

# **Relationships**

## **Risk and Reward**

### **Workbook**

[www.healthYTEENrelationships.org](http://www.healthYTEENrelationships.org)

# Common Gender Differences in Communication

*(That can lead to trouble)*

## Tentative Speech Patterns

Females, more often than males use tag endings or hedges that can take away the impact of what they are saying:

“I kinda feel”, I “sort-of think”, “I’m not sure, but... or adding ‘okay?’ to the end of sentences.

## Eye Contact

Men naturally make much less eye contact in conversations than women do. Men often unknowingly offend women by doing this, and often women assume they are being ignored.

## Objective vs. Emotional Talkers

The purpose of communication differs between males and females. Men are usually objective, factual, and problem solvers in conversations. Women more often talk just to feel supported and heard, and for more social and emotional reasons than men.

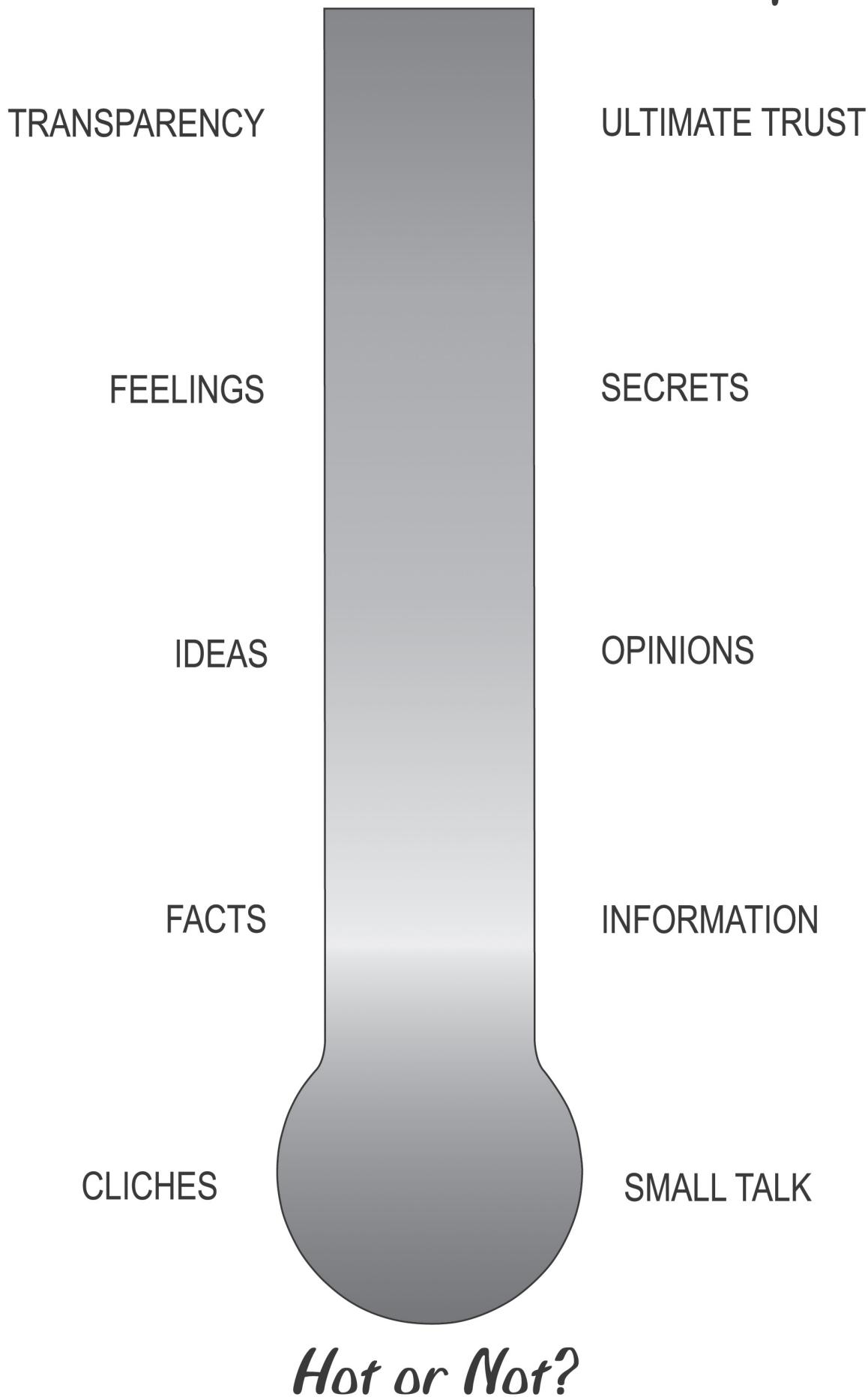
## Interruptions

Research shows that men interrupt women 5 times more often than women interrupt men in a conversation.

## Leading Questions

Men add leads such as “don’t you think?”, “wouldn’t you?” to the end of their statements and opinions twice as often as women. This, often unknowingly, diminishes the other person’s opinion or willingness to state a different one. This impact can vary depending on the tone of the statement.

# *Communication in Relationships*



# **Six Most Often Used Verbal Tactics in Relationships**

## **Jealousy and Possessiveness**

Extreme jealousy and possessiveness result in someone having to limit who they can talk to or go out with. You may be asked to give up going out with friends because “you are supposed to be going out with me”. “Why do you need to talk to other guys/girls”? Jealousy is often accompanied by accusations about where you have been or who you were with. Sometimes this is disguised as “I just care about you so much” kind of talk, but it is still jealousy, and is a tactic.

*Jealousy is never a part of healthy relationships  
It is not a sign of how much someone cares for you,  
but how much he or she cares for himself or herself.*

## **Flattery**

Most people think of flattery as positive. But extreme flattery can be a tactic to get you to do something you wouldn’t normally do such as quitting an activity, or having sex very early in a relationship. Other tactics include giving very large gifts early in a relationship, or calling attention to spending large amounts of money on dates “because you are worth it.” *If something feels like “too much too soon,” it is.* Flattery can also be more sexual in content, “you are so hot, I can’t control myself”.

*Sexual flattery is not an innocent compliment.*

## **Insecurity**

Insecurity can be used as a tactic in two ways: One person will act very insecure and need constant reassurance that you care for them and you are loyal to them. Some will try to make you feel sorry for them, “I’m not good enough for you”, in an attempt to keep you in the relationship.

The other way is when one person plays on the insecurities of another person. They call attention to personal issues such as weight, acne, or shyness to give the impression that no else would really want to go out with you.

*Two secure people are needed for healthy relationships.*

## **Anger**

Anger includes yelling, throwing things, accusations and physical violence. Anger is used to manipulate someone into doing or saying something they don't want to just to calm the other person down. Something *you* did is usually blamed for the outburst. Usually the non-violent person gives in and the "kiss and make up" stage is next, manipulating the person into thinking that the anger comes from "caring about them *so much*". Violence will always escalate if it is accepted.

***No one else is ever at fault for someone's choice to react violently.***

## **Intimidation**

Intimidation is using the fear that the anger stage will happen. One person intimidates by cold stares across a room, giving the "cold shoulder" when you did something "wrong", or directly threatening to hurt either you or someone else. A stern tone of voice, similar to a parental tone, is also used to intimidate. Other tactics include showing violence where the other person can see.

***This is sign of insecurity and disrespect for others.  
Anyone who uses this tactic, even in the smallest way,  
is not ready for a relationship.***

## **Guilt**

Guilt is a very powerful weapon because there is always some truth in it. "You are going out with the guys later, after I just spent all that time and money on your birthday?" "Aren't I more important than your friends?"

***Frequent guilt trips means that someone  
cares more about their needs than yours.***

## **ROLE PLAY SITUATIONS: EMOTIONAL BOUNDARIES**

What does the person REALLY want?

What tactics are they using to get it?

- 1) MALE “.... I’m telling you one time only- give it all back! I want his stuff gone from around your neck, out of your purse and out of your locker. You are going out with me, but your ex-boyfriend’s stuff is all over the place! No way! That just isn’t going to happen. I want his stuff gone--today! If you want to be with me his stuff has got to go. If it’s him you want, it can stay. Decide now!”
- 2) MALE “(after 2 dates)... I just can’t believe how in love with you I am. Who wouldn’t be? You’re smart and beautiful and you have a great and funny personality. I can’t stop thinking about you all day and you have become a very important part of my life.
- 3) FEMALE “.... I guess I always knew you would want to end our relationship. I understand. I was so much less than what you deserve. I never do anything right. I’m sorry. You deserve better. I wish we could try again, and I know I could try harder, but if your mind is made up---I know this is all my fault and I’m sorry. So, if you really want this to end, I mean really, just tell me. I will deal with it somehow...”
- 4) MALE “.... What else did he do to you? I don’t believe for a minute that he just called you, out of nowhere! What’s his name? How many times have you talked to him? And you better tell me all of it---every detail or you will be hurtin’!! How many times do I have to tell you not to disrespect me! And I better find out you’re lying to me and there’s something else going on or you will be sorry!
- 5) FEMALE “....Really? After all I’ve done for you, and given you? I gave you everything; you were my first. I even paid for our dates when you were broke, and spent a ton of time helping you with English, and I ask you for one thing, and you say no? I can’t believe it.

## **DATING GUIDELINES**

- EACH PERSON INVOLVED HAS ONLY \$10.00 TO SPEND.
- THE ACTIVITY NEEDS TO LAST ONE HOUR OR MORE.
- THE ACTIVITY HAS TO BE DRUG AND ALCOHOL FREE.
- PERMISSION FROM PARENTS/GUARDIAN IS REQUIRED.

*Write all your ideas below:*

# Megan and Mark

## *What's Really Going On*

### **Megan**

I'll never forget that night as long as I live. Mark and I had been dating for a while and he had always acted like a perfect gentleman. Well we had done our share of kissing, but he never gave me any reason not to trust him. The night of the party I wore this gorgeous dress that I borrowed from my friend. It was a little flashier than I normally wear but I felt like wearing something different. I really wanted to dance, but it had always been hard to talk Mark into it. At the party, I had some beer. My cup always seemed to be full, and it made me really tired. Strangely, Mark wanted to dance, but I was so tipsy that I could barely hold on to him to keep from falling. Maybe I shouldn't have suggested that we both lie down together, but I needed to rest, and it felt weird to just go upstairs by myself and leave Mark all alone. I was groggy, and felt like I was already falling in and out of sleep. The next thing I remember, Mark was all over me, forcing me to have sex with him. I didn't want to scream and make a fool of myself. Anyway, the party was loud and I doubt anyone would have heard me. At first I tried to fight him off, but I was too wiped out to really do anything. Besides, it was fast and he said something about showing our love. I'm so confused. He seemed like such a nice guy, and now he left a message on my machine about a party this weekend.

# **Megan and Mark**

## ***What's Really Going On?***

### **Mark**

“I still don’t understand what happened. Megan and I had been dating for a long time and even though we hadn’t slept together yet, I told her I was attracted to her and gave her lots of signs that I eventually wanted to go to bed with her. We were supposed to go to a party and when she showed up in this sexy low-cut dress I thought maybe this was her way of saying she was ready. At the party we drank some beer, which made her sort of sleepy and sensual. While I don’t normally dance, I was really surprised but loved the way she held her body close to mine when we danced. And then when she suggested that we leave to find a place to lie down, what was I supposed to think? Of course I thought she wanted some privacy to finally have a chance to make love. Granted, she did grumble a bit when I started to undress her, but I figured she just wanted to be persuaded. Lots of girls feel a little funny about being forward, and want the guy to get them off the hook. I don’t know. We had sex and it was fine - I even told her that it was the ultimate expression of our love. I took her home from the party and I thought everything was okay. But I haven’t heard from her since, and she hasn’t returned my call inviting her to this weekend’s party.

# Qualities Budget

Planning for your future means an “investment” on your part of things like time, effort, and money, as well as social and emotional effort.

Think about your future in terms of an “ideal” marriage partner.

1. Circle five things from the list below that you would like in that person.

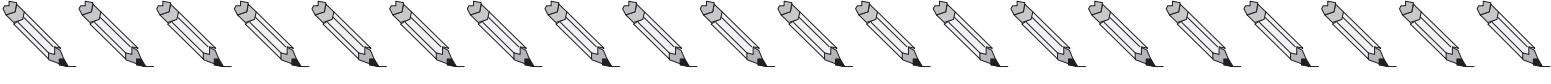
## Quality

A good looking face  
Wealthy  
Popular  
Truthful-Honest  
Has a Car  
Not Possessive  
Romantic-Loving  
Smart-Intelligent  
Attends Church/Religious  
Happy-good sense of humor  
Likes Children  
Financially secure  
Well Groomed-Clean  
A well built body-figure  
Ambitious-Hard Working  
Affectionate  
Helps with cleaning-cooking  
Athletic  
Considerate-Thoughtful  
Responsible  
Stands up for Rights-Brave  
Faithful-Trustworthy  
Energetic-Healthy  
Respectful-has good manners  
Understanding

2. Look back on the five qualities you expect your ideal partner to possess. Which one is your #1 quality that your partner needs to possess? (One so important that you would absolutely expect in a relationship.) Put a #1 next to that quality. Finally, put a #2 next to the second most important quality.
3. Choose any other quality not circled that you would consider a nice “extra” in an ideal partner. You could live without it, but it certainly would be nice to have! Write the word “extra” next to that quality.

# Homework Interview Questions

- ◆ How old were you when you met your spouse?
  - ◆ How long did you date before you got married?
  - ◆ How long have you been or how long were you married?
  - ◆ What is the best part of being married?
  - ◆ What is the most difficult part of being married?
  - ◆ Choose one quality from the Qualities Budget that you could not live without in your marriage.
  - ◆ Choose one quality that you would add “for free” but is not necessary to make a marriage work?



# **RELATIONSHIP GLOSSARY**

**Assumptions:** This is when people “read” meaning into something that was said. Ex. “I want to lay down” = “I want to have sex,” or deciding that you know what someone will say or do without asking.

**Emotional Boundaries:** The limits you set, or feel comfortable with in personal and emotional communication with others. Ex: Someone who doesn’t know you very well tells you something very personal about themselves. Or someone you dated only a few times tells you that they love you.

**Personal Boundaries:** Ways that we protect our Person (our social, physical and emotional selves) from others. Our boundaries naturally protect us early in relationships from getting “too close too fast,” either physically or emotionally.

**Physical Boundary:** Your “personal space”. The physical distance you are comfortable with in casual encounters with others. Ex: People who are “in your face” when they talk to you. This comfort zone changes the more we know and like the other person.

**Signs and Signals:** Trying to send messages without actually saying what you think. Or thinking that some behavior or observation “means something” that was not said.

**Tactics:** Ways many people try to get around your boundaries in relationships. Tactics are “shortcuts” some people use to get something they want faster and easier, such as love, commitment or sex. Tactics are also used to avoid honest communication.

**Universal Values:** Values that transcend cultures, religions, and time to establish norms and standards of ethical conduct. Example: All people of the world view honesty as an ethical quality.

**Verbal Tactic:** Getting what you want or need in a relationship through communication that is dishonest, indirect or manipulative.

The Verbal tactics most often used include anger, jealousy, intimidation, insecurity, guilt and flattery.

