



Make Him BEG For Your Attention

*75 Communication Secrets For Captivating Men
To Get The Love And Commitment You Deserve*

BRUCE BRYANS

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Commitment You Deserve

By Bruce Bryans

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As a way of saying “thanks” for your purchase, I’m offering a free dating guide that’s exclusive to my book readers. The book is called, ***Dating Deal Breakers That Drive Men Away***, and in it you’ll discover the most common deal-breaking “red flags” high-quality men watch for when dating a woman.

You can get it here at: <http://www.brucebryans.com/her-free/>

In this free guide you’ll not only learn what these red flags look like to men, but also how to best avoid them in order to get the guy you want and KEEP him interested.

Again, here’s the link to get it free: <http://www.brucebryans.com/her-free/>

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Introduction

A woman's physical beauty might be enough to captivate a man's attention...but it is not enough to keep it. Beauty fades...fast. And no matter how gorgeous a woman may appear to a man at first, if her underlying attitude and disposition are not equally as beautiful or more so, she won't hold his attention for long. A woman's charm can also be misleading. Charm is deceptive; it changes, and for the most part it is self-serving. The better the man, the less a woman's charms works on him. Therefore charm, like physical beauty, loses its potency if the very *nature* of the woman is of less quality.

So what has the power to captivate a man and KEEP him captivated over the long years of a committed relationship? What power do some women possess that makes them such a prize for high-quality men? What separates the millions of gorgeous, perpetually single women from those who may not look like super-models but have the ability to hypnotize the best of men?

The answer is simple: *It's how a woman communicates with a man that draws him close to her and KEEPS him there.* The way you handle a man's emotions will dictate just how successful you are at getting him to open his heart. Because like I say in my book, [*101 Things Your Dad Never Told You About Men*](#), in order to give you the love and commitment you deserve, a man has to open his heart to you. And the key to those doors lies in how you communicate with him. In short, the more attractive your communication is to a man the more desirable being intimate with you (on all levels) is for him. Read that last sentence again.

There are two types of women in this world when it comes to communicating

with men. There are those women who are EASY to communicate with and then there are those women that are a ridiculously DIFFICULT to communicate with. It's that simple. Some women just "get it" and they've *matured* (read that word again) in the way they communicate with men, especially the man they love.

I've had conversations with women with whom I had no romantic interest in and in short order I also had no other kind of interest in them either. Some women turn men off just by opening their mouths because everything that comes out of it seems cruel and even callous. On the other hand, I've had conversations with women with whom, once again, I had no romantic interest in but they still had something mesmerizing about them that captivated my undivided attention. It had nothing to do with how these women looked or smelled, but it was their interactions with me that made the big difference.

Assertiveness Vs. Aggressiveness

Let me be as simple and straightforward as I can here. It's quite possible to be assertive with a man without having to be aggressive. To a high-quality man, an assertive woman is VERY attractive because she knows what she wants and is comfortable communicating her needs in a healthy way that doesn't jeopardize the relationship. In other words, assertiveness usually equates to high self-esteem, which is sexy.

On the other hand, aggressiveness is quite unattractive. Excessive nagging, bossiness, and other forceful ways of communicating indicate that a woman is more concerned about getting her way than reaching win-win solutions. Aggression isn't a "bad" thing; it just has its place. And high-quality men, those who assert their boundaries, lead well, and respect others, rarely fall head over heels in love with more aggressive types of women.

As I stated earlier, a good man doesn't want a doormat, but he doesn't want an overly demanding devil-in-a-skirt either. When it comes to relationships, most

women would admit that they prefer a man who knows what he wants, speaks his mind, and asserts himself over a super aggressive, self-absorbed alpha male or a passive-aggressive Mr. Walk-All-Over-Me Nice Guy. The same applies to men, as we prefer being in a relationship with a self-confident, tender, and dignified woman over the super aggressive, hell-on-high-heels types or the Mrs. I'll-Do-Whatever-You-Say Nice Girls. One group may be a lot of fun, at first, but way too stressful to deal with in a long-term relationship, and the other group is easy to handle, but...boring. The point is, you can be soft and tender and still be a force to be reckoned with if your boundaries are crossed. You don't have to be one or the other when it comes to dating and relating with men.

Why Single, Dating, and Married Women NEED This Book

This book is for women who have difficulty communicating with men. Whether you're a single woman trying to find Mr. Right in a sea of mediocre suitors or a married woman who wants to improve the quality of her marriage, this little book can help. Chances are, you've read just about everything you can on how to keep a man interested in you. Women's magazines often give advice like "be your best self", "focus on you", or "put on that mini-skirt he loves." While these things do work to keep a man interested, they're surface level tactics that only work temporarily.

If you've ever had a man shut you out or shut down on you during an argument, it's because you failed to communicate respectfully. If you want to be able to communicate your needs and wants to a man without him losing his temper or ignoring you completely, you must learn how to talk to a man, *gracefully*. If a man doesn't feel respected when you communicate with him it's impossible to connect with him on an intimate level. And without that intimate connection, there's nothing you can do to keep him captivated by you. Men give their undivided attention to those who respect them.

The woman who knows how to communicate with men can influence the man she wants without resorting to “that mini-skirt he loves.” A man craves the attention of a graceful woman who knows exactly what to say to him, when to say it, and most importantly, *how* to say it to get what SHE wants. Men love being *gracefully influenced* by the woman they adore.

So if you’re interested in learning how to talk to a man so that he opens up to you, listens to you, and willingly gives you what you want without a fuss, this book will help you to communicate with men more effectively.

What this book proposes are various tips and ideas to help you improve your communication skills with your husband, boyfriend, or even a potential Mr. Right. As you read through this book, keep in mind that I’m not trying to get women to communicate like men. No. Where’s the fun in that? The masculine desires the feminine; therefore my job isn’t to make your way of communicating more masculine. In fact, the aim of this book is the complete opposite. I’m going to show you how the masculine mind translates incoming female communication. You can use your feminine ways to influence him in a positive way. I’m also not going to show you how to be a doormat. High-quality men want women who present a *healthy* challenge. However, there is an art form to communicating your boundaries with the man you love without sounding like a nagging mother.

As you read through this book make sure that you highlight any important points that resonate with you. Don’t treat this book like a novel by just whizzing through it. You’ll retain more of these paradigm-shifting principles if you use this book like a communication guide to help you understand how men translate the words that come out of a woman’s mouth (as well as her body language) and what to do to ensure that your man responds the way you want him to. And as long as you intend to *apply* even just a few of these seventy-five strategies, you’ll get far more out of this book than you expected.

One last thing before we get started.

This book will give some women a ton of “aha!” moments and it will give others a rude awakening. Truth is, you might disagree with some of what you read in this book...at first. The reason for that is because most of this advice is ***counterintuitive*** to what’s considered typical behavior. In the books I write for men, I always tell guys to think counterintuitively when it comes to dating and relating with women because results come only after they adjust their maps to the territory. I advise them to act based on how women actually *are* instead of how they *think* or *wish* women were. The same concept applies here.

A lot of women are using incorrect maps when trying to navigate the treacherous territory of relating with men. What women often *think* or *wish* will get them results usually doesn’t simply because men *think* and *act* very contrary. So with that said, I want us to promise each other something. I’ll promise to tell you the ugly truth about what men need and how we communicate and you must promise to keep an open mind and apply what you learn in this book to your situation...*consistently*. Let your guard down and think of me as a trusted friend as you read these pages. I’m your “man in the field” and believe me, I WANT you to get better results as you communicate with the men in your life. So, do we have a deal? Good. I think we’re ready to get started.

Let’s begin, shall we?

The Secrets of Dealing with Conflict

1

**If you must criticize, do it constructively, gracefully,
and hardly at all.**

If you intend on criticizing a man, ensure that you do so constructively. A man with a healthy amount of self-esteem can usually handle criticism, especially if he's in some type of leadership position. But that doesn't mean he's going to always enjoy being criticized by his woman. In fact, he'll probably never enjoy it for the most part. Constant criticism will put your husband or boyfriend on the defensive and he'll develop the habit of NOT sharing his inner most thoughts, feelings, desires, and ambitions with you. The long-term product of your criticism and his "shutting you out" is a relationship filled with resentment and a loss of emotional connection. You can still express your feelings and get your needs met without chastising a man with your words. Remember, don't treat him like a child, treat him like a man you respect...YOUR man.

2

Make him a criticism sandwich.

Now the time may come when constructive criticism is a necessity. In those times you make him a criticism sandwich. Instead of telling your man how much he sucks, give him some praise and appreciation first, state exactly what you

think could use some improvement (do this with grace and tact), and then lavish him with more praise and appreciation. For example, if your man sucks at helping you with the dishes and you'd like for him to help out more, try something like this: *“Honey, I love how thorough you are when you do the dishes, it’s great how you pay special attention to making sure that everything’s spotless. It would be wonderful if you could help me with the dishes at least twice a week because it makes me feel like you enjoy helping me out. I think we make a great team, and I love it when you’re so thoughtful of me.”* Now, you can pick my example apart if you want, but the science behind it is sound. Any reasonable man will be more than happy to acquiesce to your request because you took the time to approach him in an attractive, non-critical manner.

3

If you need to have a serious conversation, give him a non-threatening heads up.

Telling a man, “we need to talk” might cause him to put up his defenses way before the conversation even begins. Even if you’re upset, there’s a good chance he might already know that. So try not to make him feel as if he’s in “big trouble” before a serious conversation. I’ve never met a man who says he enjoys hearing “we need to talk” from his woman. For men, this sort of phrase stirs up memories of emotional freak outs, lover’s quarrels, or a simple reminder that he’s not making you happy and that your mom was probably right about him. Okay, I’m exaggerating, but you get the picture. Men fear the worst when they hear this phrase.

4

Don’t bring up a past fault unless it’s extremely

relevant.

Bringing up something he did wrong in the past is a recipe for communication disaster. Remember, don't complain, condemn, or criticize. Bringing up old dirt to help you "win" the argument will only make him feel like crap; either causing him to shut down or get on the defensive by bringing up your old dirt as well. This is a game you don't want to play with your man if you value your sanity (and his emotional well-being). Keep it clean and focus on the present.

5

Don't bruise his ego to make a point.

Never attack a man's ego, no matter how pivotal your point may seem. If you desire a more favorable response during an argument, avoid attacking his self-image. What I mean is, if you know he has a particular insecurity about something, don't use it against him. If you do, he will blindly defend himself (or shut you out) regardless if your "point" is reasonable or not.

6

Avoid hostile facial expressions.

Nothing causes a man to throw up his defenses faster than a woman with a scowl on her face. Your body language is extremely important when communicating with a man, because nasty looks will turn him off before he even knows what's happening. Think about it. Most men have had YEARS of conditioning because of good old mom. When mom gets upset, she scowls. When mom scowls, boy knows he's in trouble. When boy knows he's in trouble, he knows punishment and/or pain usually follows. Boy does not like/want punishment or pain. Don't make a habit of showing your man just how disgusted, angry, or frustrated you

are with him before you even begin talking. If you do, he'll want to avoid communicating with you altogether just to avoid "punishment."

7

Be reasonable.

Ladies, I think we can all agree that men are just a bit more reasonable when having an argument or disagreement with the opposite sex. The reason is because most men are naturally much more pragmatic in how they see conflict. It's extremely frustrating as a man when you're trying to get your point across but she's just not *hearing* what you're saying. She hears the words that leave your mouth, but because women process information differently it means something else to them. If a man is trying to communicate with you to get you to understand his point of view, try to be more reasonable. In truth, there are varying degrees of reasonability, and I think it's a communication quality that can be developed. I've met unreasonable men and unreasonable women, and let me tell you, communicating with all who fall into this category is nearly impossible. If your husband, boyfriend, or potential beau is taking his time to help you understand his point of view, take a step back, take note of your emotions, and ensure that they're not hindering your ability to understand what he's saying. Be the woman that can listen to reason. It is a rare feminine quality, and therefore HIGHLY attractive to a man.

8

Don't expect him to argue with you on YOUR emotional level.

I'm often stupefied at how women can outthink men on their feet even when

they're emotionally compromised. When a man is emotionally compromised he either shuts down, shuts up, or...shouts. A woman on the other hand can attack, counterattack, and verbally react with amazing speed. Smart men know this. And because we know this (yes, I consider myself a "smart man"), we're not going to try to argue with you on *your* emotional level. When we lose our cool, we can't think straight. There's only one of two ways a man can go when he loses his cool, he either gets really angry or he gets really anxious. So just because he's not flying off the handle at you, crying, or embracing you passionately when you flare up does not mean he doesn't care. There's a good chance that he's really listening, but he either doesn't want to say or do something to hurt you or he hasn't the slightest clue of what to do next to bring you back to "normal." Trust me on this. The minute you lose your temper or start to break down (especially if he's the reason for it) he immediately begins searching his mind for the right words to bring you back to normal.

Some men have never been *trained* to utilize their own emotional intelligence when a woman expresses certain intense emotions. Instead of embracing her, he may sit there overthinking her every word in his head trying to find the right thing to say. He doesn't know that sometimes (most times) it's better to act than to speak. The solution? Next time let him know that you expressing yourself emotionally might be an indication that you need him to show you that he cares in some way. He may not realize that sometimes your emotional outbursts are just subconscious tests of his resolve to see if he'll always stand by you, even when you're not at your best. If you don't *tell him* what you need when you need it (and maybe remind him every so often *before* you lose it) he may never know. That is, of course, unless he reads a book like this one.

9

Understand his communication habits during conflict.

We all handle relationship conflicts differently. Some people have been brought up to confront relationship issues boldly while others were trained to just bury their feelings or blow up the relationship entirely. You and your man's communication habits for resolving conflict will determine how effective you will be at dealing with your disagreements. If he's a quiet, stoic thinker and you're a quick-to-act, emotional livewire, you're going to have some challenges. I believe that it's healthier to get things out in the open to resolve your issues as best as possible, but even I know that this isn't as easy as it sounds.

If you can first *accept* your man's communication habits (the reality of how he is) you can be more understanding with him as he tries to understand you. Trying to change a man's way of handling relationship conflicts DURING a relationship conflict is both impractical and impossible. These are actually two separate issues. It's one thing if he never remembers your anniversary (or birthday), but it's another thing if he completely mishandles your emotional discontentment.

10

During an argument, don't create an audience.

I can say this with confidence that most men - reasonable, quality men - don't like drama. No matter how angry or frustrated you get, don't give him reason to ignore or resent you because of the audience you've created. Arguments are best reserved for privacy or for a relationship counselor's office, not for the public to see. Raising your voice and throwing your hands up in the air while flailing them about like one of Jim Henson's Muppets is going to make it difficult for him to communicate with you in a rational manner, especially if he has to reprimand your behavior publicly. No man in his right mind wants to have to treat his wife or girlfriend like a misbehaving teenage daughter throwing a public temper tantrum. So don't give him a reason to. I could go on and on about this, but I

think you get the message. Don't make a spectacle of your relationship problems in public. Save your arguments for the privacy of your own home, car, or wherever.

11

Disagree respectfully.

Men don't mind being corrected or disagreed with once a woman does so with respect and politeness. Actually, let me correct that. *Reasonable* men don't mind being corrected or disagreed with, especially when communicating with the woman they love. The problem arises when a woman's way of correcting or disagreeing with a man is disrespectful or rude. What this means is observing the way you communicate with your man to ensure that you're not sending the wrong message across. It's the *message* behind what you say that he really hears. For instance, if he wants to start his own business this year but you think it's a stupid idea, for heaven's sake, don't tell him that you think it's a stupid idea. He wants your support and admiration more than anything, so the *message* behind what you say to him matters the most.

If you struggle with this, try talking to him as if he's your co-worker or even boss. You wouldn't insult, belittle, or ignore your co-worker (hopefully) even if you disagree with them. In a healthy working relationship you'll ensure that you speak your mind but in a respectful manner to *effortlessly* reach a win-win solution. Remember, don't be an obstacle that your husband or boyfriend has to fight against just to reach a sensible resolution to your conflict. It's tough enough that you have opposing views on a subject, don't make it even more difficult by making yourself a hindrance to his reasonability.

12

If you see that he's getting upset or angry...back off.

If you and your husband or boyfriend have gotten into a tense argument and you see that he's beginning to get really, really angry...back off. This is especially the case if you know your man has a temper problem and doesn't handle his anger very well. Instead of pushing the issue, give him some time to cool down and come back to his senses. When a man externalizes his anger, the emotions are made manifest through *action*. This action is expressed when he yells at something, breaks something, hits something, or slams something. When a man's emotions have been compromised (especially his patience), all reason goes out of the window. Don't be the kind of woman that gets a kick out of arousing her man's anger. Just because you know how to "push his buttons" doesn't mean that you should. No man wants to say or do something to harm the woman he loves because of his anger. Respect his emotions and give him the time and space he needs to think and act with reason rather than anger.

13

Don't play the blame game.

As I've touched already on an earlier point, we tend to either blame others or ourselves when we have disagreements or experience unhappiness in our relationship. It's extremely important that you don't get into the habit of playing the blame game with your boyfriend or husband, because doing so will only lead to self-pitying or resentment of and from the other person. Most men are fully aware of their responsibilities in society and to their significant others. They take it pretty hard when their relationship fails or when their wives or girlfriends are unhappy. Blaming him for all of your problems won't solve them, doing so will only exacerbate them instead. Blaming yourself helps to perpetuate a victim mentality and cripples your ability to enact positive changes. So what's the lesson here? Simple, take responsibility for your own happiness in a relationship

and refuse to pass the buck onto your husband or boyfriend. He's not there to "fill in your missing pieces", he's there to *complement* you, not *complete* you. And like I said, don't be so hard on yourself. People who judge themselves too harshly tend to do the same to their loved ones. Remember that.

14

Keep your reproofs succinct.

If you must speak your mind about something he does that really annoys you, insults you, or crosses a personal boundary, be quick and concise. Don't give him a lecture and don't talk to him like a child. Mind your tone and be concise with him. For example, if your boyfriend's a jokester type and he makes up a fun nickname for you that reminds you of some girl who stole your first boyfriend, tell him that you don't like the name and you'd be happier if he called you something else. *"Baby, I really don't like that name. It reminds me of a girl I never liked in high school. I'd be much happier if you called me something else, thanks."* This is a much better response than, *"I HATE being called that. DO NOT...EVER... CALL ME THAT AGAIN! It's a stupid name and you're an idiot if you think I'll answer to that. What would possess you to call me that?"* Yes, I dramatized that example for effect, but believe it or not, there are women who would respond this way. Don't let that be you. While a reasonable man prefers a woman who's honest with what she accepts and doesn't accept, it's even more preferable when she can communicate her dislikes in a tasteful and brief manner. Try not to get emotional and belabor your dislike of something he said or did, especially if it's a first offence.

15

Avoid "you" statements.

Any sort of criticism that starts off with a “you” statement is usually followed by a comment that may be perceived as an attack. Starting things off with “you” will incite a man’s defensiveness as opposed to his empathy. If you want his empathy, take responsibility for how you feel. For example, instead of saying “*You never take me out anywhere anymore*” you should try, “*I don’t feel important to you anymore because we don’t go out like we used to.*” Instead of “*You always ignore me when we’re out with friends*” you could say, “*I feel like you’re ignoring me whenever we hang out with our friends.*” And instead of saying, “*You don’t understand me*” you could try, “*I don’t feel like you understand me sometimes.*” In every example you’re saying the exact same thing. The difference is that one statement will cause a man to become defensive and shut down, the other will help him to empathize with how you’re feeling so that he can get to the heart of the matter. If you want a man to respond favorably to how you feel, you MUST get to his heart. If he throws up defenses, he’ll never really understand what you’re saying. He may hear you, but it won’t stir up his compassion; and without compassion his desire to *change his behavior* will be limited.

16

When you feel out of control – create space.

When he says or does something that causes you to lose control emotionally, create some distance. Sometimes you’re just going to have to create some space for you to think and grab hold of your emotions so that you don’t say or do something you might regret later on. It’s as simple as telling him how you feel, walking away, and counting in your head to a high number until you calm down. For example, if he does something particularly enraging you can respectfully say, “*Honey, please. Right now you’re making me very upset and I need some time to myself.*” If he’s reasonable, he should be fine with this and then you can

walk away and do something to bring your emotions back down to equilibrium.

17

Don't exaggerate or over-generalize your argument.

Do you know those people who exaggerate and even over-generalize their point when they're having a dispute with someone? Don't be one of those people. Yes, I understand that telling your husband that he "always" ignores you is a strategy to get his attention and explain how you feel, but there's a good chance he's taking that literally. Some men take things literally when you're upset or over emotional. Why? Well, most of us have been trained to do so from birth. When our mothers got upset at us we knew things just got serious. We'd pay attention and take her seriously, exaggerations and all. Let's translate that to our adult lives and how we might relate with a woman. If she's upset, things just got serious. So, we take you quite seriously. And when you say something like, "*You never take me into consideration*" or "*I'm always the one who...*", we take you at your word and believe that's exactly what you think.

The problem with exaggerations and over-generalizations is that they are unfair, unless they're absolutely true. When a man hears something like this, he thinks to himself, "*So...I guess she doesn't care about the time I did _____.*" When you exaggerate or over-generalize something he does or doesn't do, you're telling him, in essence, that you don't really *notice* or *appreciate* what he does right. In all honesty though, the more time a man spends in a relationship with a woman he'll eventually (hopefully) realize that this is just her way of communicating something that she desperately needs more of. A smart and reasonable man won't hold it against you, and he will learn to read between the lines. Of course, that's not an excuse to be abusive with it. Many of the communication techniques in this book can be used as better substitutes for getting your point across without always resorting to dramatic tactics.

There's a right time and a wrong time for sarcasm.

Once again, if you want to be heard and arrive at a win-win solution during an argument with your beloved, avoid any form of communication that comes across as disrespect. This means that you must avoid all forms of sarcasm. Granted, this should be common sense to anyone trying to resolve conflict; but during those times when our emotions are out of control we tend to use our words to mock the other person by insulting their intelligence.

While sarcasm can be a fun and harmless way of communicating when you want to playfully tease your boyfriend or husband, like everything else there is a time and place for it. The problem with sarcasm is that using it at the wrong time with your man could be disastrous. For instance, telling your man, "*Once again, the genius gets it*" in a playful manner during a laid-back conversation in which he takes forever to remember something is quite different from saying the exact same words in a more snide way during a quarrel. As another example, if he wants to make amends and says to you, "*Honey, I'm sorry...*" and you reply with, "*It's about time you realized what you are*", you're obviously not interested in hearing him apologize to you ever again.

During an argument few things are more irritating than having to endure a woman's biting sarcasm. Most men simply aren't quick (or stupid) enough to even attempt to hash it out with you in this way. So if you didn't know before, I'll lay it out simple and plain for you...sarcastic remarks will make it exceedingly difficult for a man to *hear* what you're saying and cooperate. If you want to be nasty and show him just how clever you are, go right ahead and sarcasm away. On the other hand, if you want him to listen to you and be more open to your point of view, avoid it altogether. Remember, when it comes to sarcasm there's always a right time and a wrong time for it.

19

Don't use his words against him just to "win."

A classic technique used by political candidates when debating is to use their opponent's words against them. Trapping your opponent in his or her own creation is a masterful tactic for winning an argument or discussion, but things work a bit differently if you want a healthy relationship. First of all, your boyfriend or husband is not your "opponent." Thinking of him that way during a discussion will compel you to treat him accordingly. If all you're trying to accomplish is to get your point across and win the argument, you both lose. This is especially the case if you're a better communicator than he is.

If you are naturally quick on your feet when speaking, you might be tempted to outwit him and twist his words or use them out of context just so you can get the upper hand. After you twist his words and tangle him in your web of confusion, the whole affair will become distasteful to him, and he'll be quite reluctant to speak his mind in the future. The whole idea is to allow him to save face and make mistakes as you smooth out the bumps in your communication. As long as he's not outright lying to you about something, there's no reason to twist his words and use them as weapons in your verbal arsenal.

20

Don't use negative, emotionally charged language like *"I hate" or "This isn't working."*

Similar to a later point I make about controlling your internal self-talk, it is very important that you take into account the very words that leave your lips. Don't broadcast to a man that communicating with him causes you pain. The last thing

your husband or boyfriend wants in the back of his mind is the thought of him being a major source of stress and unhappiness. Using emotionally charged language that focuses on the negative tends to reinforce not only your personal beliefs about a situation, but the personal beliefs of your beloved as well.

Instead of losing it and crying out in anguish something like, *“I HATE it when you say things like that”*, try saying something like, *“I feel very hurt and misunderstood when you say things like that”* or even, *“Saying things like that makes it difficult for me to communicate with you.”* Spoken in the right tone, using one of the latter phrases makes it easier for him to understand how you *feel* without him internalizing your anguish as “his fault.” Being vocal about your negative feelings more often than not is akin to always playing the victim. Catch yourself in the act of playing the victim role and decide that you are not going to say anything that communicates hopelessness or disaster. Optimism and patience are a powerful combination for getting through to those we’re trying to communicate with. Exercise both of them whenever you feel the need to exaggerate negative emotions.

21

Don’t get defensive when you’re on the receiving end.

When the searchlight gets turned on you and the man you love begins to criticize or question your behavior, don’t become defensive and belligerent. It’s a fascinating thing to watch human nature sometimes. Observe human nature for your own and you’ll arrive at some very interesting conclusions. For example, have you ever realized that people who dish out the most negative criticism usually have difficulty accepting it themselves? Overly critical people tend to struggle with some serious inner issues that cause them to project their self-dissatisfaction onto others. So when the attention is really focused on them, they become unreasonably defensive.

I remember watching an episode of *Hell's Kitchen* hosted by British chef, Gordon Ramsay. The episode focused around a restaurant owned by a married couple and let me tell you...it was spectacular! Chef Ramsay (in his usual in-your-face style) asked the owners some difficult, probing questions in order to do what he does best...critique the chaos to destroy and rebuild a better eatery. The owners couldn't handle it...at all. Unfortunately, the wife could not handle criticism to any degree. Her husband definitely seemed to have some serious problems accepting criticism from both Ramsay and customers as well, but his outbursts paled in comparison to that of his hysterical wife. Now, I'm not here to judge because I have no idea what these people went through to make their dreams a reality, but I will use this unfortunate event to make a simple point: *Don't become hostile when others criticize you.*

Learn to accept constructive criticism with grace and dignity. Don't lash out every time your husband or boyfriend is displeased with something you said or did, especially if he approaches you in a loving manner. Be the kind of woman that takes criticism in stride. The kind of woman who knows when to take it into account or when to shrug it off as "his problem, not mine."

Make Him Open Up His Heart to You

22

Don't try to control the conversation.

If you've never met a conversation controller, consider yourself lucky. Men and women who dominate the conversation THINK they're fascinating, witty, or better communicators, but in reality, they really aren't. No one wants to be dominated in a conversation, especially if you're trying to communicate with your spouse or significant other. Now, I will admit that some men just don't talk enough and so women feel the need to fill the dead space with an endless supply of words and verbal strongholds. Don't do this. Trust me, there are better techniques for getting a man to talk. They may take more time and patience (see that word again) but they're much more effective over the long-term. Some men are chatterboxes around their friends and even other women, but when they communicate with their wives or girlfriends they tend to clam right up. Sometimes the problem isn't the guy. If the poor guy can never get a word in, he's going to eventually stop trying altogether. You can lead a conversation, but that doesn't mean you have to dominate it.

23

Watch his facial expressions and recalibrate.

I'm going to give you some advice that should dynamically change the way you

communicate with a man. Ready? Here it is: *Pay careful attention to his body language, specifically his facial expressions.* One thing that my wife has learned about me is my facial expressions and how to use it to navigate a conversation (to get her way of course). When we first started out together, being her passionate self, she wouldn't pay close attention to how what she was saying was affecting me. If she hit on a sensitive issue for me by mistake she wouldn't notice it because she'd be too caught up in her own emotions, trying to say what's on her mind no matter what. As she began to figure out what makes me tick (and what turned me off), she'd know if she touched on a sensitive issue just by watching my body language, specifically my facial expressions. If she did touch on a sensitive issue, she'd know whether or not to tread carefully, drop the issue, change the subject, or apologize. Over time I noticed that her willingness to "not go there" made her much more attractive to me. And she wouldn't have been able to do so if she hadn't trained herself to take note of my facial expressions. That's the beautiful thing about loving your man. Over time, you'll figure out what makes him tick so that you can communicate with him in a more compassionate way. The benefit to this sort of communication is that he'll never shut you out because he knows that you always have his best interest at heart.

24

Be an active listener.

One of the most powerful communication techniques I've ever come across is called [active listening](#). I first heard about it in a phenomenal book by best-selling author, the late Stephen Covey called, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. Applied to communicating with a man, the skill of active listening is all about empathizing with your man and getting him to realize that you do empathize with him. It's the meaning behind the slang term, "Do you *feel* me?" When a man *feels* that you understand him, he drops all his defenses and communication

flows effortlessly. Most people communicate by “waiting to speak.” They fill their mind with what they want to say to the other person instead of clearing their mind of their own thoughts to leave room to truly *listen* to what the other person is saying. The act of active listening requires you to listen attentively, then paraphrase and reflect on what he says while acknowledging how he feels without judgment or advice. Read that last sentence again.

Here’s an example of this in action. Let’s say he comes home from work and says, “You know, I really hate my job. I feel like a useless cog in a machine, and it’s starting to get to me.” Don’t say, “*Maybe you should look for another job*”; that’s you giving common sense advice he could have gotten from his friends. Don’t even say something like, “*Well, no use complaining about it. I told you that moving here was a waste of time.*” That’s being judgmental, and quite annoying to add. Instead, follow up with something like, “*Your job stresses you out and you don’t feel like you’re utilizing your true potential.*” This response will get him to agree with you because you understand how he feels. He’ll keep talking until: 1. He chooses to talk about a solution, or 2. He realizes that he’s just having a bad week, *etc.* and feels relieved to talk about it. It’s a simple example, but it should get you started on the right path. I’d advise really studying this form of communication because it can improve EVERY area of your life.

25

To start conversations don’t ask him “cop out” questions.

If your guy isn’t a big talker, this little trick could get him started or at least interested in what you have to say. It sounds silly, but it’s based on simple psychology. Ask him questions he *has* to think about to answer. Asking him a

“yes” or “no” question gives him an easy escape. It’s even worse if you ask him a question about his emotions. For example, asking him, “what are you thinking” will likely get you this answer: “Nothing.” If you ask him “how do you feel?” he may look at you with one eyebrow raised and say, “fine.” Asking him questions like these will ruin your genius plan to get him talking. He’ll see you coming from a mile away. Try asking him things about his interests or about his past. For example, asking him “*Why do you like the Miami Heat so much?*” might pique his interest and get him going a lot faster than “*How was work today?*” especially if he hates his job.

26

When he reveals, help him heal.

Men have feelings and insecurities just like women do. No matter how strong, confident, or stoic a man may appear, he has his issues, it’s just that some guys are just better at hiding and/or managing their negative emotions. As you cultivate a relationship with a man you will experience a lot of the good, the bad, and the downright ugly. Chances are, you’ve already witnessed a lot of the good and you’ve made your peace with the bad. But the relationship magic happens when you learn about his “ugly” and you can accept him as he is and even help him to heal.

Men have a gigantic fear when it comes to their inner struggles. We think that when the woman we love finds out about them, she’ll either see us as weak, repulsive, damaged, or unworthy. A man may fear revealing the deeper parts of himself to you simply out of fear that you’ll take advantage of that knowledge in the future. In short, it’s a trust issue, and a man needs to feel that he can trust you with his all before he reveals himself to you. So what’s a woman to do to get him to open up over time? Simple, when he does “go there” and reveal a little more than you might have bargained for, help him to heal. Don’t judge, criticize, or

condemn him. Instead, be a source of strength and encouragement, a healing balm to his masculine soul. In the same way he accepts you just the way you are, with all of your past and present inner issues, you should do the same.

For men, the “ugly” inner struggles are often tied to extreme emotions of guilt, shame, and anxiety. Knowing this, the worse thing you can do to him when he opens up to you is to judge, revile, or chastise him. Doing so will only enhance these negative emotions and he will begin to attach those feelings to you. When he needs to open up about something, you might be the last person he goes to because he might say to himself, *“I can’t tell her that. She’ll despise me and think I’m a loser/pervert/weakling/monster/etc. She doesn’t understand me.”* When your husband or boyfriend opens up to you, love him unconditionally and help him to heal emotionally.

27

Don’t force him to talk about his problems.

For heaven’s sake, if a man doesn’t want to talk about a personal problem he’s having, don’t try to force him to open up. Some men simply prefer to deal with certain issues alone or in the company of other men. If he doesn’t want to discuss a problem with you at the moment he may just need more time alone to mull over the issue. If this is the case, give him some space. Forceful communication does the complete opposite in this case. If you try to force him to “open up”, he’ll just clam up even more and what’s worse is that over time, the whole experience of communicating with you will leave a bad taste in his mouth.

28

Acknowledge his feelings.

If you think men are impervious to feeling hurt, sad, lonely, misunderstood, confused, or any other vulnerable emotion, think again. When it comes to our relationships there's a lot bubbling underneath the surface. A great strategy for getting the understanding that you want from him is to show him that you empathize with him. It's easy to focus on how *you're* feeling at the moment and communicate those feelings to him, but it requires a lot more effort to empathize.

Acknowledging his feelings helps to keep his defenses lowered because you're communicating that you're on his side. Subconsciously, he needs to know that you're *for* him and not *against* him. If he feels like his emotions matter to you, he'll *feel* respected and unconditionally loved. For example, if you begin to have one of those relationship talks and you notice a change in his body language, acknowledge it. You should learn what signals your man gives off when he's beginning to put up his defenses. So when you notice them, say something like, "*I know you're feeling criticized right now, but I'm not trying to upset you.*" If he's trying to explain something to you and you notice his frustration, say something like, "*I know you're feeling frustrated right now, and I understand how you feel.*" If you acknowledge his feelings there won't be any doubt in his mind as to your intentions. It's much easier to show compassion and *change* for a woman when she cares about your emotional well-being.

29

Avoid statements that expose his insecurities.

If you decide to say to your husband or boyfriend, "*You're just like you're father*", I hope you're doing it because his old man was a phenomenal guy. If you tell him, "*I should've listened to my mother*", it better be because she gave you some good advice about anything NOT related to your man. These kinds of statements are usually said in the heat of the moment and with the sole purpose of hurting a man's ego. Statements like these can tear down your man's self-

image because it shows him exactly how negatively you think of him. Avoid these volcanic statements IF you're more interested in resolving conflict than making him feel like crap.

Now, I know some women may only use these kinds of statements to *shock* a man into changing his behavior. While this may work in some extreme cases, saying these sorts of things only causes resentment. A perfect example is a statement like, "*You know what? Forget it. I'll just do it myself.*" From one adult to another, a statement like this communicates that he's not meeting your standards in one way or another and that you don't know why you bothered with him in the first place. If you do this enough, he'll start to doubt his ability to make you happy. Statements like these are insulting and will either cause him to lose his temper or suffer in quiet resentment if he doesn't speak up about it.

30

Ask him questions or give indirect suggestions.

A really graceful way to handle a man who despises being told what to do is to ask him questions or give indirect suggestions instead. When you make *leading* suggestions in the form of questions you give him the opportunity to feel self-directed, in charge, and respected. If he hates being told what to do, he may become far more cooperative because you're presenting him with an opportunity to make the decision on his own. For example, instead of telling him "*You know, you should call my mother today, it's her birthday. Don't forget*" try something like, "*Hey honey, I know you remembered my mother's birthday today. What time did you plan on calling her?*" or even, "*Hey sweetie, today is mother's birthday. I'm going to call her. Would you like to wish her a happy birthday before or after me?*" Do you see the difference?

Now, let's say that you need him to do something or you'd like for him to re-

consider a decision he's made. You can always pose an indirect suggestion at him. For example, instead of "*Dear, I'm pretty sure Mr. Tyler is asleep. Call him tomorrow*" try, "*Honey, don't you think it's a little late to call Mr. Tyler? He goes to bed pretty early, maybe we should try in the morning.*" It's a subtle change but it lets him make the final call and it makes you look like the caring, supportive first mate of his ship. Remember, respect the captain's authority and he'll be more apt to listen to what you have to say. Your mileage on this point may vary because some men aren't as sensitive to being given direct commands. But if your guy likes to think every decision was made in the crucible of his own brain, a communication technique like this will come in handy.

31

Decode his unloving behavior to feed his deepest need.

No matter how offensive his words or behavior may seem, try to decipher what is it he really wants from you. Actually, when it comes to communication, what a man really wants from you is respect. The trick for you is to see past his disgusting, unloving behavior and figure out *in what way* he needs to be revitalized with respect. Men crave respect and admiration the way women crave love and attention. And in order for him to give you the unconditional love you want he's going to need your unconditional respect. Yes, *unconditional respect*. Not, "*I will respect him when he...*" or "*I will respect him only if he...*" That's conditional respect and many women fail to get what they want from the man they love because their respect for that man is conditional.

If his behavior is unloving don't reinforce it with a disrespectful response. Be graceful with him. Chances are that he's looking for a little respect in some form or fashion. So when he communicates in an unloving way (as he often will), you have the choice to either respond respectfully in spite of his unloving behavior or give him what he deserves, which is a piece of your mind. By giving him what

he deserves, you're perpetuating the cycle of insanity and feeding his stupidity. Don't feed his stupidity. Instead, give him the unconditional respect that he doesn't deserve and stop his madness before it spreads to you. Rise above his pettiness when it rears its ugly head and respond respectfully. You'll be a better woman for it, and assuming he sees the error in his ways, you'll help him to be a better man in the process.

How to Talk, Be Heard, and Get Results

32

Don't try to compete with his distractions.

If he's obviously distracted by something very important to HIM (not you), don't try to compete with it. If you try to compete with his present distraction you WILL lose and you WILL be upset about it. On the other hand, if you try to force him to focus on you while he's already mentally engaged in something else, he'll feel like you're bossing him around, causing him to shut down or tune you out completely. Instead, look at the situation for what it is and wait until he's not so focused on something else so that you can have his undivided attention. A reasonable man will appreciate your patience.

If your guy is particularly stubborn, tell him that you'll give him the time he needs but ask him when will he be ready and open to talk. Ask for a definite time like "*after the game*", "*at dinner*", or a specific time frame like "*in ten minutes.*" Vague responses like "*later*" or "*in a short while*" will only frustrate you and make it easier for him to lose track of time. Respect his time but also ensure that he respects yours as well.

33

Be brief and don't beat around the bush.

As you probably already know, men tend to focus on solving problems. It's

nature's design to have our brains wired this way in order for us to quickly resolve conflict and handle sudden dangers. If your man is as pragmatic as they come, a lack of brevity may make conversing with him extremely difficult. Being brief will help you to get your point across without losing him. If you have a point to make, please make it as quickly as you can. Now, I'm not saying that a man won't enjoy a good story here and there, but it can get quite annoying when your woman is obviously trying to tell you something but you just can't figure out what she's trying to say. Don't lose his attention by saying more than is necessary. Keep your communication simple and straight to the point.

34

Tell him what kind of response you're hoping for.

If your guy (like most guys) is apt to provide you with fast solutions to problems even when all you really wanted was for him to listen, try telling him that you'd just like for him to listen. Seriously. Yes, I realize it's so simple that it sounds downright silly doesn't it? Just tell him, in a graceful way, that you're not looking for answers, only his attention, and that you'd appreciate it if he just listened to you without trying to fix your life. Smile when you tell him.

35

End on a worthwhile point.

If you really want to get your idea across and make it stick in his mind, end on a worthwhile point. If he says he understands, believe him. If he looks like he understands, leave it at that. Belaboring your point might provide you with a deep sense of security in which you tell yourself, "*Yeah, now I KNOW he understands*", but by doing so you run the risk of doing the complete opposite.

Too little information and he's likely to misunderstand. Too much information and the same thing might happen because he's either: 1. Lost interest, or 2. Doesn't know what the point of your discussion/argument was in the first place.

36

Watch your volume.

One of my biggest turnoffs when it comes to a woman communicating with a man is volume. Most guys won't say it, and even less will voice their dissatisfaction, but I'm here to tell you the truth. Shouting, screaming, and yelling to get your point across will not make him think you're angry, serious, and desperate to be heard. You won't get the response you're looking for (assuming you're looking for a loving response) because chances are he's feeling disrespected and/or accused. In a social setting, shouting and yelling at your man will make him feel even worse, especially if he's not the type to confront you outright in public.

Gentleness and patience is key when communicating with a man. This is the way that a high-quality woman communicates with her man, and she should expect the same sort of respect and civility from him as well. If your man has a personal distaste for loudness, respect his personal boundaries and be mindful of your volume. Believe me when I say that harsh tones and abrasive language will make some men tune you out faster than you can shout *"I HATE IT WHEN YOU DON'T LISTEN TO ME!"*

37

**When discussing your feelings, remind him that it's
not his fault.**

If he seems disheartened and begins shutting down as you try to tell him how you feel, remind him that it's not his fault and that you're not blaming him. Take ownership of your insecurities, whether they're impractical or reasonable, own them and tell him that it's the way YOU feel and that when he does _____ it has the potential to enhance those insecurities. But for heaven's sake, don't tell him that it's his fault. Why? Because he already thinks it's his fault and he's shutting down because he feels like a failure. Like I said before, if the only *high-emotion* he gets from you is when you're unhappy with him, those are the ones that will register on his "Is My Wife Happy?" meter.

38

Don't interrupt him when he's speaking.

A common complaint amongst us guys is how much we dislike being interrupted while we're speaking. I'm not sure how annoying this is for a woman when a guy interrupts her, but for guys, being constantly interrupted immensely retards our ability to communicate effectively. Some men would rather keep quiet and say next to nothing than to be constantly interrupted. In other words, some women actually *train* their men to talk as little as possible. If you want him to speak freely and unhindered, don't interrupt him just because something popped into your head. I should note that I say all of this with the hopes that your man is a gentleman and does not interrupt you while you're speaking as well.

39

If it's urgent and he's busy, simplify.

Sometimes he's going to be busy or not interested in what you have to say, even if you *think* it's urgent. For instance, if you want to know what he wants to eat

for dinner later on in the evening but his attention is elsewhere, give him options rather than make him think. Asking him, *“Honey, what would you like for dinner?”* while he’s trying to focus or unwind might get you an aggravating response like, *“Geez, I don’t know, whatever you feel like making.”* Of course, if you’d like your knight-in-shining-armor to lead and make these types of decisions more often instead of leaving it up to you, you’re going to have to think of him as your very own caveman. In other words, make the choice ridiculously simple for him. Instead, try asking him, *“Honey, I’m thinking of making baked chicken and rice or home-made hamburgers for dinner tonight. Which one would you like best?”* A question like this dumbs it down for your caveman so that he doesn’t have to think too much. More than likely, he’ll give you a much more favorable response. So remember to make things so simple that even a caveman can do it – your caveman.

40

Dumb it down.

When in doubt, “dumb it down.” If your guy isn’t a big talker and his attention span is ridiculously short, you might want to try breaking down complex subjects into bite-sized pieces of easily digestible information. Avoid talking to your man like he’s one of your girlfriends, because if you do, he’ll have some difficulty following you. As I’ve mentioned before, his brain is designed to solve problems, so if your complex conversation isn’t giving him something to solve, his mind might wonder off elsewhere to put itself to some good use. And when it comes to a man’s memory, keeping your message short and simple will make it easier for him to remember the things that you need him to.

41

Timing is key

Timing is key.

Trying to discuss your vacation plans with your football loving husband or boyfriend during an intense football game is an act of insanity. Trying to discuss the issues you have with your mother with him while he's trying to unwind after work is futile. As with everything else in life, timing is everything. When I'm writing, my wife knows that it's best not to interrupt me with matters that can wait. She's thoughtful enough to know that when I'm engaged with the written word I'm not going to be able to respond to her effectively. You should consider taking the same approach with your husband or boyfriend as well. Learning when to discuss certain matters is pivotal to ensuring high-quality communication between you and your man.

42

Ensure that he doesn't feel "blamed" or "criticized" by starting with a disclaimer.

How do you make a man listen to you when you want to talk about the relationship without shutting down? Easy (sort of), you ensure that he doesn't feel like he *failed you* or *failed himself*. If your guy struggles to listen to you when you have a relationship issue with him, the problem is usually because he's been internalizing *your* unhappiness by taking personal responsibility for it. Chances are, he's been feeling blamed and criticized even though you might not be blaming or criticizing him at all. You may be thinking that you're being clear with him and that you're just letting him know what's important to you, but that's not the way he's processing that information. While all you want is for him to understand you as a woman and make you feel more *secure* in the relationship, he's busy battling his own insecurities. In his head he may be thinking, "*I've failed again*", "*What did I do wrong this time*", "*She's always complaining*", "*I'm a bad husband/boyfriend*", "*I'm making her unhappy*", etc.

All of these negative internalizations amount to these two sentences in his head: “*It’s my fault that she’s unhappy. I’m to blame.*” Read that last sentence again.

It gets even worse because the more he doesn’t *respond* the way you need him to, the more you express yourself emotionally hoping that he’d finally *get it*, but he only shuts down even more. So what’s a girl to do when her man has this sort of negative self-talk going on inside of his own head? Well, you can make it easier for him by using a simple little disclaimer whenever you communicate your relationship wants and needs to your man. Say something like: “*Honey, I’m not blaming you for anything and I just want you to know that it’s not your fault. You’ve been good to me, and I love you just the way you are. But because I’ve been feeling _____, I thought I should let you know that...*” It sounds simple, but this little statement can literally disarm his “I’ve been a bad, bad boy” defenses and help him to realize that you’re taking responsibility for your emotions (insecurities) and that all you really want is for him to *help* you feel more secure (loved, appreciated, adored, needed, etc.) in the relationship. I honestly believe if women used more disclaimer statements like this one, men would spend a lot less time trying to understand what they “did wrong” and spend more time making their wives and girlfriends *feel* more secure in their relationships.

Now, I have to add that you shouldn’t use this disclaimer and then still go ahead and blame him. What you must get in the habit of doing is to take responsibility for your own emotions and how you’re feeling. That’s also not an invitation to blame yourself. Don’t do that either. Taking responsibility means that you accept the way you feel and that you have the *power* to do something about it. Blaming yourself means you think something is *wrong* with you and zaps your ability to do something about it. One path empowers while the other disempowers. So don’t blame him and don’t blame yourself, but always be genuine in letting him know why you feel the way you feel.

Appeal to his desire to be a high-quality man.

A key communication technique used by high-ranking leaders is to impute the qualities that they would like their subordinates to display. What this means for you is that you can *influence* your man to act a certain way by appealing to his more noble motives. High-quality, reasonable men want to be admired by the woman they love and respected by others. If you imply to him that he's a better man by taking a certain course of action, assuming that he subconsciously aspires to be a good man, there's a good chance that he'll follow through on your suggestion. For example, if your husband promised you (and the kids) that he'll take the kids out to the park and instead he comes home and gets bit by the lazy-dad-bug and wants to relax in front of the TV, you can appeal to his nobler motives by saying, "*Honey, remember you promised the kids a trip to the park this evening. I know you're a man of your word and the kind of man that puts his family first. Besides, the kids love spending time with their one-and-only father.*"

As a woman you may be thinking that he'll surely see through this as some sort of manipulation. Honestly, even if he does see through it, as long as you're sincere he'll realize that you're right. Your appealing to the "I want to be a great dad and a man of integrity" whispers that goes on in his head. Appealing to a man's nobler motives is all about using non-forceful, persuasive imputations to get him to *agree* with you. Think of it like those cartoons that have the little angel on one shoulder and the little imp on the other. Use your feminine powers of persuasion to make the voice of the little angel on his shoulder much louder than the voice of the little imp. Impute the quality you need him to display in a graceful way, then walk away and let him arrive at his own conclusion. Trust me, this is a much better way to get him to be a better man than nagging him incessantly.

Discuss your mistakes first before talking about his.

An excellent communication strategy for pointing out a mistake he made is to make reference to your own mistakes first. By doing so, you're communicating true humility by letting him know that you're not perfect either. This sets a better foundation for a man to at least hear you out without trying to defend himself or ignoring you completely. Remember, men tend to be ego driven and think in terms of "respectful" and "disrespectful." If you jump right out of the gate and tell him about his mistakes and how much he needs to change, etc., etc., he's going to have a much more difficult time digesting what you have to say. But if you illustrate humility by showcasing your own errors, he won't feel threatened. The act of admitting your own mistakes gives you an opportunity to be vulnerable with him. When you're vulnerable you have an opportunity to *bond* (develop intimacy) with him, and once that bond is established he'll see you as a trusted friend who's looking out for him as opposed to a nagging harpy who's never satisfied.

Interestingly, if you can turn the mistake you made into a funny story, he'll be even more at ease to hear your criticism. Also, the more honest you are the more relaxed he'll be. If you tell him about some gigantic blunder you made and it gets him laughing, imagine how much easier it will be for him to listen to you criticize something simple about him.

Don't resort to giving him the "silent treatment."

The silent treatment has one "good" use. It alerts the unsuspecting male specimen of a terrifying truth: "*The woman is upset with me.*" Believe it or not,

there is a better alternative to getting a man's attention when you happen to be upset and/or angry with him. I'm particularly proud of this suggestion because I'm pretty sure no man or woman has ever thought of it before. Are you ready for it? Here it is: *Tell him what's bothering you.* (Yes, I am a genius.)

Telling your man how you feel and confronting the issue is a much more mature way of communicating your emotions. The silent treatment is a passive-aggressive communication strategy that children (and immature adults) use to get their way. By using this mediocre tactic, you communicate that you're uninterested in problem solving and more interested in self-righteous grudges and playing the role of the victim. If anything, the silent treatment only makes things worse because snubbing your husband or boyfriend will only result in a very hurt or confused man. He'll either do everything in his power to get you talking again (he gives up and just wants it over with) or he'll end up angry and just give you a taste of your own medicine (he ignores you indefinitely). In short, all you end up with are two people who aren't communicating with one another.

I should also add that there is a clear difference between giving your man the silent treatment and taking some personal quiet time to cool down after an argument. Getting the space you need to think properly or giving your man some space to do the same is perfectly okay. But using the silent treatment to force him to pay attention to you is a form of emotional abuse that will only backfire in the end. Give yourself some space, get a hold of your emotions, and then address the issue rationally and gracefully.

46

Don't be a nag.

You should have known this was coming. A man would prefer to live alone in a rundown apartment than to share a stately mansion with a nagging woman. I feel

that God has a unique sense of humor and gave women the power of nagging and gave us men no natural defenses against it. Yes, if you want a man to do something sooner than later there's a fair chance that nagging might work. But trust me, you won't win any popularity contests with him. Some men get so used to a nagging woman that over time they actually become immune to it. Other men may be more avoidant and non-confrontational with a nagging woman, so they'll resort to white lies, half-truths, and coward-like evasion tactics (like staying out late or taking the long way home) just to avoid having to deal with being nagged about something. Yes, you read that right. Nagging a man habitually actually forces him to *censor* himself so that he doesn't say anything to start you up.

There are better alternatives than nagging a man into submission; many of them have already been mentioned in this book. But if you need a few focused reminders, I'll give you two ideas to help you change your nagging habit (if you have one). First of all, you've got to let go of control. Sometimes women nag because they have an incessant need to be in control. For whatever reason, they don't trust their husbands or boyfriends and feel compelled to harp on them until they follow through on something. Fear of losing control of an outcome will fuel your need to nag. So what if he forgets to mow the lawn before your parents come over? It's not the end of the world. Learn to let go and you'll find yourself less apt to nag the man who does so much more to make you happy than you probably realize. Secondly, talk about your needs. If you have needs that he's neglecting, gracefully communicate with him in order to arrive at a compromise. Men do forget and sometimes neglect what's already in their possession. If something is important to you but not quite as important to him, use the communication strategies in this book to get through to him. There is nothing wrong with giving him a little reminder now and then once it's done with an attitude of gentleness.

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Don't flaunt your intelligence if you're naturally smarter than he is.

Just because you might be smarter than a man doesn't mean you always have to flaunt it every chance you get. I'm not singling out all intelligent women mind you, only the ones that like to show off. When a guy does it to a woman, the effect is the same. It's annoying. Likewise, if a woman uses every opportunity she gets to broadcast her storehouse of knowledge, it doesn't impress anyone except her. This sort of behavior tells a man that you're insecure since you require an attentive audience to approve of your intelligence. A high-quality man prefers to discover a woman's intelligence on his own. Your brevity and discretion will stir his curiosity and draw him into you because in all honesty, a quality man loves learning from and being in the company of an intelligent woman. And believe me, as a woman, one of the most seductive things you can do to a man is to give him the *gift* of unraveling the beauty of your mind on his own.

48

Understand and communicate in context.

Sometimes it's not what you say or even how you say it that matters, but it's also *when* you say it. One of the most powerful habits you can do to greatly enhance the way you communicate with men is to understand context. A graceful communicator understands the importance context plays in communicating, whether she's on the giving end or the receiving end.

For example, in an earlier point I mentioned that you should learn when to accept criticism gracefully and when to shrug it off. The reason I mentioned this

is because just like you, a man may not be in his “right mind” at the time he criticizes you. He could have just had a bad day at work, found out some frustrating news, or lost his iPhone in Dunkin Donuts (it happens). If he has a momentary lapse in judgment and takes his frustration out on you by criticizing you, shrug it off gracefully, give him some time to come to his senses, and go about your business as if your life couldn’t be better. In this context (situation), he criticized or complained because of his own frustrations. You just happened to be the nearest victim in his vicinity. If he’s conscious of his behavior, eventually he’ll apologize, thank you, and shower you with affection because he saw how well you *handled* him in that situation. If he’s not so behavior conscious and you begin to notice a bad habit forming, do what I’ve been repeating throughout this book: Approach him respectfully, and talk to him about it. As you can see, understanding context is key, not only for resolving conflict but also for avoiding unnecessary arguments altogether.

Understanding the Masculine Mind

49

If he's had a rough day, tread carefully.

After a rough day at work all a guy wants to do is come home to his castle and relax for a bit in his fortress of solitude (home office, lounge, TV room, etc.). If the first thing he hears after he enters the door is demands for his time so that you can talk, you're going to end up in a very one-sided, unproductive conversation. Give a man some time to unwind before you jump right into his personal space. Sure, you may need to know what he wants for dinner or update him on bills that need paying or kids that need disciplining, but chances are some of that stuff can wait until after the poor guy relaxes his mind a bit. This may seem like common sense advice, but some women need to hear it: If you want a productive, engaging conversation with your man, give him some time to unwind when he gets home.

50

Don't lose him by changing topics.

I don't know who invented the term "go off on a tangent" but I'm pretty sure it was a guy referencing his conversation with a woman. I'm kidding! But seriously, if you have his undivided attention, don't lose it by losing yourself. Keep him engaged by having a point in focus. On the other hand, if you're prone

to going off topic, try letting him know WHEN you're going off topic. For example, if you're talking to your husband or boyfriend and you find yourself wanting to go off on another tangent, quickly say, "NEW TOPIC!" and carry on. You're doing this for his sake because, 1. It will help him to shut off his problem-solving device for the first topic, and 2. It will allow him to follow the conversation without getting annoyed, bored, or overwhelmed with information.

51

Do not insult or belittle him.

Here's the fastest way to make a man ignore every word that comes out of your mouth: *insult him*. Name-calling, belittling, and other forms of verbal putdowns won't win you any awards with the man you're trying to talk to. The bigger the ego, the more obstinate he'll get when you insult him. I personally advise guys to not tolerate any form of name-calling and belittling when arguing with the woman they love. Why? Well, because I expect them to keep things clean as well. Yes, it's difficult to keep hold of your emotions sometimes, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't try. A high-quality man won't make a habit of verbally abusing you during an argument, therefore you should grant him the same courtesy.

52

Avoid asking him for help if you have zero intentions of following through.

One of the most annoying things you can do to a man is ask him for his advice and then NOT follow that advice. It's kind of like the story of the boy who cried wolf. You cry for help and want his input, but you repeatedly choose to go in the

opposite direction. This sort of behavior will cause him to not take you seriously when you want to communicate. Remember, men have a desperate need to feel respected. If he sees that you habitually choose not to follow his advice, your cries for help will fall on deaf ears.

53

Don't attack the things he's passionate about.

Here's the thing. If a man has a hobby or pastime that he truly enjoys, avoid making his *interests* the enemy. Now, I know as a woman you may have to set a boundary when your man begins to take his eyes off of what's most important (you, family, health, etc.), but you can help him to reassess his priorities without demonizing his passions (assuming they're not illegal or unethical of course). For example, if he's spending too much time playing golf on Sundays, tell him that you'd like for him to spend more time with you on Sundays *because of* _____. Don't tell him that he *shouldn't* be playing golf and for heaven's sake don't tell him something that insults his tastes like, "golf is for losers", etc., etc. Always communicate what you need from him without making it seem as if you want to take his fun away from him. In short, don't act like his mother.

54

Don't assume he knows.

Never assume that he knows exactly what it is you're trying to communicate to him. Last time I checked, men haven't learned how to read the female mind. We have some committed scientists working on it I'm sure, but right now it'd be best if you didn't assume we know what you're talking about. Have you ever seen a man and woman get into a white-hot argument and the guy has this

puzzled look on his face with open hands and outstretched arms? He usually has one or both eyebrows raised with that clueless “What in Davy Jones’ locker is this woman talking about?” face. Sooner or later, you’ll hear him outburst with, “What are you TALKING ABOUT?” This is the sad scenario of a guy who honestly doesn’t have a clue what she’s talking about, and usually she feels hurt or insulted because she thinks he’s either playing dumb or being insensitive. Ladies, I say this with nothing but love and hope that you’ll hear me out: Don’t assume he knows what you’re talking about, especially during an argument or disagreement. Chances are, if he has that dumb look on his face...he really doesn’t know what’s going on.

55

Turn off “mom-mode” and talk to him like a man you RESPECT, not a child you tolerate.

If you’re married with kids this may be a potential issue for you in your marriage. I’ve observed that some women talk to and treat their husbands like one of the children, particularly when he makes a mistake or has a bad habit. Some women just seem to forget that men aren’t particularly fond of being reprimanded by their wives. Your husband doesn’t enjoy failing you. He wants you to see him as a capable and competent, protector, provider, and lover. But when you treat him like a child after he does something you don’t like, it makes him feel disrespected.

Let’s say he has the habit of walking around with his plate while eating and he accidentally drops it. Do you laugh it off with him, say “no sweat”, and help him clean the mess up? Or do you tell him how clumsy he is and remind him that you just cleaned the floors? Or even worse, do you yell at him like he’s a bad six year old? Learn to turn off “mom-mode” and don’t sweat the small stuff.

Chances are that if he has the “bad” habit of walking around with his plate while eating, he’s been doing that for most of his life. Habits don’t break overnight. That’s not to say that he shouldn’t try to change some of the things that annoy you, but let’s keep things in perspective. You married him the way he is so it obviously wasn’t a deal breaker while you were dating. So how should you respond to his less-than-ideal idiosyncrasies? Respond as if you just met some wonderful new neighbors and you really wanted them to feel at home. If they came over for dinner and accidentally broke the dish, what would you do? Think about it.

56

Use respectful body language.

Body language plays a huge role in getting a man to hear and understand what you’re trying to say. It plays an even bigger role in influencing him. Things like looking away, fiddling with your iPhone, or tapping your fingers only communicates your impatience or lack of interest in what he has to say. Of course, I’m no Emily Post when it comes to the various rules of female etiquette, but I’m sure we can agree that there are certain things (like smacking on gum) that distract and discourage effective communication. For a man, female body language falls into two categories: 1. Is her body language attractive? Or 2. Is her body language respectful? Since I’m not trying to help you pick up guys, I’m not going to say much about attractive body language, but I can say a word or two about *respectful* body language.

Respectful body language will make a man take you seriously while not feeling threatened. For instance, having your back turned to him while he’s speaking or walking away while he’s in mid-sentence is extremely disrespectful. Another example: folded arms, pursed lips, and a frowning face indicate your disgust and/or displeasure. If you want to keep his ego intact, his defenses lowered, and

his heart open to your influence, your body language must be respectful when you communicate with him. Now, I'll admit that some guys have a higher tolerance for disrespectful body language. Your best bet is to actually ask your husband or boyfriend if your body language is generally appealing or a turn-off during conversation. If you allow him to be honest with you without you taking offence, you might be surprised to hear what he has to say.

57

Don't attack those he loves dearly.

If he's particularly fond of his mother, father, brothers, sisters, etc., don't bad mouth or insult them in conversation. Even if his mother is a complete witch-of-a-woman who makes your life a living hell, don't attack her. There are better ways to communicate your dislike of someone he's fond of without sounding like you're attacking them. If you criticize the people he loves and admires he will take it as a personal insult. The trick here is to *respect* his choices without judgment. It's okay to tell him that his mother is overbearing and difficult to deal with or that his friends cause him to spend too much time away from home. Just don't demonize his relationships. As always, it's not what you say, but *how* you say it.

58

Give him space to think to make a decision or come to a conclusion.

It takes men a much longer time to process certain types of information, especially when emotions are involved. Instead of harping your guy to give you an answer right then and there, give him some time to process your discussion

and come to a rational and honest conclusion. If you rush him, his decision may be based on him trying to please you in order to avoid conflict at the moment. If you give him the space he needs he'll have a better chance at arriving to a sensible, and often more sincere solution.

59

Don't compare him to another man.

This point is self-explanatory. If you want to see a man shut down faster than a government agency at quitting time, just start comparing him to another man that you admire. As you should have realized by now, men filter out just about everything you say as either respectful or disrespectful. Being compared to another man that possesses certain qualities you find attractive that we may lack is a kiss of death. It's insulting and makes it easier for seeds of bitter resentment to sprout. In all honesty, I don't know a lot of women who habitually do this to their men, no matter how upset or uninformed they may be. But it can happen from time to time, albeit in a very subtle way, so be mindful.

60

Don't beg and whine as soon as he disagrees.

If your man disagrees with you and stands firm on a decision he's made about something, don't make things even more difficult by whining about it. It's not lady-like and very unattractive. When he's made a firm decision, assuming it's a legal one that doesn't challenge your morals, stand by him and withdraw. While men and women are equal we are inherently different, and our roles in a relationship reflect those differences. As I said before, *let him lead*. A high-quality man will want to lead you the best he can, and he's at his best when his

woman is highly supportive of his final decisions. Think of him as the captain and you're his first mate. If the first mate is always begging to have her own way and whines behind the captain's back, that could cause a lot of problems for the journey (relationship) ahead. It's even worse when you have kids. Your son and daughter don't enjoy hearing about how Daddy's decision to do so-and-so was stupid. This sort of behavior is a display of disrespect, and when your children witness it, their respect for the "Captain" goes down little by little. I think you know what happens when children lose respect for their father.

61

Never tell him, "You're wrong."

Best-selling author, Dale Carnegie, wrote a book called *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. In it he discusses a very powerful technique for influencing someone to your way of thinking. Carnegie mentioned that the fastest way to make an enemy is to tell someone that they're wrong and then prove it to them.

When communicating with a man, the principle is very much the same. Never tell him, "You're wrong", at least not in this way. Telling a man (or even another woman for that matter) that he's wrong will make him defend his position all the more, especially if you're having an argument. Even during a regular, non-confrontational conversation, saying, "you're wrong" to some men is a direct blow to their intelligence, judgment, and pride. This is especially the case if you say it harshly and with an air of superiority in your voice. A better thing to say would be, "Honey, listen. I know I could be wrong here, but don't you think _____?" or even, "Correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't _____?" Once again, by focusing on your own humanity (prone to error), you disarm his defense mechanisms and appeal to his reason. And by posing your appeal to the truth as a question, you're allowing him the opportunity to think it over and correct himself. If he doesn't correct himself,

move on. It's usually not worth fighting over.

Also, try to avoid saying things like, "*I'm going to prove this-and-that to you*" because to a man, phrases like this translate into "*You're dumb and I'm going to show you how with my superior female brain.*" Okay, maybe I exaggerated just a little, but hopefully you get the picture. Unless you and your beloved are having a little teasing fun, avoid provoking him with statements that insult his intelligence. Show a little grace-like diplomacy instead.

62

Be silent.

It is often said that silence is golden. If this is true, then women who communicate gracefully must be worth their weight in gold. My one fear with this book is that a talkative wife or girlfriend may think that she can *change* her less than talkative husband or boyfriend using some of these techniques. Yes, you may be able to get a few more honest, caring words out of him for sure, but don't expect a man to change dramatically, at least not right away. Believe it or not, silence may be the best communication strategy if you're far more talkative than your beloved. For a lot of women, their idea of keeping a relationship healthy means to talk to their man about everything and anything as often as they can. Usually, a woman like this is never satisfied with her man's level of communication. She assumes that the more she talks to him about things the more he'll understand how she feels, resulting in him changing to love her even better. As she tries to increase talking with him she only ends up talking at him, which, as you probably realize by now, frustrates him and causes him to shut down.

Does this mean you shouldn't talk to your more silent partner? Well, of course not. If you're far too addicted to "relationship talks" and find yourself torn apart

because your husband or boyfriend doesn't talk as much as you want, you may be trying to force the issue. Forcing the issue (conversation) will come across as disrespectful to a quieter, stoic man. In many ways, developing a quieter, gentler attitude in addition to using more respectful ways of addressing your issues is more than enough to get a quiet man to open up. If you communicate with him at *his* pace you have a better chance at influencing him to open up than by forcing an onslaught of words upon him.

I do understand that in this post-feminist world we live in, women are taught to be as vocal as possible about their wants and needs. Because of this notion, women are misled to believe that by remaining quiet and gentle, soft and unassuming, they lose their feminine power and sense of self. Sadly the reverse is true, ESPECIALLY when dealing with high-quality, assertive, masculine men. Knowing *when* to be silent is a very attractive quality to men of status and ambition. Any woman with enough brass can get what she wants using her mouth, but only the rarest jewels among women know how to use tactful silence to influence the heart of a man.

On Building a Better Relationship

63

Pick your battles VERY carefully.

You do not have to criticize or second-guess every decision your man makes. If you develop the habit of always second-guessing his decisions he will either do one of two things. First, because second-guessing a man's decision signifies a lack of trust he may choose to ignore you in the future when it comes to decision-making. The reason for this is because he feels as if you don't trust him as the team captain. I'm sure you can imagine how frustrating it could become if a man habitually keeps you out of the decision-making loop in your relationship.

Alternatively, instead of taking you out of the decision-making process completely, a man may take the passive-aggressive route and allow you to do what you want (to his regret). If he takes the passive-aggressive route and lets you handle things, you'll end up resenting him for being a pushover and he'll end up resenting you for being such a big bully.

Most of the time, it's the small battles that add up that causes men the most irritation. Arguing with him over small everyday decisions will either frustrate him or make him indifferent when you do need his input. For example, sometimes a man will make a decision about something simply because *he wants to*. If your man enjoys taking the long way home because it's the more scenic route, why argue with him about taking a shorter, inner city route home? If he enjoys the view, let him be. If you're at the food store and a bottle of grape juice

costs \$1.50 more than orange juice, why make a fuss just because it's slightly more expensive? If he really likes grape juice, let him have his grape juice. Yes, these are all simple illustrations, but you'll be surprised at how women make a fuss over the simplest decisions men make. When it comes to the small stuff, if he wants to do something and it doesn't cost you your happiness, let him do it.

The first thing is to know your man. If he's the strong alpha type, he won't tolerate always being second-guessed and will eventually put his foot down to your chagrin. If he's laid-back and non-confrontational he'll soon hate himself (and you) for always letting you have your way all the time. His passive-aggressive way of dealing with you will show itself in other ways through his silent acts of "revenge." So what's the moral of the story? Simple, let him be a man by respecting (there's that word again) his leadership and trusting his decision-making.

64

Be patient.

Patience is the virtue that makes both young and older women overwhelmingly attractive. I'm not talking about the patience to take abuse from a man or being patient in suffering because of his thoughtless behavior. What I'm talking about is patience in the way you communicate. If men are the more stubborn of the sexes, developing patience is going to be imperative in dating and relating with men. A good mental trick for being patient with men is to keep this thought in mind: *This man is far from perfect, but I love him anyway. The poor soul just doesn't know any better.* Now, I want to just state here that I'm not trying to help you give a man an excuse for being irresponsible, but I do want you to keep in mind that we're all perfectly flawed human beings just trying to get along in the *easiest* way possible. Let me explain (as I go off on a tangent). Cultivating and maintaining a relationship requires work, a ton of work. We all want to be happy

in our relationships without the stress of *change*, so we keep our old, annoying, bad habits not because we don't care, but because change is enormously difficult and uncomfortable. If a man truly knew on a subconscious level how to keep you happy, he would do it. But chances are, he doesn't know, at least not entirely, and therefore he will make mistakes, get on your bad side, and make you want to rip his beady eyes out. But when you realize that he's trying his best and that you can see progress, you can learn to be much more patient with him.

65

Give the man you love the benefit of the doubt, and avoid prejudging him.

If you're going to attack or criticize everything your man says he's going to learn the art of not-saying-anything-to-you-at-all. To a man, prejudging his responses is like being accused of murder and going to court just as a formality. It doesn't make any sense to argue or testify if your verdict, no matter how unjust, is already guilty.

Here's a scenario. Let's say you asked your husband to clean the dishes because you'll be getting off from work late and need a hand. You get home late, tired and worn out and walk into the kitchen and see a heap of filth in the sink. You glance at the couch and see your knight-in-shining-armor fast asleep in front of the TV, still dressed in work attire. What do you do next? Do you wake him up and tell him that he's a lazy, inconsiderate bastard of a man or do you act with God-like patience and give him the benefit of the doubt? Remember, one path is the path of love; the other is the path of self-interest.

The truth is, he fell asleep on the couch after coming straight home from work and spending the entire evening helping one of the kids with a school project that's due the following day. If you snap at him, he might feel like nothing he

does matters to you and it could lead to resentment and bitterness. If you gave him the benefit of the doubt, he would have the chance to explain and you would see just how fabulous of a father he is to your children. You would then be able to appreciate him even more and he would be more than happy to follow through on his word. It's the same situation but with two different results, all because you didn't judge the situation in your mind before giving him a chance. I'm not saying every situation will be like this one, but choosing to respond in a loving, non-judgmental way is always the better choice.

66

Change your negative self-talk.

Negative self-talk can CRIPPLE your ability to communicate effectively with your man. If you struggle to communicate with men and you have a history of broken relationships or frustrating fights, you might be suffering from negative self-talk when it comes to communicating with men.

The things you tell yourself regularly, whether audibly or silently create the beliefs that drive your every action. Your thoughts help to shape your behavior, and if you always enforce negative self-talk when trying to communicate with men you'll continue to get frustrating results. For instance, affirming things to yourself like, "*I'm never going to get through to him*" or "*He never understands me*" or even, "*Talking to him frustrates me*" won't help your cause to be understood one bit. Instead, replace these kinds of phrases with more positive ones like, "*I communicate with men with ease*" or "*I am easily understood when I communicate*" or even "*I enjoy working through conflicts with my husband/boyfriend.*"

Now before you jump up and say that you're not a negative self-talker, if you monitor your thoughts long enough you may start to notice certain thinking

patterns that have created neural pathways in your brain that reinforce unhealthy communication habits. Behavioral researcher and best-selling author, Shad Helmstetter, discusses this concept in-depth in his book, *What To Say When You Talk To Yourself*. It's a phenomenal self-improvement tool if you often struggle with negative thoughts. I highly recommend it.

67

Subvert self-interest to love him just the way he is.

We all want something. The moment you interact with another human being, you're trying to get something. Even if you compliment someone expecting nothing in return, you're still trying to gain the feeling of benevolence that comes from being kind. When we communicate with our significant others to get what we want and we don't get what we want, we get frustrated. We feel misunderstood and can go as far as feeling unloved when we communicate without getting the results we wanted. Here's some sage advice: try subverting your self-interest to communicate with your man *as he is*. Okay, this may sound a little vague at first so I'll explain. If you try to communicate with your man with the expectation that he'll be able to understand you perfectly, you will be frustrated. If you try to communicate with your man expecting him to be fully reasonable all the time, you will be frustrated. If you try to communicate with your man expecting him to just "get you", you will be frustrated.

The first step to effective communication with a man starts by accepting him the way he is now, in the present, and this includes accepting the way he communicates at the moment. If you get into a heated argument or conflict *expecting* and *wishing* he communicated better, you're already setting up a barrier to your own happiness and making it even more difficult to love him just the way he is. I know it sounds tough, but believe me; you cannot solve conflict by resisting reality. Accepting how he communicates means that you're not

relying on his ability to understand you for your own happiness. When you're not reliant on his understanding you're free to love him as he is, flaws and all, while working through the issues to reach a sensible conclusion.

68

Speak your mind and uphold your boundaries like a well-refined queen, not an uncouth commoner.

One of the sexiest things in the world is a woman who knows how to speak her mind and defend her personal boundaries in a firm, but respectful way. It is a rare quality among women, and men recognize this kind of feminine grace and adore it. When a man steps out of line with you or simply isn't respecting you, whether it is your co-worker, boyfriend, husband, etc., you have three options. First, you can do nothing, which is perhaps the worst thing you can do. Second choice is, you can act like an uncivilized ruffian and risk ruining a relationship. Third choice is, you can respond like a woman who's above pettiness and set him straight with tact and diplomacy. The third choice is the most difficult but most worth it.

Men, even the man you love, will sometimes need to be reminded of where you stand and what you're capable of. No one's perfect, and he's going to make mistakes due to pride and/or ignorance. When this happens, respect yourself and respect him by handling him with grace. For example, let's say you and your man are visiting your hometown and he insists that he knows where he's going even though you're pretty sure he's lost. The kids are in the back getting restless and everyone's hungry and tired. If your first attempts at helping him fail due to his pride, stubbornness, or ignorance, set him straight by telling him something like: *"Honey, the kids are hungry, we're burning unnecessary fuel, and I know you're tired. This is my hometown and I know it very well. I think it would be*

*wise for you to take advantage of what I know in this instance.” That’s a much more attractive and even more dignified response than, “Dave, you’re an idiot. You’re lost and you know it. You should just listen to what I have to say instead of being so stubborn all the time.” Once again, it’s the same situation but with two completely different responses that will get you completely different results assuming you have a *reasonable* man.*

69

Understand your man FIRST.

Don’t worry; I’m not one of those guys that believe a woman should do everything in her power to please her man. Whatever I say to you I say the same thing to guys, just in their own language. Just like I advise men that they should first seek to understand before seeking to be understood I’m advising that you do the exact same thing. By first seeking to understand the man that you love and want, you’ll be in a much better position to respond favorably to him. Your communication will be much more effective when you know how to manage his emotions. Yes, I said *manage* his emotions.

As I said in my book, [*101 Things Your Dad Never Told You About Men*](#), men actually *want* to be influenced by the women they love. But in order to do so you must first understand how he thinks and what makes him tick. So, seek first to understand before desiring to be understood. It will relieve a lot of the frustration that’s attached to trying to get your way when communicating with him.

70

Don’t hesitate when you need to apologize to him.

I’ve noticed an interesting thing about some women, especially the Daddy’s girl

types. They are extremely reluctant or even indifferent when it comes to apologizing to the man they apparently love. They seem to have this attitude that says, “*If he’s not aware that I’m wrong, then I won’t say anything to him, and I certainly won’t give an apology if he doesn’t ask for one.*” Are you serious? Please, ladies, if you are in the wrong and know you’re in the wrong, don’t wait for him to approach you for an apology. It communicates that you’re indifferent to his emotional well-being, especially if he’s been beating himself up about the issue. Your man doesn’t want to hear your *swift* and *sincere* apologies just to bolster his ego or to justify his inner need to dance around the room and shout, “*I’m right, I’m right, I’m finally RIGHT!*” While the latter is admittedly quite fun, your *swift* and *sincere* apology has a higher purpose. We need to know that you have our best interest at heart, and that if you’re at fault you’re the kind of woman who can readily admit it. Don’t wait for him to approach you for an apology. Men love it when a woman is *swift* and *sincere* with her apologies. It displays grace, class, and the irresistible beauty of a woman who’s above petty-mindedness.

71

Give him honest and sincere appreciation.

Whenever you can, be lavish in your praise and generous with your appreciation. I say it to women all the time and I’ll say it again...men don’t get nearly enough appreciation that they deserve. Compare father’s day to mother’s day and you’ll see exactly what I mean. Western culture seems to accept the idea that because it’s an honor to be a man, a leader, a provider of the family, etc., we don’t require lots of appreciation. Here’s the thing, men want and crave appreciation just as much as women do, sometimes even more. The difference is, most times we’re not going to come right out and ask for it. Why? Well, because it comes off as being *needy*, which is quite unattractive. We’d like for the woman we love

to shower us with honest and sincere appreciation without us having to ask for it.

Of course, when I say “shower” him with praise I don’t mean vague generalities like “Honey, you’re so great!” I mean specific appreciation that compliments something unique about him. For example, saying “*Thank you for taking me out tonight. You’re such a thoughtful boyfriend. I know you’ve been very busy this month, but I really appreciate this*” is much more specific, honest, and sincere. When you verbally express your appreciation, try to recognize his sacrifice. A good man doesn’t go around counting the sacrifices he makes for those around him, but that doesn’t mean he’s averse to having at least some of those sacrifices recognized, especially by the woman he loves. Women who exude gratitude are highly attractive because they’re easier to please and find contentment in the smallest of gestures. Men adore women that verbally express their gratitude because it makes them feel valued. The more a man feels appreciated the easier it is for him to *want* to continue making you happy. He knows that you’ll never (or rarely) take him for granted and that no matter how imperfect he is, you’ll always treasure the little things he does to make you happy.

72

Let him lead.

When a good woman is angry with her husband or boyfriend, chances are he’s not leading the way he’s supposed to. I hold the traditional view that a man should love his woman with passion and lead her with compassion. It’s a noble ideal that many guys want to follow, but they’re being met with strong resistance from women who either refuse this view of the world or who just don’t realize that they’re sabotaging their man’s efforts. I can only speak on behalf of high-quality men here, and believe me when I say that men like this *prefer* to be with a woman who lets them lead. When I say “let him lead” I mean don’t be a hindrance to his innate desire to lead. If anything, communicate your support of

his leadership. And when he fails to do so (as he will at times), use your feminine grace to influence him to be a better man.

Because some women grew up in broken homes or had less-than-noble fathers they're not used to seeing examples of women helping their men to lead effectively. And while feminism may have done some good in society, the by-products of the movement have left many women confused or even flat out rebellious to the thought of letting a man lead, especially in a relationship. I'm not here to convince you otherwise, but I will tell you exactly how men think. The fact remains; high-quality men won't fight a woman for leadership. They'll either move on to a woman who's more supportive of them, or they'll lead without your support.

73

Maintain a tender heart.

Be quick to forgive and don't hold grudges against the man you love. That's it. While this doesn't seem like a communication strategy it may be the single most important point to remember in this book as you communicate with your man. The grudges you hold against your husband or boyfriend WILL be communicated in one way or another. Snide remarks, undermining comments, and cold body language are all signs of an unforgiving attitude. If you're married, keep the softest spot in your heart for your husband. I'm not saying to let them get away with murder, but I am saying that you must be willing to love them without fear.

When someone does or says something to hurt us, it's natural for us to put up our defenses. Just like how a callus forms to protect a sensitive area of the skin, we can form calluses of the heart (cue in the cheesy music). Instead of forming emotional calluses try not to count the wrongs your husband does against you.

Even if you're dating, so long as your boyfriend treats you with love and respect more often than not, learn to forgive the things he does wrong. Learning to do so is tough business, and it's pivotal to a blissful relationship. A perfect love counts no wrongs done against it and therefore has nothing to fear.

74

Keep an unshakable sense of humor.

When communicating with your man starts to tax your sanity, remember to exercise your sense of humor. You'll make mistakes, he'll make mistakes, and sometimes nobody is going to get through to anybody. When that happens, laugh with him or with yourself. If he's a reasonable guy, chances are he'll catch himself in the act of losing control and he may burst out laughing at his own idiocy. Laugh with him. If he's having a jolly old laugh at how stupid the argument is, don't look at him all angry-like with one eyebrow raised and say, "*Oh, so you think this is funny huh?*" Chances are, most of the minor stuff is just that...minor stuff. Don't sweat the small stuff and don't be so serious. After all, we're all only human.

75

Adopt an "*I'm responsible for my own happiness*" approach to relating with men.

I saved this communication secret for last because I really want this concept to sink in and transform your entire approach to loving a man. The thing is, there's something very interesting I notice about relationships. They are designed more for giving rather than receiving, and the couples who "make it" and who flourish blissfully as the years go by are those who live by that principle. Yes, we all

know on a conscious level that we should focus more on the giving than the receiving, but let me show you just how tainted our subconscious attitudes may be towards living this principle.

If I gave you something that made you happy without *needing* anything in return from you at that moment, what happens? You feel happy because you got something free (you feel special), and I feel happier because I gave out of the goodness of my heart. I grow in intrinsic, spiritual value (high-character), you grow fonder of me because I made you feel special, and now my value to you has increased, *i.e.* Bruce is a really generous guy.

Think of how this applies to relationships. The more you can give to your beloved without *needing* anything in return, the higher your intrinsic value becomes and the less attached you are to *needing* something in return. You grow in spiritual strength as your peace of mind grows less dependent on the behavior of other people.

It appears that God designed us in such a way that we become more valuable and even desirable to others as our spiritual strength increases. Therefore to grow in spiritual value (grace, generosity, patience, etc.) the most important relationships for a woman to have are the ones with her Creator and also how she relates to herself (self-respect/esteem). When the foundations of your happiness are no longer linked to how a man treats you, it becomes a thousand times easier for you to communicate with him in a loving way.

If you refuse to suffer (be unhappy) when your husband or boyfriend does something that displeases you, what happens? You accept them for who they are and you're less apt to become unhappy when he says or does something that frustrates you. But isn't my man supposed to make me happy? Yes and no. Yes, your man should be adding more happiness to your life, but no, *his behavior* should not dictate the quality of your peace of mind. The moment a man's behavior either makes or breaks your day, you're in problems. If just about

everything he does in the relationship dictates your happiness, you won't be able to love him unconditionally.

To love a man, flaws and all, is to accept him as he is, without any hidden agenda or strings attached. With full acceptance of who and what he is, you immediately improve your ability to communicate with him because now you can respond to his displeasing behaviors with unconditional love. THIS is what makes a woman graceful. The moment a woman doesn't *need* a man to be on his best behavior just so she can be happy, she becomes FAR more attractive to him. Why? Well for one, he subconsciously realizes that the pressure is off of him, so he feels more decisive about pleasing you. And two, he also realizes that he must now prove *his* value to you. Read that last paragraph again.

A woman who is content regardless of what's going on around her is of *high value* because she's not needy. Men want women of *high value*, and men know that OTHER men want women of *high value*. When you have *high value* as a woman, no man wants to lose you, and all of a sudden the very things he used to do (or not do) to make you unhappy he'll want to change in order to *prove his worth to you*. If you learn how to be responsible for your own happiness, a man will either respond favorably by becoming a better man (to prove his worth), or you'll attract a better man (who recognizes your worth). In short, you cannot lose. Trust me, I can honestly say that as a man...we love proving our worth to a woman who's worth it.

Final Thoughts

I won't lie to you, changing the way you communicate is hard work. But in all honesty, it isn't supposed to be an overnight change. As you apply these communication techniques to your relationships with men, over time you'll begin to see favorable changes in how men respond to you. I should also point out that men aren't looking for perfect women. We don't expect you to *always* communicate perfectly. We don't expect you to *always* say the right thing to us at the right time and in the right way. You will make mistakes, and regardless of how many mistakes you make, a good man will love you regardless. But even the smallest improvements in how you communicate have the potential to elicit radical changes in the man you date or relate with.

Communicating gracefully with men is something that you get better at over time and it makes you far more irresistible the older you get. Mature beauty and inner grace are tremendously attractive and RARE in a woman. Younger women who learn how to apply these communication secrets earlier on will find their relationships with men much more favorable (and superior) than their peers. And older women who master these principles will often find that they're able to grab the attention of men of ALL ages.

At the end of the day, all a man really wants is to be understood and shown respect. But I also realize that it's a two way street, and no woman can stand being respectful to a man that acts unloving indefinitely. The reality is, if you're dating a man who more often than not, acts unloving towards you, I'd suggest that you try out the techniques in this book for about three months, consistently.

If after three months you don't see any positive changes in the way he treats you, get rid of him and move on. While you're still unmarried you have a great opportunity to find a man worthy of unconditional respect. On the other hand, if you're already married, I suggest something similar except with one small change. Try out these communication techniques with your husband for three months straight, consistently, and maintain a positive attitude as you hope for a change. If after three months you don't see ANY positive improvements, I'd suggest you both attend marriage counseling. Anything worth committing to is worth saving.

I wrote this book because I honestly feel that open communication is ridiculously important to the well-being of any relationship. It's when communication breaks down between a man and a woman that things begin to go downhill. If you can't get through to him and vice versa, no one will understand anyone and feelings of discontent will slowly fill your hearts with resentment. But you can avoid that altogether by harnessing your natural ability to influence men. If you can overcome your own insecurities, hesitations, and negative beliefs about *unconditionally respecting* a man, you'll tap into a source of feminine power that the masculine cannot resist. Men crave more tenderness, patience, and queen-like assertiveness in the women they love, and they'll do whatever they can to keep a woman like this all to themselves. Remember that.

By the way...

As a way of saying “thanks” for your purchase, I’m offering a free dating guide that’s exclusive to my book readers. The book is called, ***Dating Deal Breakers That Drive Men Away***, and in it you’ll discover the most common deal-breaking “red flags” high-quality men watch for when dating a woman.

You can get it here at: <http://www.brucebryans.com/her-free/>

In this free guide you’ll not only learn what these red flags look like to men, but also how to best avoid them in order to get the guy you want and KEEP him interested.

Again, here’s the link to get it free: <http://www.brucebryans.com/her-free/>

About Bruce Bryans

Bruce Bryans is a successful author who has written numerous best-selling books for men and women who want to improve the quality of their relationships. After writing for various online publications on the topics of dating and relationships, he ran a successful romance advice website where his insightful articles and newsletters helped improve people's love lives one-by-one.

Years later, Bruce decided to focus his time and efforts on writing and publishing books with easy-to-implement, practical information that had the potential to reach, and therefore help more people. While he doesn't consider himself the all-knowing "Yoda" of relationships, he still enjoys sharing the triumphs (and failures) of his love life with anyone who enjoys a good laugh or a life lesson.

When he isn't tucked away in some corner writing a literary masterpiece (or so he thinks), Bruce spends most of his time engaged in manly hobbies or being a romantic nuisance to the love of his life.

You can learn more about his writings and receive updates (and future discounts) on his books by visiting his website at: www.BruceBryans.com

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