

# Why Your Man is a Jerk



(...and how to fix him)

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# **Why Your Man is a Jerk and How to Fix Him**

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**By Aaron Abber**

**<http://www.FullTiltMarriage.com>**

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# Why Your Man is a Jerk and How to Fix Him

## Introduction

Thanks for picking up my book. You will enjoy it and you might just learn something.

But why did you pick it up? There are a several possibilities:

1. Your husband is a jerk.
2. You worry your husband might become a jerk.
3. You liked the title and thought it might be funny.
4. You were offended by the title and wanted to see just how bad this book really is.

If you fall into categories 1 or 2, this book will be a Godsend. You will be writing me emails telling me just how much it changed your marriage for the better or asking more in-depth questions.

[Heck, just so you have it, you can contact me here:

<http://www.FullTiltMarriage.com/help> ]

If you are in the third category then you will enjoy and get some chuckles out of this book.

If you are in the fourth category, get a life. You have better things to do than go around the interwebs looking for reasons to be offended. Or send me a message so I can make fun of you on my blog.

[ <http://www.FullTiltMarriage.com/blog> ]

Ready to dig in? Me too. Here are some facts you need to know before you get to the “meat” of this book.

## ***Your husband probably isn't a jerk, he just seems that way***

A few of you really are married to real jerks. These are the guys who are constantly being verbally and/or physically abusive. This book isn't going to tell you how to keep from being hit by the jerk. He's a real jerk and you need to get whatever help you need to leave him in the dust.

But the rest of you are married to regular guys. Regular guys who don't take out the garbage, spend too much time watching sports and who never give you a break from the kids. Regular guys who want you to be instantly in the mood and yet never seem to figure out how to do anything romantic. Regular guys who are happy to watch while you come home from a too-long work day, cook dinner, do the laundry, take junior to soccer practice and then vacuum.

You know, regular guys.

Maybe your guy isn't quite that bad, but you are still frustrated he doesn't understand you or what you go through. As you read this book you will discover exactly why he does the things he does and how to have the fulfilling marriage with him you want and need.

## ***We like to live in make-believe***

For years I worked writing ad copy for various products. While the product varied, the psychology behind selling them was always the same: The product must deliver a new life to the prospect.

Bowflex? Just look at the grandmother who is fitter than most women are at 18. Buy a Bowflex and you'll be hot again too.

Revlon? You'll look ten years younger in minutes.

Betty Crocker? Your family will tell you you're the best mom/wife in the world.

You get the idea.

Marketing works because we like to live in fantasy land where a cream will take away years of overeating and neglect, where a happy family is created by a chocolate cake and where a simple exercise machine will make us a hottie.

That's fantasy, but you knew that on some level already.

But there are other fantasies we accept that are just as false, yet we live in them because they "seem" like they ought to be true. Here are a few that can ruin your marriage:

### ***You Married the Wrong Person***

Guess what? Everyone marries the wrong person. Living with another human being is hard even under the best of circumstance. The reason we make the commitment of marriage is to say "I'll be there for you when things aren't so great." Every marriage of any real length has gone through times when murder seems a better option than divorce.

[Just kidding honey!]

### ***Men and Woman Have Equal Responsibility***

You already know this denies one of the most basic common traits of men and women. Women, much more often than men, are nurturers. It doesn't mean men can't nurture, nor does it mean some men aren't better nurturers than their partners. What it does mean is men are usually more naturally concerned about obtaining and preserving resources while women are usually more concerned with the nest and children.

### ***Men Shouldn't Be So "Manish"***

How dare a man want sex every day! How dare a man enjoy brute sports like football!

We need kind, sensitive men who know how to love and care for their wives and children. We pay attention.

As you will see in upcoming chapters, this is an irrational view of manhood that keeps many women from ever being satisfied with any man.

***Reality is often not politically correct nor even popular, but denying it will cause you to make poor decisions***

In marketing you don't worry about what people say they will do, nor do you worry about what the politically correct version of gender roll might be. Instead, you deal with the reality of how people actually conduct themselves.

Men do manish things. Women do womanish things. That's the reality and it's not changing anytime soon. As you read this book you will accept that reality and it will go a long way toward making both you and your husband much more happy.

Here's what you will discover as you read:

***Understanding why your husband does what he does will allow you to not only live together in peace, it will allow you to receive from him the things you need.***

There are a few steps to understanding your husband you need to take to get to the marriage you've always dreamed of:

1. You need to understand you married him for a reason

You'll learn this in the next chapter entitled:

“Casper of Fabio: Knowing Why You Married Him”

2. You need to understand your own agenda

That's in chapter three:

“This is your Brain. This is Your Brain on Estrogen”

3. You need to understand why his brain is messed up

Chapter Four:

“Sex, Beer and Rock ‘n Roll—or just more Sex”

4. You need to understand why his brain makes him a jerk

Chapter Five:

“He Acts Like a Neanderthal—But Less Hairy”

5. You need to understand how to potty train your husband

Chapter Six:

“Help Me Help You”

6. You need to understand how to get what you need in your relationship

Chapter Seven:

“You Can’t Always Get what You Want, or Can You?”

Sounds exciting, doesn’t it?

Let’s start by learning why you married that jerk in the first place.

## **Casper of Fabio: Knowing Why You Married Him**

As married life goes on, we sometimes forget why we married the person we married. After all, things change dramatically after you get married: Children are born, jobs change, houses and cars are bought and sold and bought again.

### ***You Married Him for a Reason***

#### **Some of you are on the verge of giving up**

As you read this some of you are on the verge of giving up. You can't imagine staying in the marriage. You've tried everything you know of and still you are unhappy every day.

I have some good news: Not only did I save a bunch of money on my car insurance, but your marriage may not be as dismal as you think!

If you want to understand that jerk who is your husband, it's often good to start with why you married him in the first place.

Most of us pick a mate based on all sorts of criteria. The main criteria are often sexual attraction and emotional attraction. We have fun together—in and out of bed—and that's how we pick a mate.

In addition we usually come up with all sorts of practical reasons to give out conscious mind the rational excuses to get our swerve on, but those are typically secondary to our subconscious reasons.

But once we get married there is more on our plate than just sexual attraction and emotional attraction. Sometimes, under the intense light of real life, we forget the positive reasons we married and start focusing on all of our spouse's shortcomings.

Often, during these periods of forgetful mental criticism, we end up looking for the person our spouse is NOT and end up disappointed. To make that clear, let's look at some of the types of men out there, why they are

attractive to their mate and what problems they are likely to experience later in marriage.

### **The Playful Kid**

Carefree, the playful kid loves a good time. He'll spend his last dime on the keg or the trip to Cancun. He loved college—but maybe didn't go to class too often.

He's attractive to women who need to cut loose. Who need to let down their hair. Often he represents the person they wish they were.

So dating is a blast. All good times.

But once married, some problems come up. His carefree ways don't necessarily translate into job security. His impulsiveness with money might imperil the retirement fund or even next month's rent. He avoids dealing with serious issues (they're just downers) and may be a bit dependent on his wife.

When his wife feels like she needs extra support, he may be unable to give it.

If you married the playful kid...

Tap into the parts of him that made him attractive to you in the first place. Embrace your inner spring break. Sure, you may need to manage the finances, but with him you can cut loose and enjoy your weekend. Or your evening. Or that trip to Miami.

### **The Career Guy**

With career guy it's all about the Benjamins. Or, at least, advancing in his career. He's attractive to women who like security and stability. Women see him as "ambitious." They know he's going places and they want to come along for the ride.

Which is cool. You get a nice house, kids in designer clothes and the “designer” schools and a gas guzzling, shiny SUV.

But you also get a man who is working long hours and is often absent in mind if not in body when he IS around. You raise the kids while he nurtures a growing career. You have to help his career as well: You have to look good and articulate for the annual Christmas party and the trip he won to Acapulco.

If you married the career guy...

Embrace the things his career can provide—nice “stuff”—while realizing the trade off might be less emotional time with him. Most times a career guy is open to negotiating “family” or “date” time as long as it gets on the calendar first and is not cutting into his 60+ hour weeks and can be changed if he gets an urgent call from the office.

### **Casper the Friendly (Milk) Toast**

In the wild species survive most often not by being stronger or winning more battles, but by avoiding those battles all together. Casper Milktoast is the same way.

Now I probably shouldn’t use the title “Casper Milktoast” because it has a supremely negative connotation, but you just can’t beat a header like “Casper the Friendly (Milk) Toast.” Sorry Casper, I just had to.

Women are attracted to Casper because he never says “no.” He goes along with their plans and gives them positive encouragement without any disagreement. The type of women who are most attracted to Casper project outer confidence and a sense of purpose. Casper is along for the ride.

Once married, however, Casper may seem like he lacks backbone. While usually confident, his wife sometimes needs to feel protected and cared for. When it comes to Casper he just doesn’t know how to be the protective guy. He needs to be told what to do and then he can do it, if it’s not too scary.

You find out he doesn't say "no," even when he should. You ask him to do something he really doesn't want to do he will say "sure" even though he knows on some level he can't do it. It's beyond his emotional ability.

If you married Casper...

Relish in the love and support he gives you as you go out to tackle the world. He'll be there on the sidelines cheering you during the triathlon, and you need that encouragement. Accept the fact he will not be the driven person you may be. Take special note of the parts later in this book on being non-threatening.

### **The Sex God**

You married Fabio/Johnny Depp/Brad Pitt all rolled into one. Why were you attracted to him in the first place? C'mon—isn't it obvious? He's God's gift to sex starved women. I mean a woman. I mean, uh, you. Yeah, not all women, just you.

Marriage is great at first—you two are rockin' the waterbed every night. Sure you don't get much sleep, but WOW. Exhaustion never felt so good.

But over time problems arise. He is pretty. Other women notice him and he likes other women noticing him. It's not that he's unfaithful, it's just that you wish he didn't seem to like the attention. It makes you feel insecure.

At the same time he's critical of your appearance. He comments—more than once—that you seem to be putting on weight. At breakfast the other day he asked why you needed both honey and butter on your biscuit. He seems to resent that you are tired from being up all night with the kids when he wants to "play." His insatiable appetite that once drove you crazy now just drives you crazy.

In addition he may be more concerned about his appearance than being on time for a soccer game or paying the mortgage.

If you married the Sex God...

Enjoy his looks and using his body, he turns you on so indulge yourself there. Let him be your trophy husband. Remind yourself that while all women seem to find him attractive, he goes home with you. Recognize you may end up being the responsible one when it comes to bills, but you will get your world rocked on a regular basis.

## **The Nerd**

You know the nerd. While the nerd is not a “new” creation, nerds have never had so much “street cred.” Chances are you work for a nerd or for a company catering to some product created by a nerd that is now rich.

Nerds are the new jocks (if nerds used their massive technical skills to give computer swirlies to jocks.)

Why do women find nerds attractive? Intelligence can be sexy. Intelligence is a strong indicator of things like stability and income potential. When a woman gets with a nerd she feels like his massive, Vulcan-like, mind will allow him to be a solid earner, good husband and father.

Plus he looks sexy in the Babylon 5 uniform his mom made for him.

But after a while the alien goddess in you wants more than just differential equations. Security is nice, but the nerd often struggles with social interaction and emotion. He’s used to keyboards and emotionless screens and you want him to show passion, care and concern.

If you are married to the Nerd...

Recognize that he DOES love you, but emotions are like a computer language he never learned. Don’t expect him to “read” from you what you are feeling or what you need. Instead, in non-threatening ways, tell him exactly what you need when you need it.

Over time he will likely not only be responsive to your requests, but he will likely learn to anticipate your needs. Really.

## **The Dad**

What's more romantic than a guy who wants to be the perfect father? The Dad wants kids just like you do and he wants to be the uber dad for them.

He's nice. He wants to get up with the kids when they cry at night, he teaches them how to play baseball and he probably helps with the Scout troop. He seems like a catch.

But the Dad can lose his appeal when he is so focused on being Dad, he doesn't do as well as Husband, Provider or Handyman. Often the Dad's wife feels she and her needs are a distant second to the kids. She loves the kids too, but she wants to be loved as well.

If you married the Dad...

Typically the Dad is open to suggestion. Get him in a safe place, just the two of you and without being overly emotional or argumentative, let him know you need a date night each week. Most Dads will be responsive to your request. You may have to remind him ("Tomorrow night is date night"), but he will likely begin giving you the attention you need.

## **Combinations**

Of course no man is quite as simple as these profiles. Most of us are a combination of more than one of these. As you read the rest of this book you will find ways to deal with your own husband and help him to give you the life you want and need.

But a word of warning...

## **Crisis Husbands**

There are some husbands that are dangerous to you and to your children. No one has the right to abuse you or your children. If you are dealing with constant, mean verbal abuse of you or your children; or if you are in a

relationship where you are physically threatened or harmed; do whatever you need to do to leave. You may need help from others as most women in these situations struggle with feeling somehow it is their fault or that they are betraying their husband.

Take whatever steps you need to keep yourself safe.

## **This is your Brain. This is Your Brain on Estrogen**

### ***Check on Your Own Agenda***

Before you can learn how to help your husband stop being a jerk, you'll need to do a little personal inventory (don't worry—it's pretty much pain free.)

Most of us have an agenda for our spouse. We may not write it down on paper or say it out loud, but we want our spouse to change. Sometimes we have an agenda we aren't really aware of, but it still affects the actions we take and the words we speak.

Let's take a common example that isn't that threatening for most of us: Ron's favorite Cowboy's shirt looks more like a rag than a shirt and his wife Ella wants him to throw it away.

Game day: Ron has that thing on AGAIN.

Ella: "Honey, is that what you are wearing today?"

"Sure, you know this is my lucky shirt—the Boys can't win without it." Ron is assured his shirt somehow creates a cosmic alignment resulting in another Dallas win. As any man knows, of course he is correct.

Ella: "But Ted and Rita are coming over for the game."

Now what has Ella just told Ron? "Your shirt is an embarrassment to me and it ought to be to you as well." Her agenda is pretty clear.

You already know women think differently than men. Here are some common hidden agendas women often have for their husbands. See if any of these fit your marriage:

***I want him to be something other than he is***

Remember the last chapter? The one where you got to take a look at the man you married?

Some women marry a man who they plan—even before the wedding—to change. If he's not already the man of their dreams, she'll make him one.

This is dangerous on a couple levels:

First, it is dangerous because you aren't married to the man you hope him to be, you're married to him as he is. And in the real world, you can't change him and he has limited ability to change himself.

There are only a couple events that bring lasting change: Crisis and Conversion. Aside from these two factors almost no one makes lasting changes in the basic ways they deal with life.

Crisis examples are pretty common to see—a guy has a heart attack so he is suddenly motivated to exercise, eat right and drop 50 pounds.

Conversion changes are around us as well: The life-long drunk who hits rock bottom and decides he doesn't want to live that way any more or the wayward 20-something who gets “saved” and completely changes his life.

But change comes when we make an internal, irrevocable decision to change. Typically it is seen as a “life and death” choice.

Change rarely happens (if ever) as the result of simply external pressure. You can't nag or manipulate your husband into being someone he isn't—you can only work within who he already is. That will become important in the next couple of chapters.

The second reason it is dangerous is because your hidden agenda reveals a need for someone else to be a certain person they are not in order for you to be okay with yourself.

Let me explain:

A person who is well self-actualized will accept themselves warts and all as being an acceptable human being. They are able to see themselves and others realistically and they realize they cannot depend on someone else to

create their own happiness; that they have to be happy with themselves regardless of what others do.

When your internal happiness depends on someone else doing a certain thing, you are likely to be often disappointed. Because others can't read our minds and even if they could they would fulfill our expectations only partially, you will find your life very frustrating.

We can choose our own actions and how we respond to others, but we cannot choose how others will respond to us.

### ***Broken light fixtures and love***

For most woman (and possibly for you), loving acts demonstrate over time how much your spouse loves you.

The problem is he doesn't understand the relationship between the two. When your favorite light fixture is broken and he doesn't fix it in a timely fashion, it means he doesn't love you to you but it doesn't compute that way for him. He sees it as "I haven't fixed the lamp yet." Simple.

You may have an agenda to have him "prove" his love for you. You may constantly be putting up little tests to see if he "passes." Did he hug me? Did he kiss me goodbye? Did he clean out the basement?

If you are constantly putting love tests out there two things will happen:

First, you will end up miserable. He will fail most of the tests because in your subconscious you are trying to prove to yourself not that he loves you but that he doesn't. That's the confirmation you are looking for. The tests you design and remember will be ones he will fail.

Second, he will see you as paranoid and not take you seriously when you really need him to. When most of your communication is done through these little tests he will not respond well when you actually do communicate with him appropriately.

## ***I just want some help***

Many women have the agenda: I just want some help around the house (or with the kids or paying the bills or tending the landscaping...)

That's not a bad agenda to have. In fact, following the guidelines in this book will probably result in getting the help you need.

But if you have this agenda you may be tempted in one of two ways:

You may be tempted to settle for the help and not work for the partnership and relationship you really desire. Chances are you want MORE than just a little help with the kids. Chances are you want a life partner who not only helps when you need help, but is a companion and lover for the years to come.

A second temptation is to stress the need you have for help before you have built a foundation of trust. For a time you can get your man to help you with just a threat—tell him how important it is for you and be very emotionally intense when you tell him.

But over time since the threat is simply external for him, he won't help. He'll disappoint you.

When you build the relationship first then you will find him self-motivated to give you the help you need.

## **Sex, Beer and Rock ‘n Roll—or just more Sex**

### ***Why His Brain is Messed Up***

Your spouse’s brain may seem an inconsistent mystery to you because he will instinctively react differently than you would to the same situation. In fact, you may have a perfectly logical response in your own mind but his response may seem amazingly illogical.

Let’s look at why his brain is messed up.

### ***It’s Biology Baby***

It’s not your brain being right and his misfiring all those little neurons, it’s a difference in biology.

While we bring many things up to a conscious level and often make decisions based on sound, logical, rational reasons, most things we react to instinctively. Our brain chemistry decides our reaction long before we engage the logical, conscious brain to the problem.

The problem comes when the male brain and the female brain react to the same set of circumstances and your female brain can’t seem to make heads or tails of what your man’s male brain is telling him.

Here is how he got the brain he did—trust me, it wasn’t his fault.

### ***What His Brain is Telling Him***

We all want control of our surroundings. It’s bred into us over millions of years of evolution. When we have control, we have safety. We can sleep.

Control, in and of itself, is a neutral word. It is neither good nor bad, though it can be used in a variety of ways, both good and bad.

There are two primary ways we control—actively and passively.

Active control is typically designed to get a particular response from the environment. For example, when my wife tells me I need to pick up our son after school because she has a hair appointment, that's a type of active control.

Passive control is typically designed to avoid some activity. (Stick with me on this one, it's a little harder to understand.) When all I want to do is get to the party and my wife asks me “does this make me look fat?” I say “No,” which is a dishonest response, because I want to get to the party. I am avoiding having to wait on her.

I might also be trying to avoid an argument about her weight.

**WARNING! STEREOTYPE ALERT!**

**Women are more likely to be active controllers in most cases. Men tend most often to be passive controllers.**

Think for a few moments about the characteristics allowing man to have survived and thrived while other species have become extinct.

In order to have offspring a man needed to produce as many offspring as possible. Thus, men evolved to be constantly thinking about mating. They developed a desire for a mate with a healthy body shape and one where the woman had a narrow waist (meaning disease free) as well as wide hips (more likely to deliver babies), clear eyes, blemish free skin, physical symmetry.

Men also developed to desire to be the only male with access to the females. The so-called “Alpha Male” had access to the most (if not all) females in the group. The lesser males were also less likely to have as many surviving offspring so the characteristics of the alpha male became more prevalent in the group over time.

So what were these characteristics?

The desire and ability to act alone, the ability to hunt (provide), a high sex drive, appreciation of what makes a woman physically desirable.

Now, stay with me as we look at the fairer of the sex.

For a female to thrive and have offspring she had to have a mate who could provide for her during the calorie expensive period of preproduction and child rearing. She had to have as few competitors as possible (meaning being the one who could consume the most resources provided by the male.) She had to develop a place to make sure her children were safe. She had to have emotional attachment to her offspring to nurture them into reproductive maturity. Sexual frequency was not as important since she only had a few days a month where she was fertile.

What, then, did females look for in a male?

Health—clear eyes, symmetry, skin tone, blemish free. Social power and the ability to provide the most resources, which usually meant physical strength and being as close to the Alpha Male figure as possible.

Now for both of these ancient ancestors of ours these things were “hard wired.”

Let’s think about some modern day implication of these ideas:

When a man is alone and acting alone, his brain tells him he is safe. When someone or thing enters the picture his brain tells him it can become a threat.

He’s pretty constantly looking for new mates—even if he’s made a commitment to a single mate, he’s likely to be drawn to visually appealing females (which is why your man wants to go to Hooters even when he’s sworn off other chicks.)

A mate and her offspring are a drain on his resources. The best way to assure the survival of his offspring is not to focus on playing catch or Barbies, but on financial success and power.

He doesn’t need a deep relationship with the mate nor the children. In fact, males who focused solely on relationship will find it difficult to provide for themselves and their offspring. Expending emotional energy is likely a negative.

For a woman, the responses are far different. On a subconscious level the woman knows her sexual appeal to her mate will decrease over time. Worse yet she is programmed to understand as she ages she will not be able to produce the protective resources she needs to survive.

For her and her offspring to survive she needs a home. She needs a safe place until her children reach maturity. Then, she needs a strong bond with those children so they can provide for her as she loses the appeal of her mate who has likely moved on to a younger, more fertile, mate.

So much for our ancestors, how does this boil down to behavior today?

### ***Whole Lotta Humpin' Goin' On***

Find me a man and I will show you a guy who is thinking about sex.

While you will hear around the internet a man thinks of sex every seven seconds, the figure according to the famous/infamous Kinsey Institutional Study is every 2 minutes. While Kinsey has had his research criticized heavily, let me tell you based on my personal research that normal men think about sex, on average, all the time.

My studies are still ongoing.

Over the years philosophers have pontificated about the role sex (or the desire for sex with a particular mate) has driven the history of men. Helen of Troy had the “face that launched a thousand ships”—just so her man could keep her.

(By the way...there was WAY TOO MUCH of Brad Pitt's butt in that movie for my taste, but then I don't find his butt particularly tasty. Your mileage may vary. If you're into that sort of thing you can find pics of his butt by [clicking here](#).)

Back to sex—I mean, writing.

Men think about sex because they are hard-wired (no pun intended) to think about sex. It was a survival mechanism for their ancestors. The ancestors

who had the most sex had the most offspring, so now we have lots of men who think all the time about having sex.

### ***The Feminizing of the Western Worldview***

But men are having a tough time in the current, Western world. In reaction to the rampant, often abusive, patriarchy of the last several thousand years, many normal male traits are now considered somehow evil.

School boys are told to sit still when everything in their biology tells them to be active, hunt and kill. As testosterone kicks in not only do they become more aggressive and harder to keep still, they also start competing for the attention of potential mating partners. Gun shows and suggestive jokes abound.

In our society those types of behaviors are considered, well, a little Neanderthal. And, in reality, they are. They are also normal.

Now don't get me wrong—I am not on a misogynistic rant and I do think women should have the vote—I am just making an observation about reality.

Because men are now being told from a very early age they shouldn't act or think like they naturally do, they often struggle as adults standing up for their normal desires. We want to watch the ball game partially because conquest is built into us—and when our team wins, we win. We want to have sex every day because we really like to have sex.

But don't expect us to stand up to you when you tell us twice a week is really way too much—our society has told us our high sex drive is somehow perverted.

### ***How Your Brain is Different***

You have very different psychological imperatives to deal with. Chances are you are biologically programmed to want stability and security much more so than your male counterpart. You need to make sure you can provide a safe and resource rich home for your offspring.

When you see your man acting like all he cares about is beer, baseball and sex, you wonder how his career is panning out. Or whether he has fixed the broken step. Or if he paid the light bill.

These worries can become consuming.

Before we move on you need to understand an important fact about your husband: His biological imperatives are just as deeply ingrained as yours and they can be just as distressing and consuming.

In the next chapter you will see just why your man acts the way he does...

## **He Acts Like a Neanderthal—But Less Hairy**

### ***How His Brain Makes Him a Jerk***

Now we get to the nitty-gritty. The rubber hits the pavement. The nose hits the grind stone. The cliché hits the paper.

(Did I mention what a great writer I am?)

You now have a firm background in how your man thinks; now let's see how it causes him to act. Once you understand how he will act and react, you'll be ready to show him how to give you what you need in your relationship.

There are problems that seem common to most men and are often heard as common complaints from women: He won't help out around the house, he won't talk to me, he isn't romantic, he doesn't help with the kids, if I didn't do it nothing would get done.

Why then do men refuse to talk? Refuse to engage you in meaningful emotional conversation? Why aren't they romantic? Why don't they help with the kids?

### ***Men are Intensely Practical by Nature***

Now before you disagree, let me be clear about practical. In this case I am using this definition:

Practical means “having an obvious and effective immediate use.”

Men are practical because they often say or do the thing that will produce the most effective immediate result.

Your man's ancestors didn't survive and thrive by winning confrontations, they won by avoiding them. Now his instinct is to avoid confrontations unless he is assured, before the confrontation, he will come out on top.

When they avoid a possible confrontation by saying “yes” when they really mean “no” or “not now,” they achieve the temporary goal: Avoiding the confrontation.

### ***It's Not that He Doesn't Care, He Just Doesn't Understand***

Avoiding confrontation may sometimes like to you like he doesn't care about you. That's not necessarily the case.

When you tell him the basement step is loose and someone could trip on it, he is busy thinking about something else—probably sex. He files it in his brain along with cleaning out the garage and sharpening the mower.

A week or so later he's watching the game while you go downstairs to do the laundry. You almost fall over the loose step and remind him again. He, again, files it along side changing the filters in the A/C.

At this point a thought pops into your mind: If he loved me he would fix the step. Now you immediately discount it and give him the excuse “he probably just forgot. It has nothing to do with whether he loves me or not.”

Another week passes and you trip coming up the stairs. You skin your knee and bruise your forearm. Now that nagging “if he loved me he would have fixed that step” is so loud your rationalizations for his inaction just won't quiet them. You got hurt because he just didn't care.

Now in his mind the two have nothing to do with each other. He loves you. He shows that in many ways—from paying the bills (or earning money to pay the bills), by running the kids around, by remembering your birthday most of the time. In his mind household fix-its don't have much to do with love, they have to do with work.

He just doesn't understand the connection—though he's sorry you fell and will probably kiss and hold you as a result.

### ***He Isn't Lying, He's Postponing***

When you ask your husband to do something he either plans on doing it then, or later or not at all. In all three circumstances he may say “sure, I’ll take care of it.”

Now that doesn’t necessarily mean he will take care of it, it means he doesn’t want to discuss it any more. If you rely on his “sure” as an iron clad contract you will likely be disappointed. (In just a minute I will give you a way to deal with his commitments, but at this point you just need to understand what he is thinking.)

And when it comes to conflict...

### ***The Last Thing He Wants to Do is Fight***

Most men don’t want conflict (or “drama”) in their relationship. They want smooth sailing. So when they see possible conflict on the horizon, they say or do whatever they need to do to keep it buried.

Again, you need to be careful not to depend on his responses (until he is trained—that’s your next chapter.) It will just lead you to misery.

OK, finally, you’re ready. You’re ready to learn how to potty train your man.

# **Help Me Help You**

**or**

## **How to Potty Train Your Husband**

### ***How to Potty Train your Husband***

First, remember your needs and his needs: While women typically need emotional closeness; Men need space. In a mutually supportive relationship both should occur.

Second, males want sex. They think about it constantly. They were wired to continue to be potent late into their lives. They also want some variety. But they want to be able to choose sex with a willing partner who almost worships them as the alpha male.

If you have trouble treating a spouse with this type of respect, possibly you should consider how you would prefer he treats you. He's wired to need this. If you provide it, he will be far more likely to give you what you need.

I'm not trying to say you do this to get something in return. Nor am I saying he should be allowed to treat you any way he chooses. If I were writing for men (which I am in a companion book), the burden would be on them.

In this case I am writing to you, a woman. I am saying you should do this as part of your commitment to him. There are things he should be doing for you as well, but it's not some kind of Mexican stand-off.

**Once you accept this, then here is how you can please your husband and help him be the person you need him to be...**

### ***Non-Threatening Communication***

Women control their environment actively: They build the nest. When something needs done they manage to get it done. They multi-task.

When a woman tells her mate what to do, she does it thinking it's just a regular thing. "Can you take out the garbage hon?"

What she doesn't realize is he doesn't want to take the garbage out right now, nor does he want to tell you no, possibly leading to an emotion laden discussion. He will take the garbage out, when he feels like it.

So this is what happens—he tells you "Sure" or "In a minute." A woman takes that as a solid commitment.

When she goes in the kitchen three hours later and he still hasn't done it, she feels hurt: "He doesn't care about me enough to take out the garbage!"

In his mind the two have nothing to do with each other. In most men's minds there is rarely a thought "If she really loved me she would..." (EXCEPT in the area of sex.)

Then you become very emotionally threatening to the man. He doesn't want to have a discussion about it with you; he doesn't want to hear an ultimatum about how little he cares. He is terrified of the tears you are about to shed.

In his mind it's a freakin' Hefty full of banana peels and coffee grounds. In his mind he's thinking "Oh shit" and "Get over it."

The longer these little "slights" go on between you, the more avoidant he will become. He will walk on eggshells. He will talk like Heath Ledger in Brokeback, barely opening his mouth (well, except for Jake Gillenhal.)

And his resentment will build. As the resentment builds there will likely be several reactions, including, but not limited to, avoidance through things like drinking or excessive hobbies, angry blow-ups for no real reason, criticism—even very hurtful criticism like "how fat are you going to get?" He may even become impotent.

But how do you get him to do the things he needs to do around the house? After all, at least two of you live there. Two of you are earning the money. Two of you are making the messes. How do you get your man to help you around the house?

## ***Non-Threatening Partnership***

Non-threatening partnership means being equal partners in your marriage where you both have responsibilities you fulfill on a regular basis. These responsibilities can be as simple as giving one another proper respect, to showing passion, to taking out the trash.

Now so far I have told you not to have expectations. I still don't want to attach your emotional balloon string to expectation unless you expect it to float away. This isn't about having expectations, it's about having and fulfilling responsibilities you have both agreed to fulfill.

Partnership is necessary and on some level he knows that already.

Have a "meeting" with your spouse. This meeting has a single purpose: To line out what responsibilities you have and what responsibilities he has around the home.

Here's how you prepare and execute the meeting:

First, don't treat him as a child, treat him as an adult. Do it at a non-threatening time, not when he just failed to live up to some expectation you have for him.

Second, bring a paper and pen(cil) to the meeting, or at least have one handy.

Third, initiate this meeting with the following statement—and only say it if you can say it sincerely. If you are angry, or resentful, don't have the meeting. I can't underscore that enough. If you don't have a loving, positive attitude, this meeting just isn't going to go well.

Here's what you say:

"I am struggling to know what I need to do around the house. Can you help me figure out what things I need to be doing? It would really help me."

Pay close attention to his body language at this point if you ever hope to succeed in training your man. If you detect a note of hesitancy or fear, back

off and tell him you can do it yourself or do it with him later, whenever he wants.

Now if you get through step three, go on to step four. The meeting.

At the meeting you make, together, a list of the things that need to be regularly done around the house. Don't make the list for him, let him suggest most of the items. If he misses some, don't worry about it unless it is a major task. Taking the garbage to the road once a week? No big deal. Laundry? Probably a big deal.

Now a note about reality for full-time homemakers:

If your husband is working full-time to provide the money for the home and your main responsibility is simply to keep home and children, don't expect your husband to take an equal role in chores around the house. Over the years I have counseled a few couples where the wife's role was to keep house, but she had the unrealistic expectation of the husband sharing in the housework, cooking, etc.

You need to understand it makes sense for you to do the lion's share of the housework.

Back to our meeting...

Now ask him which chores he wants to be responsible for. Let him pick without your input. Don't worry about his past performance ("But you never do that, I always have to..."), just let him pick.

Now, if you think he is picking way too many things to do or that he picks one that you believe he will hate (for me that would be laundry or dusting—I don't mind doing much else), you can suggest he maybe NOT choose that thing or that many things.

Then you pick the chores you want to be responsible for.

If there are any responsibilities left, alternate with each of you choosing one each turn.

Now that you have this completed, make it clear you are both agreeing to do the chores you've signed up for and don't expect the other person to do it for you.

Step five: Put the list on the refrigerator.

Now you have an agreement for him to do certain chores and for you to do certain chores. He made most if not all of the list. He got to choose the chores he wanted to do.

Now comes the hard part for most women:

Step six is to let him be responsible for the chores he said he would take care of. Without you nagging him, reminding him or reprimanding him, let him do it his way or not at all—but also let him suffer the consequences of not doing the chores. If he agreed to take the garbage out to the road on trash day and you notice he hasn't done it, let it go. The only way he will learn to do his part is if he is allowed to suffer whatever consequences there are for not doing his part.

### **But what if he gets offended by your inaction?**

In some cases you have always reminded him when he didn't get something done. You were his own personal To-Do list. Sure, he probably resented that, but he is used to it.

For some of you when you stop reminding him to do his chores he will at first be angry with you: "Why didn't you remind me?"

Now this will be tough for you. He's angry. He feels like you let him fail. Inside he may truly feel as if it is your fault he didn't get the trash to the street.

Use this four step way of answering him:

1. Acknowledge his feelings
2. Apologize for your role
3. Explain why you did what you did (or didn't do)
4. Tell him how you plan to respond in the future

In this case it looks like this:

“Wow, I can see you are disappointed.”

“I’m sorry you feel I let you down.”

“In the past I did always remind you, but I wanted to quit acting so controlling”

“Since neither one of us needs me to be controlling, I’m trying to not tell you what to do.”

Now this only works when you are able to do it without being emotionally threatening. But if you can, it will allow him to start taking responsibility for his own actions.

Now that you have helped him do his part around the house, we need to move to the bedroom. Being skilled in giving him what he needs emotionally in the bedroom will help your relationship on every level.

### ***Non-Threatening Sex***

The two most common sexual problems I saw in 20 years of counseling couples were these: Either the man wanted to have more sex than the wife wanted to provide, or the man wanted to have less sex than the wife wanted to have.

One exercise I did regularly with couples who were struggling in this area was designed to find out their personal preference for sexual regularity. I would give each of the counselees a small piece of paper and a pencil, and without letting the other party see it, write down the number of times they would want to have sex each month.

In most cases they both agreed (within a time or two) on the number. One spouse might write down 8, one 10, but when I revealed their answers they were both willing (at least in my office) to settle on a mutually agreeable number.

Yet in reality neither one was happy with their sex life. What often sounded like a frequency problem was often something else entirely.

## **Why Some Women Refuse to Have Sex with Their Husband**

I recently asked a group of women to write me and tell me if they often turned down their husbands for sex and if so, why. The responses are telling.

Many women said things like: “He expects me to have sex at the drop of a hat, but he won’t help me with the dishes. If he would just help more around the house I would be willing to have sex with him more often.”

Now if you are one of those people who would say the above (or something similar) let me ask you this:

How would you feel if your spouse said, “I won’t help around the house until she starts having sex with me more often”?

Chances are you would think the two don’t have anything to do with one another and you would be right. Sex should never be used as a punishment, a reward or a manipulation.

When sex becomes a punishment, reward or manipulation it carries with it all kinds of baggage that results in a rocky marriage. Your husband may have a high sex drive (or even a normal one), but if your diaphragm comes with strings attached, he’s not going to want to have sex. At least, not with you.

At the same time when he is feeling pressured by the outside world, he may be more likely to want to have sex with you. He may not have the emotional strength to romance you into bed, and he may not have the emotional strength to talk to you afterwards. But he knows on some level if he has sex with you it will help him feel better about himself.

## **So how to you fix your sex life?**

Seduction without expectation is key. Don't make sex about emotional attachment. Don't argue with him about sex or be demanding about sex. Some men will think it's hot when the wife shows up in the French Maid outfit, but some will see it as expectation, especially if the previous history is one of sex with pressure.

If you attempt to "push" sex onto an unwilling man he will see it as an invasion threat. Invasions are to be avoided at all costs.

Understand that no-pressure, no-drama, no-manipulation sex will likely make him much more emotionally attached to you. Over time this will help your relationship on many levels.

On an emotional level he needs to know you see him as the alpha who can solve his own problems. Non-manipulative sex helps accomplish that, but verbal encouragement does even more. Let others criticize him, you support him. If he does something wrong rest assured he will figure it out eventually.

Space, beer, sex, praise and no drama. That's what he needs.

Finally, he needs just one more thing...

### ***Non-Threatening Space***

You may want to spend every waking moment together. He needs some space. And by space I mean TIME and often a PLACE where he can do whatever he wants. Sometimes that will be alone, sometimes it will be with other guys.

If you have followed the instructions so far, the amount of time he needs to be alone will likely much less than if he feels threatened by you.

Many men have to deal with the criticism of their spouse about how they want to spend their alone time. "Are you still playing that game?" "How

much football can you watch?” “Why don’t you turn off the TV and go outside?”

Men need to be able to indulge their need for alone time in order to process the things going on in their lives.

For you to give him space is simple: Let him have time alone. Without criticism. Without pressure. Without reminding him about the garage needing cleaned out.

Four keys:

Non-Threatening Communication, Partnership, Sex and Space. These will help your man deal with life on his own terms and be ready for the next part: Giving you what you want in your marriage.

# You Can't Always Get what You Want, or Can You?

## ***Getting What You Need in the Relationship***

*“You can't always get what you want  
But if you try sometimes you might find  
You get what you need”*

- The Rolling Stones

So far you've found ways to help your Neanderthal act just a little more like a human. But it's all been you. You've changed how you think about him and how you respond to him.

But how do you get what you need in your own relationship?

## ***Recognize He already loves you***

He chose you. He chose to live with you, to have children with you to be sexually faithful to you. Recognizing he already loves you will allow you to communicate your needs to him without threat and with confidence.

Once you understand and accept he loves you then you will realize he wants a successful marriage with you as much as you want one with him. While he may not be wired to put the same attention into relationships you do, he is just as concerned in his own way.

## ***Don't Manipulate, Communicate***

In order to get your own needs met you may have to do what might be a dangerous thing for you: You might have to tell him what you need and exactly when you need it.

If you've been married any time at all you've probably encountered a rough spot where all you wanted was for him to hold you. Or tell you he loved you. Or both.

But you also wanted him to do it without you asking. You wanted him to have this spontaneous feeling of love and hold you and tell you he loves you without you having to ask.

Once you accept without question that he loves you, you can ask him for what you need. If you need him to hold you, ask him. In you need to hear him say he loves you, ask him. I know, I know...on the movies the hero always knows just what to say, what to hold on to.

But we aren't in the movies.

(If you want proof the movies are fake, think about this: when was the last time you saw a romantic movie where one of the partners farted during sex? Exactly.)

Now a cool thing is *probably* going to happen once you start telling your spouse when you need a hug—he'll figure it out. He'll figure out those times you need to be hugged or told you are loved. And he will, eventually, like a rat put into the same maze day after day, figure out how to find your love cheese.

So how do you communicate and bypass his inner cave creature?

First, assume the best. Remember he loves you so he would never knowingly say or do something just to hurt you.

Second, always remember he will learn eventually. Don't remind him of how many times he's messed up in the past—those were all practice—keep telling yourself he's about to get it right.

Here's a fill in the blank script to use when you need to let cro-magnon know he messed something up:

"I know you didn't mean to," see this is assuming the best—he didn't mean to do whatever he did to hurt you, "but when you \_\_\_\_\_ ed, it hurt my feelings because \_\_\_\_\_."

Then shut up. See what he says, what he does. Understand he has to trust you first—this isn't something you try in the very first day, wait until you

have worked through the chapters before this. He's got to see you as a partner, not a threat.

When you master the art of non-threatening communication, my little grasshopper, you will be ready to enter the realm of wedded bliss.

### ***Partner with Him, Not the Kids***

As you work to help your man become all the man he can be, there will be times of trial. Just when you think he's getting it, he'll totally blow it. You'll ask for support and he won't get it. He'll get you Oil of Olay for your 40<sup>th</sup> birthday.

You will be hurt, disappointed and maybe a little angry.

In times like this you may be tempted to focus on being a mommy rather than a wife. After all, the kids love you. The kids don't give you any grief. The kids do what you want them to do.

So when hubby isn't particularly appealing it may be tempting to put all of your attention on the kids. Letting Suzy sleep in the bed tonight will avoid that awkward sex argument. Spending all your time working for the PTA will avoid having to face the non-conversations you are not having with hubby.

It's tempting.

But if you want to have the marriage of your dreams you can't give in to the temptation. Your husband is going to come around, you just have to consistently remind him—in non-threatening ways—just how to fulfill your needs.

Your kids will benefit from having two parents who are in love with each other, demonstrate it openly and appropriately and can teach them by example how to have a solid relationship with another person.

But there is just one more thing you need to do to help your husband meet your needs. But be warned, it's a little adult.

## ***Learn Sexual Skills***

I am not saying learn new acrobatic sexual tricks that will cause his head to spin with unrestrained passion. (Though if you come up with any good ideas I can pass along to my wife, contact me at [FullTiltMarriage.com/help](http://FullTiltMarriage.com/help) )

What I am saying is you need sexual confidence. Knowing you can please your man sexually is a very powerful position. A man will do almost anything for a woman who shows she is sexually confident.

You need to focus on learning what will please your husband and providing him sexually with the things he enjoys. Why do you want to provide him sexual pleasure? Because, just like generations of women before you, you will get everything you want if you learn to please your husband sexually.

As I have said elsewhere, the way to a man's heart is through his penis.

Every man you know has certain fantasies and desires. So do you. Being able to fulfill his fantasies is a solid key to getting *everything else you want—even your own fantasies fulfilled*.

It's worth the effort.

## Conclusion

Where do You Go from Here?

Having a happy marriage begins with a choice. Sometimes the choice is made first by one partner, sometimes by both, but it is a choice. Following the guidelines in this book can help you do your part to improve your marriage and hopefully your mate will also do his part.

But always remember this simple fact: Nothing changes until someone takes action. Take the action, give it a try and you will be pleasantly surprised.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for improvements to this book or how to help people have better marriages, let me know. You can contact me here:

<http://www.FullTiltMarriage.com/help>

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