. He can't help but feel your love and respect.

With unconditional support, a man's confidence skyrockets in a relationship and he will work harder on bettering himself to provide for you and meet your needs even more.

Why does he say I talk too much?

“Women use two to three times more words to describe a certain thing in comparison to men” is an old cliché. And, unfortunately, this can be true. Men, however, are more purpose-oriented and need to know the main point of the conversation before it even starts. Therefore, you shouldn’t be surprised when a man feels overwhelmed with all the words and little details, as frustrating for you as it may be.

A man becomes exhausted and soon loses interest if you fill your conversations with all sorts of tidbits and extra details. Instead, think of how children, teenagers, and elders often need things stated simply and succinctly. Try making it easier for him to process all this wonderful information you want to share with him.

Why doesn't he seem to recognize that he's in a relationship; that he has commitments?

This is definitely a sore spot with women. But the fact is that just because a man is in a relationship doesn't mean the two aren't individuals that have separate interests and activities. The same should go for you, as well. At times, it may seem as if he's ignoring you in favor of these other outside interests – almost as if he's trying to live a life separate from you.

There are two ways to deal with this:

- First off, just because you're in a relationship doesn't mean that's become all of who you are (or him, either). Therefore, you should have your own friends and activities that you enjoy, and not to the exclusion or detriment of your relationship, of course, but to keep you a whole and healthy person mentally and emotionally. In this way, you continue to bring more to your relationship over time.

- You can also say something like,

“Honey, I know you enjoy going out with your friends, and that it’s important for you. Just please don’t forget that I sometimes can miss the one-on-one moments we can have and have had before. I’d really love to do something with you that we both could enjoy when you feel like it.”

This is another great loving gift. Let your man be different from you and free him from demands and expectations. When you do that, you give him the freedom to fulfill those expectations in ways that may well exceed your own.

He keeps doing things I hate. How do I stop him?

Oh boy, you messed up and forgot something very important which should have been done ages ago. In the inebriations of first love, you didn’t set proper boundaries that made it clear what’s ok with you and what isn’t. Failing to clarify specific do’s and don’ts may lead to finding yourself faced with varying situations where he keeps doing and saying things that make you uncomfortable even when you’ve told him not to.

For example: Let’s say every time he’s with you in public, he makes eyes at other women, and maybe even whistles and flirts! Of course this would and should bother you. This is how you can approach it, when you’re alone together:

“Honey, I know that at the beginning of our relationship, I didn’t say anything when you flirted with other females, but now I want to let you know that it deeply hurts me. I find it humiliating and degrading and am embarrassed by it. While I know I don’t control you or your decisions, I’d still appreciate it if you kept my feelings in mind.”

If he continues to do whatever it is you've shared your feelings about, then take some space and leave him alone for the time being. This may sound a bit harsh, but if he doesn't seem to understand your feelings and needs and completely neglects them, then it's obvious he doesn't really care about you in the first place.

It's not your responsibility to change him, anyway. He has to want to do it himself because he knows he needs to. In this way, a little distance and silence, in moderation can help. Use it until you calm down and can be rational about the situation. What you don't want is a power play where nobody wins.

Why can't I talk to him like I talk to my girlfriends?

He's a man. If you share things with him that you should rather be sharing with your female friends, he's going to want to help you fix whatever he thinks is wrong. You may just want to vent, cry on a sympathetic shoulder or even need a little attention. Nothing's wrong with that. Just don't depend on your man to act like one of your female friends. It's already been established that men are woefully lacking in that area.

How do I know when to give him space?

If things have been going south for some time in your relationship, let it go for a while. Stop trying to fix or control it. This is the best thing you can do for yourself. Stop focusing on what he's doing or what you're not getting from him. Often, when you just let it all roll off your shoulders it will find a way of fixing itself, or at least becoming less of a problem than you think it may be. Either way, it eases the stress. And right now, it's the stress that's breaking the relationship. The more respect and freedom you give your guy, the more he'll appreciate being with you. The same goes for him.

Sometimes, men need more time alone than women do. Try and be happy to allow him his time alone. It's a "guy thing." When he bounces back, things will appear to be much better. And remember, he'll always come back, when you let go like that.

Why is it okay for him to mention other women but I can never talk about another guy without making him jealous?

Yes, it's completely unfair of him if he does this. For one thing, he shouldn't mention other women around you, especially if it's in a way that makes you feel insecure somehow. As for being jealous, this usually happens because men are territorial. Guys are naturally protective of what they view as theirs, which should never be confused with being suspicious of their partners.

They think and feel things on a completely different level therefore if their partner shows any attention to another guy, they get very uneasy. It's a biological thing. If you're involved with him and you strike up a conversation with another guy or come into physical contact with another guy, it will make him feel uneasy. While he may not show instant aggression, he can definitely be disturbed heavily by it.

A man usually thinks "I must be lacking something if she's so interested in that guy." And sometimes men get aggressive, but only hotheads and severely insecure men actually resort to violence or confrontations. Let's hope your guy isn't of that sort, or you may feel like crawling under the nearest rock, or at worst, end up bailing him out of jail.

He probably just has this twinge of fear that some other man could replace him, and that makes him feel a bit threatened. The good news is if he's got a healthy self-esteem and if you've managed to make him feel well loved and respected, the twinge shouldn't last. How each man deals with that concern is on a case-by-case basis.

Why is he always trying to control the relationship?

Ever notice that guys feel women are control freaks sometimes? Well, the fact is, guys have this innate need to “feel” in control. This doesn’t mean they have to always get their way, but they do need to feel that things won’t happen unless they “allow” them to happen. How many times have you or your friends said something about wanting “take charge” men who “are heads of the household”?

Guys hear those things and take notice, and sometimes they take them to heart more than others. When a man does that, this can create insecurities when he thinks he’s losing that control. Plus, women frown upon men who submit to no control at all. A man who can submit to right authority is one best suited to control. That’s the balance.

So, how’s the best way to handle that? Think about it. Would you want your man making a major decision without checking with you, or at least letting you know before it’s done? Probably not, since it’s safe to say that no matter how much you feel that you shouldn’t have to consult your guy for little decision you make or thing you do, it’s probably in the best interest of your relationship to at least talk to him about it and ask him how it will make him feel.

I don’t know of a man who doesn’t respond with an open mind and heart to whatever the woman he loves wants, as long as it’s reasonable. Sure, there might be times when you have to trump him, but it should be seldom to none.

Why does he think I’m trying to change him?

Well, in his world, that’s exactly what you’re trying to do by asking him to do things he might not be comfortable or used to doing. If you want your guy to do something, usually you can work your wiles to get him to go along. And boy, he loves those wiles, too. The

trick is doing so in a way that he feels in control of the situation and that he know that he isn't being pushed into anything.

Do not try trickery or arguments to make him do something your way. In fact, that's the best way to make him hate you even more. What a man is looking for, is someone who loves him for who he really is, foibles and all. He knows he's not perfect, and perhaps he's actually thinking that the woman he's fallen in love with is just the perfect one to help him work some of those imperfections out, if nothing else than through the inspiration she gives him by her love.

But you don't dare depend on that for your own happiness. You can't expect him to cater to every one of your needs, just as it wouldn't be right if he were to expect the same of you. If he does give in to your requests for the time being out of pressure from your end, it can raise serious difficulties later. And there's a good solid chance he will resent it and you, in the long run.

On the more minor end of the spectrum, women often try to change their men to some degree early on in the relationship. Some try to get him to wear a different style of clothing, and he may even go along with it. After all, few men have any sort of good fashion sense unless their mothers have somehow helped in that area. A woman may want him to vigorously take up hobbies she has and do so pleasure. Others meet him as a smoker then harp on him about quitting.

There can be all kinds of changes women may "demand" of men. It's one in a line of many battles between the sexes. Woman meets guy, likes guy, dates guy, moves in with guy, marries guy and then immediately sets in to change said guy into a whole *other* guy. You want to tear your hair out at times! No wonder this causes friction!

Why does he tell me what to wear and what not to wear?

Well, the fact is, he shouldn't have to tell you what to wear or not to wear. But it sometimes happens. Sometimes, and you might want to

stay away from this guy, a guy wants you to dress provocatively in public: Can we say 'pimp?' And it might be confusing that the same guy who found you so provocative and attractive in sexy clothing doesn't want you to dress that way anymore once he has you in a relationship. Other women like this idea because it shows he cares.

In general, women shouldn't dress provocatively in the first place, especially if they are in relationships with men who may be a little less confident. He loves your curves. He just doesn't want every Tom, Dick and Harry seeing them. Remember, guys tend to be possessive, and though he probably doesn't mind you looking classy, that's a very different thing from "sexy," and he doesn't want to have to be spending every minute out on the town with you making sure nobody else is looking at his "property!"

Guys vary. For example: Some guys *want* you to dress provocatively so that they can gloat about the fact that they have you all to themselves (again, be wary though of the pimp type guy who may want more than other guys to just look.) Other guys may see it as you having no respect for yourself.

There was a time when if a woman dressed provocatively, *everyone* knew what that meant and no decent man would have anything serious to do with her. Others see it as a form of manipulation, or trying to get what you want from a man. The last kind of guy sees it as you having zero respect for him as well as yourself. Ultimately, it really is a reflection of how you see yourself.

Can I tell him about my past relationships?

Rule of thumb: don't talk about ex-boyfriends. Bringing up ex-*anything's* should only be done minimally and with as little information as possible. Not that you want to hide anything, but you also don't want to lay the seeds for anything negative, either. There's a threefold reason for this. One: If it was a good relationship, it could put pressure on him to feel he has to "live up" to someone else.

Men don't like that any better than a woman might in relation to an ex-girlfriend or wife. They don't even like to be compared with his mother! Two: maybe not at first, but eventually, he may wonder if you will become unhappy with him and maybe talk bad about him someday to someone else. And three: it can unknowingly give him ammunition to throw in your face in the future, should he be angry with you as in "No wonder things didn't work out with your ex. I see how you are now!" If he asks about them, keep it short, brief and nonchalant, as if the only thing that matters is him, as it should.

But really, this rule applies to bringing up almost *all* other guys (with the exception of your perfect father, of course), whether you were ever in a relationship with the guys or not. Don't talk about how funny or smart someone else is. Instead - if you want to share about something specific that was funny - mention that without nailing it to a specific person.

An exception would be the standup comedian on television or a club you both went to. *Never* allow other guys to touch you. Exception, it's a family reunion and everyone's giving out friendly hugs to everyone else. Most of all *don't* flirt. This one quickly drives guys over the edge.

Don't *ever* make yourself out to be the flirty type. Note: if you flirted with him, that's a two-edged sword as well, since he well knows what you're capable of. There's a good chance you'll find yourself suddenly abandoned if he finds you flirting with other guys. If nothing else, you might have to face a good dressing-down of your actions. Neither one is pleasant or desirable. This could seem like a double standard in light of what he might do. I feel your pain.

Don't even compliment other guys a lot in front of him. He will begin to hate them and you over time if you keep doing this regularly.

I'm using the word "hate" to prove a point. Imagine your guy

talking a lot about another woman. After a while, if not immediately, this would weigh on you. As sensitive as a woman is over something like that, a man is even more so because of his natural predilection to territorialism. Gauge your dealings with the opposite sex by your relationship with your man, and he will likely follow suit, or at least do so more than the average guy will.

We do love each other but we can't stop fighting.

Some people see fighting as a sign that you *do* love each other. Let me rephrase that. It shouldn't be fighting. It should be disagreeing. Arguing within reason can indicate that the two of you care about problems that arise. It's *how* the two of you deal with those problems that can set you apart from couples that *don't* love each other.

These "fights" can happen when you're trying to make your partner understand your needs and your partner is trying to make you understand *his* needs. You both feel that you're giving more and getting less in return. Disagreements pop up from time to time and fights happen. Now, this is a simplistic way of seeing how things can be, since a disagreement can stem from most anything, and not only from trying to have your personal needs or desires met. They happen to us all.

What's important is to recognize when fights are getting out of hand. For example if you two are:

- Bringing up topics that have always been "off limits"
- Fighting in front of the children (HUGE NONO)
- Fighting in front of friends, family and coworkers.
- Bringing up embarrassing topics (such as sexual secrets)
- Taunting ("I dare you to say it")
- Nasty name calling

If you can't seem to stop fighting, then it's time to reconsider your relationship. This is more than a basic differences concern, as your whole relationship may have become toxic, for each other and those around you. Differences may have come to such a point that

neither of you can or are willing to compromise in which case you could end up living in a nightmarish relationship, thinking it will get better when it clearly won't. At the very least, counseling is in order, either individually, or as a couple.

Why does he stare at other women?

To put it succinctly, men are visual creatures. No, this isn't an excuse for blatant staring and caring little about you or your feelings. But it's a cold, hard fact.

Men struggle with visual temptation. It's a constant and ongoing battle for them from puberty and on. It's the whole focus behind the fashion and beauty products industries.

Girls become very aware of it at an early age, too. Some are encouraged by their own mothers or other female figures (magazines, billboards and television are the worst culprits) to start primping pretty, from painted fingernails and toenails, etc.

Our whole culture feeds that obsession of beauty and desirability to the detriment of both men and women. I do realize some women dress a certain way as a celebration of having lost weight. They want to show off their better figures. Some dress a certain way because it makes them feel sexier about *themselves*. Every woman is sexy in her own way. But the tragic fact is that if a woman dresses in something form fitting and revealing, she wants men to look, period. It's a matter of how the men behave when they *do* see her that counts.

Many women don't understand men. Men are wired to notice and appreciate, but to what degree he shows respect for you, all women in general, and himself when he does look varies from man to man.

How do I show him that he is absolutely wrong about

something?

In one of the greatest understatements ever: Men can't handle being told they're wrong, especially from their women. They don't deal with it well in the least. After all, he's supposed to be your shining knight in white armor who raced up on his white steed and swept you off your feet, and bound to protect you and care for you for the rest of your natural lives.

Oh, I know, you both realize he's not exactly all that, but even still, being told he's wrong clashes with every fiber of his being. Because of that, you'll just distance yourself from him if you're dead set on telling him he's wrong about anything. So, whenever you feel that inexplicable urge to let him know how wrong he is, you need to consider the following:

1. *How important is it to be right?*
2. *What is likely to happen if I insist on being right (and blaming my partner)?*
2. *Would I prefer to feel loved or be right?*
3. *Will he change if I keep telling him how wrong he is, or will he fight back?*
4. *Will this help or harm my relationship in the long run?*

Once you answer those questions honestly, you may realize that you don't really *need* to tell him he's wrong. It may be only an opinion he has which is right according to him. It's pretty similar to an opinion you have which might be wrong according to him. You're free to think what you think most of the time, as is he. Besides, there's a good chance if he's really wrong, and it's not a life-threatening thing, he'll find out some other way.

His actions upset me so much. What do I do?

If you feel frustrated by his actions, the first thing you need to ask yourself is this:

“Why are his actions setting me off? Why am I feeling so disappointed? Is it because my needs aren’t being met?”

Ask yourself if it’s right to feel disappointed and hate him just because he doesn’t do as you please or he doesn’t fulfill certain expectations you have.

It could very well be some deeper issue that you need to address within yourself. You can’t always change his actions towards you, but you can definitely control *your* reactions.

He appears so cold, even after we have a confrontation.

Why are men like this?

Bingo, something else to realize. Men are more disturbed by emotional confrontation than women, who seem more at ease with it, and are even better at it. Men are overwhelmed with emotional confrontation. No, I’m not saying women get off on confrontation. I’m saying that they deal with it better and tend to get better results out of it. Note: This doesn’t take into account abusive relationships where women are often faced with things very overwhelming.

Men become confused during such confrontations, sometimes totally losing track of what is going on. To men, such conflict is like drowning in unfamiliar waters. Men may appear calmer during a conflict, but don’t be fooled by this. Men will stay stressed *after* a confrontation, while women’s levels of stress fall after an argument. By venting, women essentially get it out of their system to a higher

and more efficient degree.

That's why it's natural to see a man withdraw during or after an argument. He internalizes it more. On the other hand, conflict can be a way that a woman can ease the stress, a way of venting frustrations. Essentially, it's her way of "getting it out."

Why do men avoid arguments?

They do this because a man wants to do what's right and is afraid of upsetting his partner. Women have a completely opposite reaction to this in fact, and this very silence makes a woman even more upset. In her world, she feels talking more will help the issue but men usually feel that talking less and staying silent will make the issue go away.

So it's no wonder that when a man witnesses his partner is starting to get upset, he tries to get even more distant and silent because he doesn't want to further upset her.

So the big lesson here is this – It might seem like he is trying to avoid talking to you when the reality is that he is trying to avoid a confrontation that usually overwhelms him.

Why do men cheat?

Excuse me. Both men and women cheat. Let's get that out in the open. There's an old wives tale that "all men are dogs" and that it's impossible for them to commit faithfully to one woman. That may well be true for some men. But facts show that it's *just* as true for *just as many women*. And most times, men have affairs for the very same reason that women do: to obtain the attention they feel is missing in their life.

And, yes, there are those who do it just because they're uncaring and have little to no conscience. And this goes for both men *and* women. Since you're reading this book, it's safe to say you're not one of those.

What do I do when my man won't open up?

If you have tried all of the strategies mentioned in this book, doing all you can to show your love and care and respect in ways that don't damage, honing your patience to perfection, and you still don't get a positive response, then you may be dealing with someone who is an exception or has already given up. That's a huge red light, and you may well want to sit back and re-evaluate your relationship and situation. It could very well mean that further down the line, you'd have more issues in the relationship.

Is there a way I can "read his mind"?

There isn't a magic wand which will help you figure out every little detail. However, there are ways to know how to get some idea of what's going in his head. Whenever something confuses you about him, simply focus on what he's doing. Whenever there is any conflict between what a man says and what he does, always, *always* ignore the "what he says" part.

If you remember to focus on what a man is doing, you won't ever need to be confused by what he's saying. I'm not saying to ignore everything he says. What I *am* saying is that if you're confused and he's talking one way and behaving in another completely different way at the same time, go with what he's doing over what he's saying. Actions always tell the truth.

There's no point in using a man's words to figure out what's cooking in his mind. If he's saying he is fine but is pulling away or starting to get distant from you, then do not trust his word. His actions speak



the actual truth. Note: Don't tell him that his words and actions don't match; keep it to yourself or else he will do even more confusing things in the future. Simply base your actions and decisions on what he's doing.

It seems like we're growing apart with time, and sometimes I think it's his fault. What can I do?

Women usually make several mistakes when such a thing happens. Rather than discussing it with their partner, they start blaming their partner. They accuse him for not caring or listening, and any number of other things.

Even though you might feel that it's his fault, it's never a good idea to hold him responsible for the way you are feeling in the relationship. Because when you think he is to blame, all you will do is pin point his mistakes and will try to make him realize how wrong he is.

In return, he will get a lot more defensive and this will make everything further difficult for you in the relationship.

The best thing to do under such a situation is to never tell him what he is doing wrong rather talk about yourself and your feelings. Instead of saying "You make me feel horrible when you do this," say "I feel horrible whenever such a thing happens in the relationship."

This small shift will make huge differences in your relationship.

I hate it when he spends more time with his friends than me. Is there a solution to this?



Men need private time to be left alone. It's that fraternity thing. They need their own hobbies, interests and/or sports, and male friends. That's why male clubs used to be so popular. Women had their things, too: sewing or cooking clubs and volunteer work. Boy, has the world changed! If you try to take this away from them, they will start to hate you for it. Maybe not right away, but definitely as time passes by.

By understanding that he needs time alone and allowing for it, it helps him to be a better man, for you. How would you feel if your man tried to control your life and dictate who you can or cannot speak to? Psychologists and social experts say that when a man starts wanting to isolate you from your friends and family, that it is a sure sign of an abusive relationship. Therefore, you should let him have his time whenever such a need arises.

Is sex important to a man?

There have been certain relationships where sex wasn't possible, due to very real physical limitations, and yet the relationship was a happy and fulfilling one. Why? There are so many other ways to show love and desire and affection.

But, for a healthy man, sex means more than "just sex." Sex provides a sense of validation to them. This is probably not discussed usually, but if a woman stops having sex with a man, it affects him deeply more so than most can imagine. When you stop being physical with him, he internally thinks that you don't want him anymore and are rejecting him.

On the flip side! Both men *and* women have urges, temptations, hormones and libidos. Both men *and* women have times where they just want to get a "release" and not necessarily get into the emotional ends of sex. It's often said and thought that men want little more than sex, and that just plain *isn't* true. Again, one of those myths.

Men and women cheat. Men and women both do it for emotional reasons, and they do it for sexual reasons. It could be said that men and women both feel the same way about sex, with some rather significant missing details that both women and society, as a whole, don't take into account:

- ▶ Men are visual creatures. Women on the other hand aren't visual. Thoughts and feelings are *their* primary stimuli.
- ▶ Men, from the beginning of time, are wired to want to "spread his seed."
- ▶ Women require being warmed up sexually. This is how *they're* wired. Men, on the other hand, don't require much more than physical stimulation and he's ready to go.

Ok, big pause and gulp to gather up the strength to say this. Not meaning to offend your sensibilities or anything, but I just have to shoot it out there because it's a fact: Women are, by *far*, the largest demographic purchasing personal pleasure items. No one, well almost no one (there's always a few) bats an eye knowing about or hearing about a woman with 6 or 7 (or more) "toys." Men, on the other hand, are generally mocked and made fun of for having "toys."

Because of this, women get their urges and can more easily and readily take care of those needs. Men are much more limited and nothing he can do feels anywhere near the real thing. With women's "toys," they're not only *like* the real thing, but often seem *better* than the real thing. Ok, exception: there are women who *do* want more than just the physical release. In which case, the 'real' thing is ever so much better and fulfilling.

Women sometimes take care of themselves extremely often, and while men do too, they can't do anything comparable to the living, breathing, real thing. As a result, men more often *seem* to seek it out. They don't get any more or any less urges than women. They just seem to get the urge for the *real thing* more often than



women. Make sense now?

So what do men really want after all?

If men were allowed the freedom of speech, they will readily admit that they need a world where they aren't put into categories and labels. They want to act and be like men, but they don't want to be judged or ridiculed for the male habits they display.

They want to be in a relationship but with the right woman, someone who understands them and doesn't try to cage them into a certain lifestyle.

Final Words...

I hope I've been able to lay out a good roadmap to the male mind. I know I can't possibly answer each and every question. Of course, not all men fit these generalities. Still, it's a good place to start from. And it can sure help you understand things when you see some of these happening in your own relationship. Men are foreign critters, I know. As smart as you women are, I'm sure it won't be long before you're able to work it all out to the improvement of your life and your relationship.

Men aren't as easy and transparent as society makes them out to be, and it would benefit men, their partners and society, once that's realized. They are far more complex and intricate than most give them credit for.

There are two things that can improve this situation. Society could either relax its perceptions and expectations for men and allow them to be comfortable in their own skins just being themselves. By doing so, men could actually be the men their women need and want them to be. Or, men could cease to care what society thinks and just be themselves anyway.

Personally, I vote for the second option. It's way more fun, and leaves men where they actually want to be anyway, in control of themselves. Would that make programs like this obsolete? Who knows? Somehow I doubt it, but hey, we can hope.

Knowledge is only useful when it is acted on

Being the smart woman that you are, it won't take you long to figure out what you need and can utilize in the concepts presented here.

Every relationship is different. Every relationship can always be improved, no matter how good it already is. Kudos for the time and effort you took in following this program because you really want to understand your man. Most people start training programs or read books and never finish them.

You've made it further, showing you have both the courage and tenacity to see things through. You've learned a lot, you've taken the time and the first step. I know you'll act on what you've learned so far in this course. Just know that I'm cheering you all the way.

Good luck!