

## **A Secret to the Cease-Fire in the War between the Sexes**

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Sexual tension between a man and a woman can be a good thing. However, sometimes we get stuck and the tension in the relationship mounts to dangerous levels. There is a secret to the cease-fire in the war between the sexes. Read on to discover what it is!

Recently my husband installed a new mailbox for me. It is beautiful, as mailboxes go! However, within a week, the handle broke! Held to the door of the mailbox with two screws and bolts, one of the screws went missing and my beautiful mailbox looked ugly with its handle hanging sideways.

He talked about how to fix it but he didn't fix it because he had to go on a business trip. After all, the handle still worked, it just looked funny. So, while he was gone, I fixed it! I had paid attention to how he would fix it and decided to do it myself. Then the next time I had him on the phone, I bragged about it.

Was he proud of me? Was he relieved there was one less item on his to do list when he got home? I don't know. What I heard was him exclaim, "You don't need me!"

Now between the two of us at this point in our relationship, that was playful teasing. For some, however, that would have been a real criticism offered. For others, it would be something felt but not spoken, with another layer of resentment piled on. He would resent her for disrespecting his ability and need to take care of it himself and she would resent him for his unspoken disappointment in her. In addition there would be the guilt and shame of something so simple and seemingly inconsequential causing a breakdown in the relationship.

Now that's a lot of heaviness associated with which of you takes a little screw and bolt and fixes the handle on a mailbox. But it is a reality for a lot of couples. For some, it has been such an intense reality in previous relationships that it can show up on a first date and ruin the chances of a budding relationship.

On a different day, I had been in a conflict with a good friend and could not figure out what had gone wrong between us. Conflicted, I felt both guilt and victimization. All I wanted to do was tell my husband all about it, have him listen and appreciate how it made me feel. I hadn't gotten far into my story when he was already trying to fix what was wrong! I didn't want him to fix what was wrong...I wanted to be heard, understood, and appreciated for the predicament I was in with my friend.

At that point, we were not as far along in our relationship as we are this week with the mailbox. I sighed, huffed, and aired my frustration over being unheard and misunderstood. If he *really* loved me, wouldn't he know what I needed? Now I had feelings about his attempt to "help" me that I needed to process. Do you suppose he wanted to go there?

There is a difference between men and women that once mastered creates happiness instead of strife. Men deeply appreciate respect and women deeply appreciate having their feelings valued. In fact, when a woman actively respects her man, he experiences his own feelings being valued. When a man actively values his woman's feelings, she experiences respect.

One thing I do not understand and that is why is it so difficult for women to tell their men they respect them through their actions and words? It is tough. As soon as I believe I have this thing down, I turn around and treat that man like he is a child and I do not even realize I have done it! I take something away from him that he wanted to accomplish on my behalf. I do that because he wasn't getting it done in my time frame. So, again, there I am like a mama dismissing a little boy instead of appreciating my best fellow, my beau, and my lover, for all the love and all the ways he shows me he loves me!

On the other side of the issue, why is it so hard for men to value their women's feelings? How often do we have to say, "I don't want you to fix my problem! I want you to listen and understand how I'm *feeling!*" What is so hard about that?

I do not know why it is so difficult. I only know that it is. What I do know is that every single time I tell him I respect him, especially when it is for something very specific (not a generic, cover-my-bases respect), he glows and wants to be near me and love me! And every single time he values my feelings in word or deed, I melt and want to be near him and love him.

I do not know how long it takes to master a woman respecting her man and a man valuing his woman's feelings. I do know that the discipline of practicing it has big payoffs and is well worth the time and energy!

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There is a secret to relationship success that is direct, simple, and effective. We and others have used it to transform marriages that felt burdensome and hurtful into marriages filled with love and satisfaction.

You can discover this secret for yourself in the e-workbook called *Creating the Love You Want: Five Unique Steps to Improve Your Marriage*. Go to <http://www.CreateTheLoveYouWant.com> and order your copy right now. With it, you can begin making a difference for yourself tonight!