

So don't hold back your requests thinking he'll be happier if you're easier to get along with or it's too selfish of you to ask him for more. You need to ask, in order to prevent the resentment build-up and he needs the sense of purpose of providing and making you happy in the relationship.

If you feel bad for asking, go back to tip #1 and say thank you more often and more expressively, and that will be everything he wants.

Life is too precious to waste in resentment

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little words

3 COMMUNICATION SHIFTS WOMEN CAN MAKE FOR A BETTER RELATIONSHIP

Any change in you will influence him



LET'S FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL.

Often when we feel like there is a problem with communication in our relationship, we focus on what the other person needs to change. But since you can't control another person, we are usually disappointed.

So let's focus on what you *can* control.

Here are three simple ways women can communicate to get a better outcome with a male partner:



little words



Instead of "sorry", say "thank you"

Often when I've been holding back a lot of things that I've wanted to say to my husband, things that have hurt me or that I'm frustrated or upset about, something will eventually tip me over the edge and then they come out all in a big rush.

Normally after this kind of dumping I feel bad. I want to do something to rebuild the connection that I feel I've disrupted. So I tend to either try to push him to dump his frustrations on me (so that's it's fair) or I apologise for doing it.

Both of these reactions discourage him from taking on responsibility in the relationship. The first treats him like a female, who needs to get things off her chest, and the second like a little boy, suggesting that he isn't capable of handling the things I've shared.

If you find that after you've done this, you feel bad, try finding your husband and saying "Thank you". Let him know how much you appreciate being able to share the things you said and how much better it makes you feel to be able to get them off your chest.



Doing this inspires him to do more in the relationship. It lets him know that you value his presence and you admire his emotional strength. Appreciating him will make him feel much better than an apology will, without invalidating your need to share what's on your heart.

Do tell him every little thing



If you want to avoid dumping, practice sharing more frequently. When you notice something small that annoys you, rather than feeling like it's too petty to bring up, practice voicing it straight away.

When you hold it back, while it feels like you're being "nice", what you're really doing is adding it to the ever-growing pile that will erupt and spew out like molten lava when you eventually reach the final straw.

Regular little things are much easier for him to absorb the pain of than the volcano you've been "kindly" storing up.

Share it in this way: "I have something I need to share, and it would be a huge relief to me if you would be able to just listen while I share it, would that be ok? When you do, I feel like" (Go as deep as you can with the feeling and express it fully. If you minimise the impact, you'll still add the rest to the volcano-pile.) Then, thank him for listening to what you had to say and tell him how much better it makes you feel to be heard.

Doing this will help prevent the build-up of resentment that eventually leads to a massive argument.



Commit to asking and re-asking

There are plenty of things we want that we feel like we just aren't getting. It can be really discouraging to feel like your husband won't even do the simplest things you ask, let alone those big ones that lie heavy on your heart.

I used to ask Tim to do something a few times and he wouldn't do it, so I'd feel really let-down and complain to him about it, and he still wouldn't do it! It didn't feel like there was anything I could do about it, so I added it to the "Reasons My Husband Sucks" list. If I couldn't get him to do the things I wanted, at least I could get some kind of validation by running over this list in my mind, to my mum or even publicly in a shaming way, among friends.

While it felt to me like he deliberately ignored me or just didn't care about the things I wanted, oftentimes female communication is just too subtle for men.

When we think we've asked, we sometimes have only hinted, or we haven't been direct or persistent enough. Sometimes we feel like it will be "nagging" to keep asking, but the alternative is normally put-downs, sarcasm and complaining. These can have a devastating impact on the relationship.

Now when I want something, I commit to myself to ask for it consistently, at least once each day, until it happens. I ask directly and without criticism or complaint. I change my expectation - I will need to ask multiple times for it to happen. The results are much more satisfying.



Start by choosing a small thing that you've been wanting from your husband, and commit to asking for it at least 10 times, politely and directly "Honey, could you please today?"

If he still isn't there, use the method in #2 and share vulnerably with him how it makes you feel when it isn't happening. Then commit to yourself to continue asking. Always remember to appreciate him when he does it, no matter how long it takes. This will make the road shorter next time.

Being asked to do something for you actually inspires him into a masculine state. He will feel at his most fulfilled when he's chosen to sacrifice something for you, whether it be time, energy or money. When you acknowledge this sacrifice by appreciating him, he truly feels fulfilled.

