

How to Love a Woman Who is as Powerful or Even More so than You

Sarah Elizabeth Malinak, M. Div.

I watched Nicole Kidman, who played a powerful, live-by-her-own-rules kind of woman, make love to Hugh Jackman, who played a powerful, live-by-his-own-rules kind of man, in the movie *Australia*. Relationships like that are not supposed to work. In this film, these two powerful people in love were convincing. Of course, their relationship met hurtles due to all that power multiplied by two. They eventually locked horns on an important issue and seemed unable to reconcile. However, love won out in the end with both of them giving a little. Creating a win-win situation, neither of them had to give up who he or she was to save the romance.

Then I read about Amy Adams, an exciting, powerful actor who is on a roll these days winning memorable and award-nominating roles. She has been in a romantic relationship for six years to an actor who hasn't had the same measure of success. They recently became engaged. In an article from *Vanity Fair* (November 2008), Amy is quoted as saying, "He's not competitive with me...He has a wonderful talent, and there aren't many people in the world who are like that, where he does not think that my success is his failure. He just doesn't see it like that, and I don't either."

Contemplating these two powerful women, one from fiction and one from real life, I realized some essential pieces to loving a powerful woman. Love her for her strengths. Love her for the vulnerable side that only you are privileged to see. Refrain from interpreting her success as your failure. If you master these three things, you can create love for a lifetime with the woman of your dreams!

When you love a woman for her strengths, you love her for the things that attracted you in the first place. One of the sexiest aspects of any person in the world is confidence! A woman's strengths are some of what give her the confidence that caught your eye the first time you noticed her.

As her man, you are privileged to witness a side of her that no one else sees, not even her best girlfriends. Women long to be understood and known by their men. At the risk of sounding like a line from an all-time-favorite chick flick, no one can "complete" a woman like the man who loves her for who she is. Her desire is to reward him by letting her guard down, allowing him to be with her in a way no one else is. Even something as simple as your eyes being the rare pair that sees her without make-up and without perfect hair means you share an intimacy unique to the two of you.

There is a price to mastering this one, however, and that is the extent to which you are asked to listen to her. There may be times when you invite her, politely and with warmth and affection, to quit talking so that you can share her intimate space without the words creating a distance between you. As much as women want their men to know them and seeing how that involves a lot of verbal sharing, sometimes they need to be reminded that the pathway to your heart doesn't happen between your ears! It happens in a more visceral, sharing personal space way. Reassure her that you want to hear it all. Perhaps

hearing some now and more a little later would be good. If you invite her to stop talking in order to get physically closer, let her finish her thought or that particular story anyway!

The more power a woman carries out in the world, the more challenged she might be to release it in order to be soft and receptive with you. This is a place where your leadership can shine.

Finally, whether or not you perceive her success to be your failure is pretty much up to you. If your woman is in the habit of using her success to make you feel patronized, you may already be determining whether or not the relationship will continue. If you are in this situation, she may have good intentions without realizing how she communicates condescension. In that case, she may be worth hanging onto while you take leadership and help her distinguish when her words and behavior are empowering and when they are disempowering. If she is mean spirited, though, I hope you will love yourself enough to communicate honestly with her and consider letting the relationship go.

However, if she doesn't use her success to put you down, then whether or not it does is up to you. You may have friends who tease you about her success or who envy you for it. Sometimes it may be hard to tell the difference between the two. Men, who have had successful relationships with powerful women, have work or a career that is their own. The first such man that comes to mind is Carl Dean, husband to Dolly Parton. She has said that one of the reasons their relationship has lasted so long and has been so rewarding is because they have their own interests. Carl not only has his own interests, he owns his own business. They've been happily married for forty-two years.

Successful, powerful women can be complex creatures yet beautiful to behold and an unending mystery to unfurl. They want to be loved as much as anyone. If you're lucky enough to have fallen in love with one, love her for her strengths, appreciate the vulnerability she only allows you to witness, and trust your own power and success rather than interpreting hers as your failure.

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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!