

What a Woman Wants by Katie Jansen

Why can't you just listen to me? I don't want your advice; I just want you to listen!" I yelled.

"I did listen to you; you could have done something to prevent that problem!" my boyfriend replied.

That was the gist of our last argument. We concluded that we were just different people. Well, of course we are different people. I am a woman, and he is a man. That's right; I am a woman, and why can't a man understand what a woman wants? Come on—we give them all the right clues; we basically feed it to them. (They might as well just roll over and drool.) The truth is, men and women communicate in different ways; we talk, listen, and act differently. This fact can create some major misunderstandings and even arguments. I am a woman, so I have a pretty good idea of what a woman wants. So listen up boys!

Men and woman actually think differently. For example, a man and a woman are having a professional conversation. As the man talks, the woman nods her head, and the man thinks, "Oh great, she agrees with me." (Where the heck does he get off thinking that?) The woman actually nods her head to show she understands what is going on. Now why don't men pick up this good habit of nodding the head? I mean, come on, when I am trying to explain something to a man he just stares at me. (Do I have to repeat everything ten times before a man says or shows me that he understands what I am saying?) Being a woman, I understand these slight differences. I have come to understand that if a guy is just staring at me when I talk, he probably understands me. Now most men don't have the ability to give feedback; they continue to think that I am agreeing with them time after time! So here it is straight out—when I nod my head, I simply want to indicate that I understand what you are saying. IT DOESN'T MEAN I AGREE WITH YOU!

Now, let's get down to business. We have established that men can't understand the brilliant minds of women, so it looks like I will have to explain. When a woman tells a man a problem, why does a man always have to try to fix it? (Okay, right now you men are itching that sensitive bone in your body and pulling out a one-liner like, "I just hate it when you are sad, and I want to make everything perfect." Well, the truth is women just like someone to be there for them. (Yeah, it really is that easy.) When I tell my boyfriend about a problem that I am having, that is just not the time to evaluate what I could have done differently in the situation; it is not the time to go over and over an aspect of the problem to find out what went wrong, or how to fix it. For my sake, please just give me a hug and reassure me that whatever happened was not good, and that it will eventually get better. According to Julia Wood,

When women talk about something that is troubling them, they are often looking for communication that expresses empathy and connection. Yet masculine socialization teaches men to use communication instrumentally, so they tend to offer advice. Thus, women sometimes interpret men's advice as communicating lack of personal concern. (92)

If my boyfriend showed a little more empathy when I told him about a problem, we probably never would have gotten into an argument.

Another thing that makes men and women so different is schedules. The Myers Briggs personality test proves that most men are thinkers, and most women are feelers. Thinkers are "interested in what is logical and work by cause and effect." Feelers make decisions based on what they feel, on pure emotion. For example, why is it that boys can't just go with the flow? I can look at most guys and say, "Hey, let's get in the car and drive to the beach, eat dinner, and then drive back home." (Okay guys, I know this may be hard

to comprehend; just take a deep breath.) Most guys will look at me like I have completely lost my mind, and they will give me a million reasons why it won't work. They are just too logical. Men, women just need a little spontaneous action in their lives.

One of the major things that make men and women so irritable with each other at times is language. Men and women have very different ways of expressing wants and needs. When a woman wants something in the relationship, she will say, "We need to... (fill in the blank)." What she really means is, "Boy, I don't like what you are doing so in order to please me you need to. . . !"

As a woman, I don't understand why a man always runs when a woman says, "We need to talk." To a man, these are the scariest four words a woman can ever say. Julia Woods explains that, "When a woman says, 'let's talk about us' to men this is often means trouble because they interpret the request as implying there is a problem in the relationship" (92). Most of the time a woman wants to vent about a problem, and usually it doesn't even have anything to do with the relationship. There are other set modes of communicating I would like to explain. Here is one example: I have set up a nice romantic evening for my boyfriend and me. His buddies call and want him to go out with them (a major dilemma for a guy, but a girl just can't pass up romance, and her girlfriends would surely understand). Being completely ignorant, he actually asks me if I would mind if he went. Not wanting to be a controlling girlfriend, I say, "Fine....go ahead." HELLO. THIS IS NOT THE GREEN LIGHT! I am trying to say in a polite way, "I really want you to stay with me." I know my boyfriend really knows how I feel about the situation because he proceeds to ask if I am upset! (Um, I wonder.) So I say, "I am not upset. " (This should be a red flag.) Really, I am saying, "Of course I'm upset, you moron" ("English Language by Gender" 1)! Now I just can't resist; I have to go on. I really know that he gets my drift, because he is starting to feel bad. He looks at me with big puppy dog eyes and says, "Kate, do you really want me to stay?" HELLO! Now, you have to understand that I don't want to make decisions for him, and I don't want to be controlling, so I say, "It's your decision." Wow, that is the number one clue; if you get that line you'd better stay with her! What I really mean is, "You should know what to do by now!" So, as you can see, there is a lot of room in this scenario for misunderstanding, but that is just how women work, and that is just how men work. Men don't understand our clues, and yet a man is just waiting for those clues, so they can get away with what they are doing. I know that, as a woman, I am not going to play dumb, so men you better start picking up the obvious clues we lay down in front of you.

There is no other way to explain it—men and women are just simply different. We think, act, and talk differently, and overall we communicate differently. It's no wonder men and women get in so many arguments. To each man and to each woman, their point of view is very clear. However, every woman knows, just as every man knows, that a woman is always right, and that what a woman wants is just what she should get!

Works Cited

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