

The Needs of a Man and a Woman

By Dr. Myles Munroe

The Woman Needs Love

The primary need of the female-man is love. We have learned that the woman was designed to receive love. This truth is so central to a woman's emotional needs that if it is the only one that men learn and apply, it will make a vast difference in women's lives-and consequently in their own.

A woman doesn't just want love; she truly needs it by design. This is why a man can give her a house and expensive gifts and she will still not feel satisfied. The man will say, "What's wrong with you? I can't do anything to please you. I'm giving you all these things, and you're still unhappy." She will answer, "It is not this mink coat or this house that I really want. I want you. I want you to tell me I'm important and special and unique to you, and that I am everything you've been dreaming of. I want you to tell me you love me.

You can't replace love. To love means to cherish, to care for, and to show affection. Cherishing a woman doesn't mean buying her expensive presents; it means dropping everything you're doing just to make certain she is all right. Love doesn't say, "I'm busy right now. I'll talk to you later." Caring is making other people wait while you meet the needs of your wife.

Affection is the environment in which to grow a wonderful marriage. A woman's need for affection can be met with plenty of hugs and kisses; a steady flow of words, cards, and flowers; common courtesies; and meaningful gifts that show the man is thinking of her, esteems her, and values her presence in his life.

A man can also meet a woman's need for love by providing her with financial security. This will make her feel cared for and protected. In addition, when a man spends time with a woman, it makes her feel loved because she knows she comes first in his life.

Balancing financial provision and quality time with his wife often creates the greatest challenge for a man because providing for his wife usually requires that he be away from her while he is at his workplace. However, when a man spends many hours' overtime at his job trying to "get ahead" but neglects his wife (and family), she will not feel loved, even though they may have millions of dollars in the bank.

If a woman is single, receiving love is still her greatest need. She also needs the affirmation and companionship of men. It is the way she is designed. Fathers, uncles, brothers, and male friends

can recognize a single woman's need and show brotherly love by acts of kindness, companionship, and assisting during life's difficulties.

A Man Needs Respect

Because the female's primary need is for love, she often thinks that the males' primary need is for love, also. He needs love, but he has a need that is even greater than that.

If a female expresses love to a male, without fulfilling this other need, he might not respond in the way she expects him to. He might remain somewhat distant. For example, a woman may wonder why her husband doesn't seem satisfied in the relationship when she has been lovingly trying to help him by keeping the household running smoothly and providing for his material needs. A woman might even write her husband love notes and give him lots of affection, but notice that he still doesn't seem happy. She wonders, "What else can I do for this man?"

Yet a male feels about those things in the same way that a female feels about the male's provision of a house. He is grateful that his material and emotional needs are being taken care of, and he appreciates his wife's efforts. However, these things don't address his primary need.

As much as a woman needs to feel that she is loved, a man needs to know that he is respected. Being respected is at the core of his self-esteem, and it affects every other area of his life. "Each one of you [husbands] also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband." (Ephesians 5:33)

A woman can meet a man's need for admiration and respect by understanding his value and achievements more than anyone else. She needs to remind him of his capabilities and help him to maintain his self-confidence. She should be proud of her husband, not out of duty, but as an expression of sincere admiration for the man with who, she has chosen to share her life.

A husband is to love and cherish his wife. A wife is to respect and honor her husband. In this way there will be a constant meeting of the other's primary needs.

What do I do in the meantime?

"One of the problems a woman may face is that her husband doesn't know he's supposed to love her in the way I've just described. (Scroll down to see the post "The Woman Needs Love, Part One and Two") This is a very real problem. Even though a woman might be honoring and esteeming her husband, he might not be showing her love because he really doesn't know how. Both men and women need to understand and meet each other's needs. However, if the

woman understands their needs but their spouse doesn't, it is important that she have patience. She needs to respond to her husband according to what he knows.

If I know that a person is ignorant, I can't be angry at him. Jesus is the highest model of this for us, He said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). The difficulty comes when you know that a person is aware of what he's supposed to be doing but still doesn't do it. In this case, some kind of reproof is necessary. Depending on the situation, a woman might appeal to the pastor, a trusted Christian friend, or even a family member to speak to her husband for her. Yet her best appeal is to pray for her husband and allow the Lord to change him.

However, you can't reprove an ignorant person, but you can reprove a person who has knowledge, but you need to overlook the faults of a person who is ignorant. This will keep bitterness from taking over your heart. Avoid blaming the other person, live responsibly before God, and make sure you carry out your own responsibilities to your spouse. Trust God to teach your partner how to meet your needs."

A Woman Needs Conversation

In addition to love, a female needs conversation. She enjoys talking with others. This sounds simple, but it is a real need based on her nature. A woman needs to have a man talk with her. Notice that I said with her and not to her. Because males have a leadership mindset, sometimes their conversations with their wives amount to instructions rather than a give-and-take dialogue.

The man should always make a point to converse with the woman. Costly gifts don't mean anything to a woman if the man just leaves them with her and then walks away. She'd rather have the conversation.

The man can fulfill a woman's need for intimate conversation by continually making a point to communicate with her. To truly meet her need, he should talk with her at the feeling level and not just the knowledge and information level. She needs him to listen to her attitudes about the events of her day with sensitivity, interest, and concern. All of his conversations with her should convey a desire to understand her, not to change her. This means that he should not necessarily immediately try to solve her problems for her. He needs to resist the impulse to offer solutions and instead offer his full attention and understanding.

After giving her plenty of time to express her feelings, he should conduct his end of the conversation with courtesy and openness, looking her in the eyes and telling her what he really thinks and feels. He should share his plans and actions clearly and completely, because he

regards himself as accountable to her, and ask for her input. This will enable her to trust him and feel secure.

Some men say, "What am I going to talk about with my wife? They don't realize that the woman has a need to express herself and therefore has much within her that she wants to share. A man can simply say, "What's on your mind?" and she'll usually have no problem carrying the conversation. All he has to say in response is, "Uh-huh. Oh, I see." However, he has to make sure he is really listening!

A woman can create opportunities for conversing with her husband by developing an interest in his job, his activities, and his hobbies, such as sports, music, or computers. As much as the woman needs conversation the man needs to share his interests with her. These related needs are a natural bridge of communication between them.

For example, if he's in the middle of watching a ballgame, it would not be constructive to say, "Shut that thing off; I'm tired of this." That won't create an atmosphere for conversation but will usually cause tension. Instead, she can walk into the room in which he is watching television and say, with genuine interest. "Honey, they just caught that ball, and now they're kicking it again. What are they doing that for?" The man will immediately start talking, because he lives to discuss his interests and pursuits.

Here is another illustration. If the woman goes into the room where the man is watching his favorite team compete and says, "I want to talk to you," he will probably say, "Right after they finish this play." When she comes back in a few minutes and says, "I said I want to talk to you," he will answer, "Right after the next play." This will likely continue throughout the entire game. Instead, a woman can say, "Sweetheart, I'd like to talk to you, but let's watch this game together first. I want you to tell me everything about this game." Now the woman has really succeeded, because the man is doing what he likes, but she has gotten him to talk about it, too. After the game, she will likely have his full attention in the matter about which she wanted to talk to him.

So, if women can get involved with men in their sport or any other interest they have, they can actually develop an atmosphere for conversation. Many women would truly be amazed at what would happen if they would learn to be interested in what their husbands are interested in.

The Man Has a Need for Recreational Companionship

While the female has a need for conversation, the male has a need for recreational companionship. Notice that both of these needs have to do with sharing the company of others. This is why, when the woman participates in the man's recreational interests, he will

begin to converse with her. She is sharing one of his basic needs with him, and he appreciates it.

I wish I could plant in the minds of women how important a man's need for recreational companionship is. It has to do with how he is designed. Because the man was created first and has a leadership nature, he seems to have an inborn need to protect his "domain" or "territory" from threats from the outside world. He is a protector. This is why a man needs to feel as if he is always winning at life. (You women may have noticed this trait already.) This need translates into a desire to win over the competition in a sports event or to master a particular area of interest or expertise. It is this territorial nature that leads to his need for recreational companionship. He needs to be involved in challenging activities, and although he likes to win, he also likes to share these experiences with others.

Nothing blesses a man more than when a woman is involved in his recreation. I can't emphasize enough how important this is. As I mentioned in the last section about a woman's need for conversation, if a woman participates in whatever a man enjoys doing—playing tennis, visiting historical landmarks, playing an instrument, or designing computer programs, for example—and lets him tell her all about them, she can strengthen her relationship with him. He will feel good when she is involved with him in his recreation.

I've seen men pick up other women who participate in their recreational activity because they need the companionship. A wife may prevent this from happening if she becomes involved in her husband's interests. If a man gains a sense of accomplishment through performing music, she should become familiar with his music. Whatever he considers his form of competition or whatever he is involved in that makes him feel as if he is shaping his own environment, she should become a part of.

I've heard women say things about their husbands such as, "That old fool; he's always over at the ball field." Why would a man spend hours on something unless he has a need that is being fulfilled through it? Instead of fighting against what brings fulfillment to the man, the woman should find out why it is important to him. Then, if possible, she should participate in it so that they can experience it together, thus building understanding, companionship, and intimacy in their relationship.

A Woman Needs Affection

Third, a woman needs affection. This need is a part of who she is. A woman doesn't just want affection—she needs it!

Yet while one of her primary needs is affection, one of the males' primary needs is sex. If these two interrelated needs are not lovingly understood and balanced, they can cause some of the worst conflicts in a marriage.

What men and women need to understand is that affection created the environment for sexual union in marriage, while sex is the event. Most men don't realize this, and so they immediately go after the event. They don't know what it means to create an environment of affection. They focus only on their need. Men need sex, but women need affection, and they need this affection to precede sexual intimacy.

These differences, again, have to do with the distinct natures of males and females. The male was designed as the source. Not only was he the source "material" for the creation of the female, but also he was given the source for creating new life through his seed or sperm. He is the provider of the seed, and therefore his natural inclination is to provide this source. This is one of the reasons why he concentrates on the event of sex.

The woman, on the other hand, is the one who gestates the new life. Her role is to provide a warm and secure environment in which the life can grow and develop. As an incubator, the woman's natural focus is on the sensory, intuitive, and emotional realms of life, and this is why she has a corresponding need for affection in order to feel loved and fulfilled.

The problem is that the man is not naturally affectionate. Many men simply do not understand how to give affection to their wives. How can a man give a woman what she needs when he feels he doesn't have what she needs?

The man can learn to be affectionate. He can come to know the woman's purpose and design and then meet her needs for affection as it relates to this design.

"Understanding the Purpose and Power of Woman" by Dr. Myles Munroe; Pages 165-173.

Note:

The next sections of the book deals with the woman's seasons and how the male is always ready. It also deals with learning how to fulfill one another's needs. I found it very enlightening. I'm not led to write any further on this subject but I encourage each and every one of you all if you're interested in learning more to purchase the book. There are several awesome books that have been written on this subject like "Understanding the Purpose and Power of Men" by Dr. Myles Munroe, "The Five Love Languages" by Gary Chapman and "His Needs and Her Needs" by Willard E. Harley, Jr., just to name a few. We pray for prosperity, peace and love in your marriages and life. My God continue to bless you all richly as you continue to pursue Him.

Sincerely, Curtis and Michele