

WE COMMUNICATE DIFFERENTLY

There is nothing strange or mysterious about it. Men and women have different ways of expressing their true feelings. Women often won't express their real feelings, especially if those feelings could hurt the one they love. However, if they're upset or angry enough, they'll say how they feel at the moment - even though they may regret it later.

Men, on the other hand, don't necessarily express their true feelings, even when they're angry. When provoked, some men will say things they know they don't mean at that time or at any other time just to win the argument, prove a point or wound the other person.

I'm not saying that women don't say things on purpose to hurt, they do. The difference is, women mean it. When a man says these things, sometimes they are true, but usually it's a maneuver, a bluff, a tactic.

Now, here's where it gets complicated. A man assumes that when a woman is angry she says things she doesn't really mean - just like he does - so he's quick to forgive and forget. Little does he know! When a woman hears a man say cruel and hurtful things, she assumes he means every word, that those are his real feelings coming out at last. She'll never forgive or forget.

Not only do men and women express anger differently, they also think differently. But, men and women think they think alike, which is why they have problems communicating. Men tend to think quietly and express their conclusions in words. Women tend to think out loud, talking as they process their thoughts. These different ways of communicating can lead to man-woman arguments. The "get to the point" argument is a good example. She thinks out loud and expresses her thoughts. He thinks quietly and expresses his conclusions. He's waiting for the punch line; it hasn't occurred to her yet.

The woman says, "How can you have given that so little thought?" He has given it a great deal. The man says, "Get to the point!" She's trying. The man, listening for her conclusions, says in utter frustration, "Get to the point!" She can't. She hasn't reached a conclusion yet herself. On the other hand, when she suddenly hears he's going to quit his job and move to Alaska she panics, thinking "How could you make such a rash decision?" Little does she realize he has been mulling over the issue for months.

A related word war is the "You never talk to me" argument. Again, it comes down to different styles of communicating. She says, "Talk to me." He says, "Not again." Her request drives all words from his mind. He feels ridiculous and can't interact.

Have you ever noticed that men can talk to each other without many words, understand exactly what they're saying and agree wholeheartedly with each other? When a man tries to say the same thing to a woman, it takes him much longer to make her understand, and then she often disagrees with him anyway.

A woman can speak with another woman in half sentences. A man who overhears the conversation may exclaim, "What on earth are you two talking about? It doesn't make any sense." The women try to explain it to him using paragraphs, and he doesn't understand. "Women!" he'll say, "you just can't understand them. And if you do, you're in serious trouble."

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"Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." Ephesians 5:20, 21