

# Communication problems between men and women in a relationship

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



To have a successful relationship, men and women need different skills and abilities which may be very difficult to attain. One of the most important factors to an effective relationship is to have a good communication with your partner. Though it sounds a fairly easy thing to do, most of divorces have been result of lack of communication (Tannen 104).

Men and women fail to understand each other's requests or suggestions when communicating, is like they speak different languages, like they come from different planets (Gray 9). In *Do Men and Women Speak the Same Language?* Philip Yancey describes this understanding issue between men and women as a " vast cultural gap" (82). Communication problems in a relationship between man and woman are due to their different styles of conversation; a woman comprehension is extremely different from that of a man. " Male/female relationships represent a classic case of cross-cultural communication" (Yancey 82). Even if men and women speak the same language, each of the words they use has different meanings for both of them. When a woman tries to express her thoughts or information she might use exaggeration, metaphors, and generalizations. Most of the time when a woman use exaggeration, the man takes her expressions literally and reacts in a defensive way causing the women to feel misunderstood or upset (Gray 61).

Every time a woman wants to talk about a topic, she wants to convey something to her partner; she always has a purpose and " request for support" behind all her expressions. A women needs to communicate with their husbands to feel that there is intimacy and love, but when a woman do

not express herself clearly enough they do not get the respond they expect (Tannen 108). Men are often good with “ public speaking”, they can feel very comfortable and confident when talking in front of people, but at home they tend to be the ones who talk the less (Tannen 104). Unlike women, men do not need too much communication to feel a connection with the loved one. Men do not talk about their feelings very often; they avoid those kinds of topics unless they are prepared to say what they think in an organized manner. While women think “ out loud” and say what they think through the “ process of just talking”, a man thinks carefully about what he has heard, how he wants to respond and how to say it. This process that occurs in their minds can take minutes or even hours; this is why sometimes they do not respond to the woman early enough causing the women to worry and to feel insecure (Gray 68).

. “ When a man is silent it is easy for a woman to imagine the worst” (Gray 68). It is very difficult for a woman to understand why her husband is not talking. She will not know how to react in these situations. What many women do not understand is that a man needs to have a private moment and space where he can think about different things that might be bothering him but that he knows he can take care of them by himself. The man will go to his “ cave” and figure things out; when he has organized his thoughts he will leave the “ cave” and everything will be back to normal (Gray 69). Women do not feel comfortable with this process because they do not just stop talking when they have a particular trouble.

In fact “ sometimes women talk for the same reasons that men stop talking” (Gray 70). Between women, if they feel someone is upset they will ask them questions that a woman won’t hesitate to answer. Women will try to help men by asking questions, but when a man is in his “ cave” he doesn’t want anyone to ask him questions; that will bother him even more leading him to say hurtful things that will start an argument (Gray 72-73). If a woman does not understand this behavior she will feel that she is not being helpful and that she is a bad wife; “ women tend to feel approval from others and thereby gain the sense of worth” (Yancey 84). The reason why men and women have different styles of conversation, different ways to look at things and different ways to approach problems is because they grow up in different and opposite environments. Tannen’s study on the way girls and boys communicate themselves at a young age showed that girls would hold conversations based on one topic for certain amount of time; girls tend to tell stories about people or personal experiences. On the contrary, boys would talk about several different topics at the same ime; boys are use to tell jokes, to talk about games and notice random things around them (106).

For little girls maintaining a friendship consists in telling each other secrets, sharing their thoughts and stating opinions therefore in a woman there are expectations of finding a husband who can be similar to a best friend, someone she can share all her thoughts with, but most of men do not reach these expectations (Tannen 105). Friendship between boys are based in actions and activities they do together not on talking and sharing thoughts. Since they don’t assume talk is the cement that binds a relationship, men

don't know what kind of talk women want, and they don't miss it when it isn't there" (Tannen 105). Boys grow up surrounded with large groups of friends where there is some kind of leader that tells them what to do therefore men act like they do not listen to their wives who in that case represent the leader they do not want to obey. For some men " being the listener makes them feel one-down, like a child listening to an adult or an employee to a boss" (Tannen 106). For these reasons, women often complain that men do not listen and it may be true in some cases but when a man says he is listening, he actually is (Tannen 106). Men do not make it easy to women to know if they are listening or not, many men just listen but do not reply or they don't let the women know that they are listening with some kind of sign.

Women see this as disrespectful since men do not show interest and she feels ignored. If the men do not care about what she is saying then the women will once again feel worried and upset and she will eventually express herself with exaggerated language (Tannen 107). When men and women argue they easily say things that they may not mean and things that they will regret later. Since women " think out loud" she does not take time to think before she talks therefore most of the time she might not be proving her point effectively and men will start pointing out her errors or will start judging her. This scene makes women very upset because at the end they realize that the men did not understand what she was trying to say, that their complains were absolutely " misunderstood and misinterpreted"(Gray 60-62). A good relationship is based in good communication and good

communications is based in understanding, caring and loving. When a woman know what to do when a man is on the “ cave”, she will show him that he cares for him, that as a wife she understands him and supports him.

And when a man realizes when a woman needs more love and attention, he should show his wife that he is willing to please her and to do anything possible to make their relationship work. By improving communication between men and women they can also improve their lives (Gray 285).