

## Stress responses in men and women

Guest: John Gray

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### Meagen Gibson - [00:00:09]

Welcome to this interview. I'm Meagen Gibson, co-host of the Relationship Super Conference.

Today I'm speaking with John Gray, the author of the most well-known and trusted relationship book of all time, *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*.

John helps women and men better understand and respect their differences in both personal and professional relationships. He has many books, blogs, and free online workshops at [marsvenus.com](http://marsvenus.com) that provide practical insights to improve relationships at all stages of life and love.

His most recent book is *Beyond Mars and Venus*. John Gray, thank you so much for being with us today.

### John Gray

Thank you, Meagen. It's a real pleasure.

### Meagen Gibson

John, COVID has given us a more shared experience of stress than in any recent memory of mine. I personally know of a lot of marriages and relationships that have ended during this time. So what can you tell me about how men and women cope differently with stress?

### John Gray

You know, talking about men and women in stress is actually one of my favorite, favorite topics. The reason for that is that it's so verifiable biologically. Often when I talk about gender differences, people might think, oh, well, that's not everybody, that's not everybody. And certainly, as I describe it, it won't always describe everybody. And there's exceptions to anything.

But if we look at the biology, something that nobody disagrees with is that men and women's hormones are very different. Women have a whole set of hormones and timing with those hormones that allows them to make a baby, whether they make a baby or not. It's a completely different design, and men do not have it.

So we have a design, and ironically, if we look at our most primitive brain, which is where our sexuality is controlled by, is to seek out and find as many potential mothers as possible to spread your seed. Okay, it's a biological reality to that. Now, when I describe that, and for women, there's a biological reality which is her hormones are different but also she has to be more careful because if she has sex it's an investment of 9 months in a lifetime of taking care of somebody. So she has a lot of different hormonal reactions that help her to navigate that world of thousands and thousands of years of

evolution. And that doesn't change just because Berkeley University says men and women are not different.

There's realities here and not that culture doesn't affect us because it does affect us, it trains us how to be our best person. And our culture has changed. And that means if our culture changes, we need a culture that will support men and women in lowering stress.

So the premise here is that as women have evolved to be able to incorporate more of an androgynous lifestyle, which is both masculine and feminine, and men have become more androgynous in a sense of masculine and feminine. That's really a whole new reality of, simply put, women are more independent and men are more happiness oriented. So men like to be happy, that's what we'll call our female side or female hormones. And work, sacrifice, overcoming challenges, making a difference, that produces what we'll call our male hormones.

And why do we call those male and female hormones? Because the male primary hormone is testosterone. Now, men need 10 to 20 times more testosterone to feel good and to cope with stress. When a man is stressed out, basically, we'll call him anxious, irritated, annoyed, exhausted, no libido for his wife. It could be for Internet, but that's different, two different worlds, but to be intimate with this partner, irritability and depression, all symptoms of stress. We call that stress. Being stressed.

We're not talking about stress out there in the world. The world is very stressful. My work can be very stressful but how do I react to it? That's my stress response. And what I want is that, I want a stress response if it's temporary and it's very quick. Like if I'm having to drive my car really fast and make a turn, okay, my testosterone has to shoot up. But the stress response at that time is something called cortisol. Cortisol stress hormone.

Now, everybody's heard about cortisol. Not only is it not good for your health, but it keeps you from being happy and fulfilled for both men and women the same. Cortisol is your stress hormone. Men, when their testosterone is low, their cortisol will be high. That's a biological test. It's true for everybody if you have a male body. If you don't have a male body, then when you're stressed, your estrogen levels will be low. A woman, when she's happy, she will tend to have estrogen levels 10 times more to 20 times more than a man's average estrogen levels.

So we can see there's an actual biological female that we can measure now and when it comes to stress. So simple logic, if we can have a relationship or a lifestyle that promotes more estrogen in a woman, she'll be happier. And if we can have a lifestyle that promotes more testosterone in men, he'll be happier. He'll feel good. The stress hormones will be lower. So that's our objective here.

Now, once the world has changed radically, where women have the freedom to express both parts of who they are, their feminine and masculine side. If a woman can't express her masculine side, she could be stressed. If a man can't express his female side, he can be stressed. And so we have to keep that in mind while we're talking about this.

But the reality is, whenever there's depression in women or men, women's estrogen levels are too low. Men's testosterone levels are too low.

And to make things a bit more complicated, because we are complicated, when women are ovulating, that's generally when her estrogen levels need to double. If they don't double around that time, then for quite a while, she might be more stressed. Okay, we'll put it that way. But after ovulation, towards her period, she still needs estrogen. But if she has too much estrogen, then you get something called estrogen dominance, and that means not enough progesterone. Then she'll be stressed. So it's not a simple call for women.

But the bottom line is, even after ovulation, she still needs estrogen. And if she doesn't have enough, she'll be depressed or she'll be more stressed. But particularly after ovulation for 12 days towards her period, she needs to make sure that she has both estrogen and progesterone and a little bit more progesterone.

So we're going to just simplify this by talking about female hormones and male hormones.

**Meagen Gibson - [00:07:10]**

Now that you've laid out the specificities of both biologically, we'll just simplify it down to female and male.

**John Gray**

Simplify it down.

Now I've written a book on all of this called *Beyond Mars and Venus, which Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, people who love those books, this is a must because it updates the ideas of men are from Mars, women are from Venus. Now, that book is amazing to people who are in a relationship where a woman has children, and she's also dependent on the man to make more money. She could still be making money, but she's dependent on him to make more money. That's a dynamic which is really explored. Although I didn't talk about hormones.

But when people read *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, they kind of go, oh, my gosh, this is like my life. Is he following me around? He's hearing my conversations. And literally, in days, relationships improve.

I was just having dinner with a couple the other day and actually, if you have children and you're living together in a house there's a certain dependence on each other. And as soon as that happens, the basic men are from Mars ideas blossom and you go, oh, my gosh, now I understand.

So what would you understand? You'd understand that women need to talk more. Men should listen more. What you'd understand is that men tend to get really close and then they detach and it's like they don't love you. But they do. They just need to pull away in order to rebuild their testosterone to then come back. So that's a concept, it's popular and it shows up in dating a lot, regardless of what stage you're at, which is men get close and then they pull away and you go, what has just happened? Women often take it personally instead of realizing that dating, our sex, intimacy raises estrogen.

And in men, and feels really good to both of us because estrogen is happiness, it's love, it's connection, it's comfort, it's peace, calm all these good qualities of happiness are the estrogen side of us. So when a man has sex with a woman, particularly sex, his estrogen soars really high and it pushes down his testosterone. He tends to react by pulling away, becoming distant in order to rebuild his testosterone. Because distance produces testosterone.

You know the old saying, distance makes the heart grow fonder. Well, that's particularly true with men. I've learned that in my marriage of 32 years. If I was gone too long, then when I came home, my wife was not interested in having sex for quite a while. She says, I need to get reacquainted. I thought, what?

**Meagen Gibson**

Exactly.

**John Gray**

And if I didn't understand her, her need to be reacquainted, that's got connection, estrogen stimulation, I would feel rejected. And I did in the beginning. And you feel like, what? And of course, when man pulls away, a woman, particularly after sex, she feels so close. And then he pulls away. And then he kind of ignores her for a couple of days. She's like, what happened? We got to such a connected place.

So this is practical for most people. But more of our challenges, particularly when it comes to stress, is my book *Beyond Mars and Venus*, which we'll be talking about today, which is men, when they're testosterone's low, they're going to be more stressed. When women, they're estrogen levels are low, their female hormones are low, they're going to be more stressed. And so what can we do? You'll probably be asking me today. What men can do, and women can do for themselves.

### **Meagen Gibson - [00:10:42]**

Well, and so much of what you said, it's so funny that estrogen drives our happiness and connection and that goes up, that men have to go away in order to drive their testosterone up, which is going to drive them to connect again in that base brain, that reptilian brain. I've got to go connect again. I've got to go spread my seed. But first I have to go away so that raises again. Just fascinating really.

Protective measures if we want to go way back. The female needs that male to go away for a little while. Let me rest, as they say.

And the other thing that I was thinking, too, before we get into stress and how to manage it, is around when women move out of their reproductive phase and how progesterone and estrogen lower and testosterone raises and how you can often see a manifestation of how that stress is going to come out. There's increased irritability, there's increased disconnection, like all of those things because of that hormone imbalance. So I don't know if you have anything to say about that.

### **John Gray**

But I have so much to say about that. As we begin to learn, and this might be too soon to be talking about this, but once we understand the cycles in a woman's day. And we do have a fantastic class at [marvenus.com](http://marvenus.com) called *How To Get Your Me Time*, which should really be titled *How To Balance Your Hormones At Different Times Of The Month*. Now what you're saying is now you're beyond the menopause stage, how do you lower stress then?

Well, the cycle that you're going through before menopause is automatic. Your body naturally does these dance of hormones. And you do it even in a day. One hormone is produced, testosterone is when you're sacrificing and giving to others, solving problems, fixing things. Another hormone, estrogen is produced when somebody's helping you solve problems, when somebody's helping support you, when somebody is giving to you and you're receiving, that's your estrogen.

And then there's another one which is progesterone, which naturally these hormones are changing in your body, if you're not stressed, you'll have the right balance. Progesterone is social bonding, that's connecting with others other than primarily the person that you're intimate with. So that would be playing cards with other people, that would be making dinner together, that would be a social cause, a demonstration, whatever it is.

### **Meagen Gibson**

Playing a game.

### **John Gray**

Playing a game is a really great one. So that's a progesterone producer.

So there's solitary activities which are self nurturing are also progesterone activities. So that's your me time. Learning how to be happy without depending on a man is your me time, and you have to be able to do that. And at the same time, to do that you need to also be able to ask for help at the times when you need the estrogen.

So this is like a whole new world for us to consciously make sure that all three of those things are part of our monthly cycle. And it is somewhat controlled by nature. The right times for it tend to be even

measurable in some studies that when the moon is new, that's in a sense, equivalent to when you're having your period. And when the moon is full, that's the equivalent time of when you're ovulating. So the best time for a romantic dates, if you're beyond menopause, is when the moon is full or moving towards fullness.

Now what's interesting is you won't see this research being contested a lot and so forth, on beyond menopause statement because younger people, earlier than menopause, the moon is not majorly controlling everything. But after menopause, because your own inherent, natural cycles are not working the way they used to, the moon has a much bigger influence.

So if you look at people beyond menopause, the moon, new moon, full moon there's certain times when you need to pull back, certain times you need to go out. And in my experience in 50 years of people before and after menopause, that's my experience of seeing.

So you need to be very conscious of whenever you're stressed. And now we know this to be the case, whenever you're feeling stressed, now for women that would be more feeling overwhelmed. That's one of the earlier stages before depression, but that sense of overwhelm. You'll see it happening so much today. That is clearly an indication you're making more testosterone than estrogen.

So the antidote to stress for women is to shift gears and balance yourself. You're out there solving problems, overwhelm is feeling I have to do this, I have to do this, I have to do this, I have to do this. Anytime your brain is telling you, I have to do something and there's not plenty of time and plenty of support and plenty of money and plenty of friends and plenty of people supporting you in that, giving you comfort and ease, that's estrogen. So you're over there feeling, I have to do this, and nobody is helping me. That's really an extreme version of stress. It's all up to me.

And ironically, when a man feels it's all up to me, it's a super testosterone producer and he comes alive.

### **Meagen Gibson - [00:16:08]**

People are depending on me. I'm fulfilling my life purpose.

### **John Gray**

Exactly. Exactly.

I remember, I don't know, about 6 years into my marriage with Bonnie, she looked at me, she says, you know, John, I depend on you, and went, oh, I really have to do something here. There's a place where you show up as a man more because your testosterone shoots up when you feel it's up to me. And when women feels it's up to me, that's a good feeling if you also have plenty of estrogen in your body, which means I have backup. I have support. I have a team. I have people who love me. I love nature. It's having the feeling of love along with I have to do this.

Which is why, in the old days, my parent's relationship for example, my dad was a good provider, and that's what women needed most. My mother's dream was having 7 children. And I never saw her stressed. Okay, this is 6 boys, imagine that. And of course, we weren't always perfect little kids. And all she had to do is say if you don't listen to me I'm telling your dad. He was a policeman, so she had a really good policeman.

And she also had a good provider, and she could depend on him for those things so she gotta do what she loved to do. And what she loved to do, she wanted to be a mother. And her dream was 7 children and she got her 7 children. And I think she'd rather have a few more girls but she had her dream. And she could be so happy running the household because running our house was acting like a CEO of a business.

## **Meagen Gibson - [00:17:44]**

It's a lot to do. My father was one of 7 as well. That's a lot.

## **John Gray**

There's a lot of I have to's when you're raising children, so it's not like there's no testosterone being produced it's just that she has to do all these things, but she also had a partner that provided the support so she gotta do what she loved to do. You see how that dynamic goes together.

Now, a modern woman today, and the whole idea of loving your children is they give you so much love. When they're young, you're a god, basically you're everything. So you're guaranteed love as you give.

When you apply that same thing to a husband, are you guaranteed love if you give to him? No. If you give to him, you're not guaranteed love, particularly if he's in his cave. Unless he's pulled away. You could be doing things for him and he doesn't have the estrogen that connects with you. Because that's what women need most is that connection. He needs to detach from you for a while.

So this is where understanding of hormones comes into play otherwise we can feel so, take things so personally and we can be so hurt by it. And ironically, the more high consciousness has happened on the planet, and I'm saying high consciousness meaning for women to be aware, conscious of their female side and their male side. And for men to be aware of their female side and their male side.

The problem with this new consciousness is that it feels so good to not be, if you're a woman, to go over to your male side because this is all new, it's all exciting to be on your male side, and it feels so good for men not to feel like all the pressure is on them, and they have to do it all, and they can go over and do what they like to do. But the problem here is for both, if a man goes on his female side, but he goes too far, he can't get back. It's too hard. This is the guy who is laying on the couch and it feels good, and you can't get him up.

And for women, she's over there solving problems, but she can't come home and relax and forget the problems of the day. Men can. You see, we have these different designs for feeling good. Men can feel good by forgetting things. And women can feel good by remembering things as long as somebody is listening. If nobody listens then basically your testosterone surges and it says, you've got to do it yourself.

Think about the way the brain works. A long time ago, if you're in a village and you're a woman and you knew there was a tiger lurking in the forest and you're the only one who knew, wouldn't you feel a compulsion to tell everybody? If there's a problem you've got to announce it. Otherwise it's all up to you to kill that tiger, protect yourself from that tiger.

So women's nature is when they're stressed to talk. Hey, we've got big problems here, and to talk about it. And where we're missing in our consciousness is, and our knowledge about our new challenges, is that when women are stressed, they're going to want to talk, but they don't actually have to solve the problem, they just need to be heard. If you're actually living in a community where everybody's dependent on each other all you have to do is talk about the problem and the men will jump in and solve the problem. That's what they love to do, because solving problems actually produces testosterone, it makes them feel good. When men have no problems to solve, a retired man, testosterone plummets.

## **Meagen Gibson**

Statistics around retired men after they retire, if they don't have a purpose and they don't have something to fix, they die.

### **John Gray - [00:21:23]**

And you know, whatever disease they die of, heart disease is the number one disease. And we all keep looking at cholesterol as the problem. Half the people who die from heart disease have no plaque in their veins. They don't have high cholesterol, bad cholesterol, whatever. But have to, it is an issue which is oxidized cholesterol, not cholesterol itself, but oxidized cholesterol is an issue in terms of our health. However, it's not the primary ingredient for a heart attack. It's basically stress. Being stressed is the primary ingredient and you can measure chronic cortisol levels or adrenal burnout, they won't be so high because your adrenal can't even make the cortisol anymore.

But the flip side of this is any man who has a heart attack always, always has low testosterone.

### **Meagen Gibson**

Really.

### **John Gray**

This is it. So you're over there pointing out that they lose their meaning and purpose in life or they feel helpless. It could be, some research has been done on traumas, unresolved shocks and trauma. It could be a job loss, it could be a betrayal, a financial loss, it could be a child that hates you now, it could be a divorce. A lot of those, whatever they might be, these traumas, they set in motion a depression of low testosterone and then that can cause a heart attack as well.

And you can't really say in science anything directly correlates with something else. But you can say that whenever a man has a heart attack his testosterone is low, and if he has healthy testosterone, you know for sure he's not going to have a heart attack.

Just like today what people are saying around COVID. Unfortunately, they don't say enough about it, is actually, if you have high vitamin D levels you can't get sick from COVID or have side effects. But taking vitamin D doesn't necessarily protect you. You need to have, or solve the problem, you need to have long before you get the flu or whatever, you need to have high vitamin D levels. Now we know that that's an amazing thing for everybody. And then now some people can't utilize their vitamin D so sometimes just taking pills and vitamin D aren't there. But knowing that I need to make, you can check your vitamin D levels and see whether you're going to die of COVID because it's going to go around forever.

### **Meagen Gibson**

To that matter you can check your cortisol levels. Like when you go to your physical every year and you get your blood panel your doctor will say, have you been experiencing a lot of stress and you're like, I don't know. And they're like, well, I can see in your blood work that you have, actually. So why don't you tell me what's going on and maybe it's time to manage this a little better. And the same with the vitamin D, all of these things, your blood tells a lot of stories when you go to get checked out doesn't it?

### **John Gray**

Absolutely. And so we can be preparing very simply.

But right away look at the acute levels of stress in your life. Okay, what do you do now? If a woman is stressed she can know what are the things, if I'm single or I'm married, that will produce more estrogen or progesterone? And you'll find that very quickly your stress levels go away.

However, it never feels natural. You see, eating ice cream will put on fat in me in two days. I gain like 5lbs, I don't know what happens. But if I was to follow what I feel, what feels good to me, I would just eat a whole quarter of ice cream or a half quarter, a pint. You've got a pint, you just keep going. It just

tastes so good. And everybody knows, generally speaking, as you get older it puts on fat. Is that good for you? No. But, boy, does it feel good to me.

So you have to understand that just because something feels good or feels natural, it's not necessarily good for you. And that's very, very important. And it's a very important message because if you're a woman and you're more on your male side to do the things that increase estrogen will be a low priority and will not feel natural and will feel uncomfortable and you'll resist it, and you'll say that's just not me.

And I can't tell you over 50 years, how many women said it wasn't me, who once I gave them what they actually needed, I got them to talk about their emotions and their feelings and to look inside and was somebody who's not going to fix them, solve them, correct them, interfere with them, doubt them. The problem is if you get that kind of support, you'll realize, wow, this actually feels really, really good, and I feel happy. But you have to have somebody be able to listen to you, give you that need, and then you realize, oh, I really need this.

And so many women have never received that support. It's a sophisticated kind of support that we have never understood in the history of humanity because women's problems have never been a big thing, being too far on your male side because the culture supported women being on their female side, and the culture supported men being on their female side. Which is actually a great culture if you're living at the level of survival and security.

Once a woman, once a culture is so safe that a woman doesn't depend on a man for her survival or her security and there's education so she can now be her own man. I can take care of myself. Now you get this whole new problem that I see with women, which is, why do I need a man? It's like having another child in the house. What's so good about having a man? And these women are just missing the boat. And men are saying the same thing, why do I need to get married?

### **Meagen Gibson - [00:27:03]**

Nobody needs me. I'm gonna to give up my freedom, give up my money if nobody actually needs me. If I don't have a purpose in this relationship.

### **John Gray**

If I'm not successful., you see meaning and purpose is what it's about. But you'll also have to get messages that I'm successful in making a difference. And you have a purpose, which is okay, I'm here to support you, provide safety for you to grow and love and so forth, and I love doing that, that's who I am, I'm a hero. But what gives it meaning, meaning is very important, is that it works.

If I have a job and it doesn't do anything, it has no meaning. So I'll quit and my testosterone just goes down. It's that men need signals just as women need reassurance again and again and again that they are loved and you're not going anywhere. And that's why the female side of us needs reassurance that we are loved. Someone is there for us.

And here's the interesting thing is because women are more on their male side, the need to be on the female side to counterbalance that is greater than in history. There's a depth to femininity that other previous generations never knew. And that would be something that you explore and learn in therapy, for example, not that you have to go to therapy. My books teach you how to do it yourself. But it's to go deeper from talking just about problems, or what's good in your life, talking is to go deeper inside and fully feel the emotions associated with what's going on.

And women often, we'll say often women are more emotional. The reality is men typically show up more emotional, because when men have high stress, what does it mean when a man has high stress? It means his testosterone is going down and his estrogen is going too high.



## **Meagen Gibson - [00:28:50]**

So he's very much in touch with his feelings.

### **John Gray**

He will be very emotional.

Now interesting, in touch with feelings is a little different from being emotional. And that's a distinction. This is all advanced knowledge here. Women say my husband's not emotional at all. Watch him when he's watching a football game with his friends. He's very, oh, no, great, oh bummer. We're very emotional. But that doesn't mean he has self awareness where he can look whenever he's stressed, what emotions are behind that.

Nor do women. Women talk about what's going on. They'll say, well, you didn't do this, you should do that and they'll have feelings of disapproval and feelings of rejection and feelings of hurt. That's one emotion but there's a lot of other ones. And she doesn't fully feel it without laying the blame on her partner.

You can say, when you say that, it triggers me to feel this hurt of not feeling, triggers my feelings of insecurity, and I'm overly sensitive. Now, if you say that, a man can hear it. But if you say to a man, you hurt me when you say that, he wants to be your hero, and now he's just failed you in the most intimate way. He doesn't ever want to hurt you. So he then has a reaction, which every man will have, to defend. He has to explain, well, I didn't really mean it that way, or I didn't do that, or you're looking at it the wrong way, or you should balance that with how many good things I do, and how could you be doubting me now? So we get all defensive about this.

And the answer is not just tell men not to be defensive. Although that's good, we can practice that and I teach men to do that. But the flip side of that, women can learn, since she's the one who's feeling hurt, how to communicate that feeling so he doesn't do the thing he did again.

Like a monkey, if you don't have a communication skill one monkey steps on another monkey's foot, and the monkey goes, ow, and the other person never had anybody step on their foot, they don't have that sensitivity, and so then he does it again, and you go, ow, ow. And you get louder and louder. Anytime you're amplifying your emotions to get change. You're a monkey.

What we have to do is if you want to create change you have to create love, and you have to communicate love. Love brings out the best in your partner. And these amplified wounded emotions actually only create defensiveness. And his defensiveness only amplifies for wounded emotions. So there's an art to being able to communicate emotions that you really can't apply right away in your relationship. Although my books give you the words, but the words are not enough. It has to be authentic.

You can't just be repeating something if in your heart you're feeling disapproval and mistrust and rejection, and you use the words, it doesn't work. But what can teach women how to go to their estrogen side, because I know anybody listening to this is going, how do I get to my estrogen side?

## **Meagen Gibson**

I am, I'm waiting.

### **John Gray**

One of, there's many, but this is called self exploration. This is self reflection. The ability to look within rather than look out, is estrogen producing. Looking out, how do I solve this problem by changing the outer world? That is testosterone production. There's a fire in the house, let's get out of here, let's put a hose on it, let's put it out. That's when our emergency man comes to life. The testosterone goes up,

he'll risk his life. He will do it. And it feels good to do it because he knows somebody's going to appreciate him for it. If nobody's going to appreciate him for it, he will stop feeling excited.

But we tend to appreciate those things that we don't want to do. And those things that are most difficult or challenging to us. So on the flip side, the female side of us to go where no woman has ever gone before, which is to start looking in the emotions, not from the point of view of being emotional, just being hurt, being angry, being upset, is to be able to talk about those emotions without blaming your partner.

Because any time you use an emotion to change somebody, and that's called blaming your partner, you want to change them, then what happens is wiring is set up in your brain and reinforced that the outer world has to change before you feel better.

And not only that, but you train your brain when you're stressed to always be looking at what's out there that's causing my stress feelings? Rather than for women, you need to look within. How to go what's inside of me that's causing my stress feelings? And the first step to realize is hey, when am I happy when my heart is filled with love?

So do you have the ability to find yourself regardless of the outer world? That's what you want to gain, is how to be happy and fulfilled regardless of what's happening out there. And then look at, how can I intelligently change what's out there? But when it comes to relationships, particularly, men do not change if you come from a place of you're bad, you need to become better. They come from a place of, you're the one I love, you're the one I'm happy with, and would you do this for me? And would you do this for me?

So that's the concept. Here's a practical example. And you have to realize a lot of the things in relationships are little things. You see, they get more and more annoying over time if your partner doesn't change.

### **Meagen Gibson - [00:34:35]**

The repetitive cycle. When you're noticing patterns, when you're noticing, and we're great at that, at pinpointing this continuous pattern that keeps happening. It's not the thing that happens, it's the thing that happens over and over and over. That's where all those big emotions come from.

### **John Gray**

Yes. And in the beginning it happened and it was no big deal.

### **Meagen Gibson**

Exactly.

### **John Gray**

So we have to pick it apart and then find the solution to that.

So one of the little things in my house, and just as a preference, is my house, to walk from my bedroom to the kitchen and back to my bedroom is the length of a football field. Just to get the context here. So to get over there to get a glass of water or whatever.

### **Meagen Gibson**

It's a trip.

## **John Gray - [00:35:26]**

It's a journey.

And along the journey are about 20 light switches, on and off, on and off, on and off, on and off.

## **Meagen Gibson**

This is my living nightmare with my kids.

## **John Gray**

So it's quite common that when I go through the house I leave lights on. No matter how hard I try to turn out those lights, I would leave lights on.

Now, in the beginning, Bonnie would say, you left the light on, try to remember, okay? I said, okay, I'll try to remember. I didn't remember. Occasionally I would, of course, but I didn't remember. As that repeats itself over and over and her pointing it out to me over and over for years the thing that was no big deal in the beginning is now a really big deal.

And why is it a big deal? And we have to recognize ourselves, why we're making a big deal out of this little thing. It's not who I was in the beginning of the marriage. I have changed. Women always see how men change. They don't see how they change. Just remember who you were when you were falling in love.

I was just counseling a couple and I showed them their wedding picture. I said, man, you see yourself kneeling in front of her, that's who you've got to find, that guy. And you see that woman going, he's my man, I'm so happy. That's what you need to find without your partner changing. Because I guarantee with these new knowledge and these new skills, if you can find it in yourself, you'll bring up the best in your partner, in most cases, in most cases. Unless your partner is lost in some drug addiction and that's another solution we can help solve. But right now we're looking at the normal problems.

So the light switch. So Bonnie, she'd come into the kitchen and I'd have gone to the kitchen to make something and leaving lights on, and she'd say, she looked at me with disapproval. It hurts. You forgot again. You never turn out the light. Of course, in my mind, I do turn out the lights sometimes. The never and always thing. I learned, always don't take that personally, that's just an emotional reaction there.

But she would give me the look, and the Greeks talked about that look 5000 years ago. They talked about Medusa. Now Medusa, if you look her in the eyes, if she's upset at you, you turn to stone. That's what happens to men when anytime you look at a man with disapproval or anger and make eye contact, he will shut down. He will have no connection, no ability to feel what you feel, he'll only defend.

So just keep that in mind, if you're having a difficult conversation, sit side by side instead of look at him. If your heart is full of love, look at him. That's the eyes are the windows to the soul.

So what Bonnie did, is this thing was very upsetting to her. She finally figured it all out. And it's a wonderful teaching point. It's such a clean example, although she's done it in 100 different ways since she did it that time. And she came into the kitchen and she looked at me with a smile. Anytime you smile at a man, and I think she was smiling because I'm trying something I think is going to work. And she was smiling and I said, hi. And she smiled and she said, John, I've noticed recently you've been turning out the light in the living room, and I love it. And sometimes you still forget. I just want to remind you, I love it so much. And then she walked out of the room. That was it.

That's called sandwiching a request or information basically. I love it. Sometimes you forget to acknowledge what he does right. Sometimes you forget, with a minimization of tone, opposite of

amplification. Whenever you use your emotional tone to amplify your request, men will always minimize your request and it goes into the trash can. And it's gone. And this is his biological reaction, because when anything stresses you and you're a man, the tendency to let go of that stress is to forget it.

You see, one of our mistakes as men, is women will be upset and will often say, just forget it. Don't worry about it. It's no big deal. So all you have to do to a man, just understand men's language and realize that when you're upset with a guy, first of all, if you're going to share with him anything, say this really isn't a big deal and you really don't have to worry about it. But I want you to know that sometimes you are doing what I want, but sometimes you don't. And I love it when you do what I want you to do. And that's it. Just inform him, don't try to change him, inform him, give him the information.

And without me teaching this to women, they think, why do I have to teach him? I've already told him over and over and over, you have to rewire his brain. See, this is called brain rewiring. Men's brains are not designed to pay much attention to or remember little things, particularly little things that cause stress.

Our whole mechanism inside, put me back to a caveman, is I go out in the cold and I say, no big deal. I go into danger and say, I can handle it, no big deal. See, we minimize, I have to give up this, I might lose my life, no big deal if it saves my wife and children. That's what we do. So if you want a man to hear you, simply say, it's not a big deal, but it would make me really happy. Or I really love it when you do this and this and this, and ideally catch him when he's doing it right in your mind, so that when you ask for more at a later time, you can say, I've noticed you've been doing that and it just makes me feel so good. And I just want to remind you, I love it when you do it. And then go. You don't have to ask. Just inform him.

That's one way of communicating. Another is how to ask. And that's also you can't ask for more unless you're coming to a man with complete centeredness and that I am grateful, happy, accepting and trusting of you. You're the guy. And I can ask for more when what I have makes me happy. You look to a man. These are good directions to go in, nobody's perfect at this, but look to the man in your life not to make you happy. Look to him to make you happier.

So that's the theme of Lauren's course, my daughter Lauren started a course, *How To Get More Me Time* because it's separate from your man, that you raise your estrogen levels, you raise your progesterone levels so that all you look to him for is extra.

And I was inspired by this, one of the inspirations for that concept, which is an amazing concept, look to your partner not to make you happy, but to make you happier.

A book I saw from a feminist who was dissing men. One of these women who says, I don't need a man. That was another one, just for fun I'll say it, *If you can't live without me, why aren't you dead yet?* That was a funny one.

### **Meagen Gibson - [00:42:27]**

Inspiring title.

### **John Gray**

But another one is, which I liked a lot, and I actually saw the positive side of it, which are *Men are just desserts*. Now think of that. Your main meal is your life, and that's what we all have to realize. A man should never, ever depend on his wife for his happiness. This is really not a good thing. I depend on my wife to be happy and my family to be happier. A man has to first prove himself in a testosterone world to build that testosterone.

Because the only time you're going to have a boost in testosterone in your relationship is when you have a relationship where there's intimacy and sex. So everything that builds confidence towards, we're gonna have intimacy and sex that's the thing that raises a man's testosterone more than anything is that. If she's happy, if you just do this boring sex that couples do. They do their regular thing. That actually, over time causes a man's testosterone levels to go down.

One of my big talks I gave was popular, which was, oh, I forget the name of it, but it was about too much sex or not enough sex. And everybody used to always ask me, because I wrote a book on sex called *Mars and Venus in the Bedroom*, number one bestseller for a year on the *New York Times* list. And so I know what I'm talking about. A lot of people like that book. It's very helpful.

But this was the problem for it is that, everybody would come up to me like, you're a sex expert. I said, yes, I studied it and have a good partner. And they said, how often do you have sex? Thinking that if you have great sex it's every day or something. And I say, well, usually about once a week, sometimes if we're on a vacation, we'll have a lot. But pretty much our routine is once a week, and it's fantastic.

And I could see their looks of disappointment. Particularly men are so massively addicted to so much sex. This is a problem with going to his female side is sex is allowing men to go to their female side, and men are away on their male side can become addicted to sex because it's the only place they go to their female side. See it's estrogen shoots up when a man has an orgasm. Biologically, we can learn this stuff. Biologically his estrogen peaks beyond anything he can ever get to on his own. And estrogen is love. And then it knocks his testosterone down. And that's why you'll see high estrogen lowering testosterone.

Let's look at some statistics that show the truth of that. They've done a study, hundreds of thousands of men, and they found single men, on average, have higher testosterone levels. Then committed men, men who are in a committed relationship, that means monogamous relationship, their testosterone levels go lower on average. And married men, on average, have lower than that testosterone level. And fathers take a big drop because they love their kids.

See anything that creates personal love, personal, not impersonal love. I love my computer, I love my video game, that's a different kind of love. I love my ice cream. It's, I love this person, I care for them, I'm connected to them, I'm responsible for them, I give to them, I sacrifice happily for them. These are good things to have, but they also produce a lot of estrogen.

So typically, men's testosterone average goes down, down, down now. Now, mine, at 70 years old, are 50% higher. And a big part of that, besides having successful communication skills so I feel successful in providing the support my partner needs, men today don't know, keep this in mind. Women, men don't know what's required to support your estrogen levels. Translate, men don't know what you need to be happier in the relationship.

And now let's look at, I will say, from my experience of working with women, women don't know what will make them happier in this relationship, because what will make them happier is estrogen. And one of the most important things for estrogen is vulnerability. Vulnerability. And vulnerability doesn't mean saying I'm hurt all the time. That's one aspect of vulnerability. But usually if you're pointing the finger, it's not vulnerable. You're dominating. You using your negative emotion to control someone is not vulnerability. It's when you share, which is different from complain.

So that's an important distinction. Two women sitting in a restaurant talking about how bad the food is, is sharing. But you're in the restaurant and the food is bad and you call the waiter and you say, waiter, my food is not good, you're complaining and you want somebody to fix it. You want a free dessert, a free drink or replacement, whatever. So you're sharing a negative emotion, a state of negativity with somebody to get them to change. You've just reduced yourself down to a complainer and not vulnerable at all.

And also primitive. Your monkey brain is taking over, which then makes you rewire your brain so it goes to the monkey brain rather than to the human brain, which is capable of looking at a problem

and solving it within yourself. And also then focusing on what are they now from a positive place, what are my opportunities to change the outer world? It's not like you don't want to change the outer world. You have to learn how to communicate and where you come from when you communicate.

So one of the advanced skills for women is the ability to process your emotions. So another time, I was late for dinner, 3 hours late. I remember going off to give some talk somewhere, and Bonnie said, what time are you going to be home for dinner? And I said, probably it's going to be over at 6pm, so probably around 6:30pm. So she made a special dinner. She wouldn't always do that, but she was feeling a bit romantic and wanted to do something nice for me. And so I told her, yeah, probably around 6:30pm.

Well, the event I had, my talk ended at 6pm but it was in an outside tent because there was overflow. And as people were leaving the event, everybody kept coming into my tent. And as long as the audience was full, I just kept talking.

**Meagen Gibson - [00:48:50]**

You just kept talking.

**John Gray**

I just kept talking. And you see, I can do. So I completely forgot the time.

At 9pm I was like, oh my God. I called her up. Fortunately, it was the message machine, she wasn't answering my call. I actually didn't want to talk to her at that time. I understood she'd be very, very angry and upset. When I came home, she said, your dinner is in the refrigerator. I'm going to bed. So I fully understood, I didn't like taking defensiveness to that. I got it. And actually men are the best when actually they did something really bad, they can really understand why you're upset. It makes more sense than a little thing. That was a big deal. I get it.

The next day she got up and is ignoring me and went off to another room and processed her emotions. And that meant she wrote them out, everything she was feeling as if she was talking to me and not editing, not worrying about whether it's blaming to say, whatever the monkey brain wanted to say, the primitive reactive brain. And it's a system that I recommend, which is first, it doesn't have to be first, but there's four basic tones of emotion, anger, hurt, sadness, fear, insecurity and regret, guilt.

So how can you feel guilty if you're mad at them for something? Well, you can always feel guilty for withholding your love and being so pissed off at them.

**Meagen Gibson**

For being resentful. Yeah.

**John Gray**

To be resentful, exactly. It's not loving and nobody wants, so if your goal in life is to be this loving person, you can also say, and I'm sorry that I rejected you so much when you came home. And of course, I'm going to say, I understand, I understand completely. But you own your emotions. But you let yourself feel anger, you let yourself feel sadness, you let yourself feel fear, you let yourself feel regret, and I'm sorry.

And then you let it go by saying what I really want, what I really want, what I really want. And then you say and I understand, because she's reasonable, she understands. It's not that I don't love her. But when you're angry, it's because you feel unloved, you feel disrespected, you feel unsupported, you feel afraid. These are buttons that get pushed inside of us, and most women cannot get to the depth of those emotions.

And you don't have to be a master of this. You can just start out by writing out what happened and what emotion you feel and writing out what didn't happen that you wanted to happen, and then what didn't happen, what should have happened.

So there's this formula to help your brain elevate itself above these monkey reactions that most, very competent, capable, confident women don't even know they have because they're primitive, but they're there if you're stressed. And by looking at them without using them to change the outer world, your estrogen levels will come back up, and suddenly your brain will shift and you'll be able to remember all the good things he does as well.

And this is the interesting dynamic of men and women. So for women to handle stress, stress causes you to forget the good things in your life and think about and look for and remember the bad things.

Now, this is biology. For women when they're first experiencing a rise of stress they have 8 times more blood flow to the emotional part of the brain. And it's like a library. On the ground floor, there are positive emotions and memories. And on the top floor, there are memories of all bad things that have ever happened. And when you have stress, literally, you get in an elevator and you're on the top floor, and that's all you can think at that time. Your brain just focuses on what didn't happen that should have happened, what you don't like etc.

And for women to process, estrogen will lower the cortisol levels at that time by talking, journaling out, talking to yourself, talking to a friend, talking to a coach, talking to a therapist, reading a book that expresses women's feelings. Anything to get in touch with emotions, evoke emotional response at deeper levels. Then what happens is estrogen levels soar, blood flow stops going to the negative memories, and fears and concerns, and goes to the memory of positive things.

And that's what happens to women. When you get away from the reaction you'll start to remember, he's not so bad, well he did do this, and he did do that, he does do this and I do need this. So then you go to a positive place.

Now, men don't react to stress that way at all. What men do is they detach, which allows their testosterone levels to come up. And when they detach and their testosterone levels come up, then they will tend to analyze the situation of who's right and who's wrong.

And he will go into a resentment state if he can't realize what he did wrong. That's how men can let go and find forgiveness. Women find forgiveness when they can remember all the things he does for me. And men find forgiveness when they realize what they did that's wrong. So they analyze.

And for a man, first in his analysis, only once his testosterone is up so he's not emotional at that point, he has to be in a non emotional state. Remember, detachment is testosterone, analysis is testosterone.

So he'll tend to look at what happened. And if he doesn't understand women, he will blame her for everything. Analyze her. She's just being ungrateful. She's being overly reactive. She's not supportive of me. I can't ever get what I want. So why do I even bother? That's your typical analysis if you didn't understand what's really going on inside of her, her sensitivities, and her needs, and what her challenges are.

So if you understand women, if you're a man, then you can see okay, what she did that I didn't like rather than what's bad, what she did that I didn't like. And now what's my side of it? And if he knows the solution to good relationships with the women, and every man says this to me, I didn't realize it, I didn't know. And men are actually the most responsive to this message if they get to hear me speak, because I point out that they don't know and they want to make the relationship better. And why don't men buy relationship books? You might be asking. Because they always make men wrong.

And the second one is that men by a kind of relationship book, it's called the part of the bookstore, how to make money.

## **Meagen Gibson - [00:55:07]**

It's a testosterone driven success section.

### **John Gray**

That's right. And sports. Men read stuff that points out testosterone.

But this message men relate to so well because we love our partners. We care about our partners. But our training is a million year old training. And at least it's the training of our father, which is the fire you put it out. So how do you put it out? Men think if a woman has a problem, tell her she's wrong, and then your problems solved. And don't be upset.

### **Meagen Gibson**

I'm sorry to interrupt, but what you said earlier about the female process of let's journal through all four stages of that. And then at the end there's the accountability piece. I imagine what happens, too, is that you come and you journal it all out, and then you come, and then you end with that accountability piece. And I'm sad because I resented you so much. It changes the responsibility of the masculine out of defending themselves into defending you. Because they're like, I need something to defend, since you've just taken all responsibility away from me and absolved me of the thing that I actually did do that I understand was wrong, now I'm gonna defend you. No, no, you had every right to be upset. You had every right to be mad at me. I totally did talk 3 hours longer than I said I was going to. So you leverage that defensiveness in your favor.

### **John Gray**

That was a lot. I've never heard a woman say what you just said. Would you say it again?

I loved it. I loved it. What I heard you say this, so my experience of helping people is that when you first express your feelings of anger, and a lot of women have difficulty doing that, they go right to hurt, but if you feel anger it's going, you did this and this and this and I don't like that and that's not what I want. So there's a feeling of anger.

And then the deeper level is, and you didn't say this, you didn't do that, and you didn't do this. That creates a feeling of sadness, disappointment and hurt. You ignored me. But you didn't give me what I want. So that's what sadness is.

So if you really look at the way the brain, and the brain needs to look at something like, here's my thermos, look at this side of it, this side of it, this side of it and the back side of it. When you play it all four sides and then top and bottom. And a top, top or bottom is actually the desire, what you really, really want. And then the top is the understanding and the wisdom, the why you let it go, forgiveness and all that.

So I want you to say what you just said because I didn't fully get it and help me understand it better. And right now if any men are listening, this is the thing, this is the phrase you always want to use with a woman, help me understand that better. When she's talking, and this is not what's happening here but I just want to point out to men.

### **Meagen Gibson**

You're not manipulating me right now to make me feel bad.

### **John Gray**

No, I'm not. Exactly what I'm saying. It's not a manipulation, but I really need that information. I love what you said. But in a situation where your wife is talking, if there's any resistance to hearing her, you



can overcome your own inner resistance by taking charge and choosing the situation as a learning experience and saying, help me understand that better, tell me more.

And it's hard when you do that they feel like you're completely wrong, because that's what men do, that's like women, they blame. And as soon as we get into the emotional, primitive part of the brain, we blame. That's because monkeys do that. Everything is, the outer world makes me feel this and now, as adults, we can go, the outer world triggers me, my insecurities, and this is what comes up inside of me and if I explore it, I have the ability to let it go. And that's the skill we want to all develop.

And what I got from what you said is, if you write out what you're angry, sad, and afraid of, that's your vulnerability, which then allows you to balance it with your masculine side, which is your accountability. I never saw that. But that's the brilliance of the love letter technique, I call it the love letter technique, because it brings you back to your loving self. So you go through those various emotions and exploring, it's like an exploration of what's upsetting you.

And since I'm there, I wrote this one book, which is called *Mars and Venus Starting Over*, because usually if you're ending a relationship and moving on, you've got baggage. And I've got over 35 processes, maybe 100 processes in there just for fun, to process everything in that relationship. Because when you can end the relationship with an understanding of what they didn't do, that they should have done that you didn't get, and what you should have done that you didn't do and your accountability to problems.

Because when you feel, and this is what happens for women when they end the relationship to start another one, it tends to be on average, again these are averages, 9 years before they get back on the horse. And many of them don't, meaning to ride a relationship again. And men, it's 3 years. So women, when your husband gets married 3 years later, please don't take offense at that. That's what men do on average. Because what men do is they have that sense of accountability which says, what I did wrong is, or he might even just say what I did wrong is I married the wrong woman. But he's always going to have that sense of masculine accountability. And then that gives him a sense of, I can trust myself to create something new.

Whereas women don't always get to that male side, the accountability because they don't understand. And I think that's part of what you're just saying, Meagen, is that if you have the understanding of men, then you realize how you unknowingly push them away, how you unknowingly turn them off. And with a little bit of knowledge I could have been different, I could have had a different way of understanding the situation and it wouldn't have been so difficult for me to process.

So with that understanding you have that sense of accountability. Most women are completely blank when they come to me and they've been married and it was an awful marriage and they just got out, and I'll listen for a while about the marriage, and I say, and what did you do to contribute to that? Nothing. I gave and gave and gave and nothing, nothing. And I go, you know, every woman who's unhappy always says, I gave and gave and gave, and I didn't get back. What's interesting, I don't hear that much from men. And she'll say, well, that's because he doesn't give so much. And I say, no, it's because you give too much. And you have to find the right time to say that.

What man's logic is, if I'm giving and it's not coming back, stop giving so much. And that's a problem for men. And for women, if you're giving too much, you're actually training him to give less. It's got to be balanced. It's got to be balanced. And that's the art of learning how to ask what you want and get it.

And that's what my daughter teaches so well in her, *How To Get More Me Time* is to get the support you need so you can be happy and fulfilled, and then how do you then ask for what you want? And also how do you set boundaries so you're not over giving? See, wait a second, there's a person over here who needs to get support as well, and how to do that without using negative emotions to motivate your partner. And I think we've driven that one down quite well

So I want to remind myself what you just said, which was absolutely brilliant, which is that anger, sadness, fear creates a sense of vulnerability, which then all allows you to get to your accountable side and that balances it. Then you can get in touch with what it is I really want, what I wish, what I need.

And what I find is for women who don't know what they need, don't know what they want, by processing the negative emotions you become more clear about what you need and what you want. And when you know what you need, actually, life is much, much simpler.

See, most of us are fooled by, the senses have their own desires. You see it and you want it, you see it and you want it, you see it and you want it and if you're not getting it you'll feel disappointed. But when you get beyond the negative emotions, back down to the negative emotions, the accountability, then comes desire. And you just start expressing what you want, what you want. Then what do I need? Your brain goes to what's most important to me? You see.

And if you get to your needs, they're not so hard to fulfill. Part of my own success in life and my own happiness in life was a message my mother taught me by her example of being a fulfilled, happy woman, which is, she used to live it but she'd say it occasionally, which is John, in this world, you can't always get what you want. It's okay to keep wanting, but you can't always get what you want, but you can always get what you need. It became a Rolling Stone song of course.

### **Meagen Gibson - [01:03:45]**

I was like, that sounds familiar.

### **John Gray**

This was who she was. And she said, if you're not getting what you need, it's because you're looking in the wrong direction. If you're not getting what you need from your partner right now, you're demanding too much from them. You need to look in other places. Because we don't just need sex and intimacy and love. What we need is friendship. We need unconditional love, giving unconditional love. We need work where we're doing things for others, making a difference. We need to take care of our body. We need a higher power, whatever that might be, something or someone who's got your back who knows more than you. So you don't feel like you're all out here alone.

These are all needs that we have. And also the need to follow our heart, to be happy, not to be overly dependent on others. These are all important needs, and men are perfect to help you develop those needs. Because when you have an orgasm with a man, it's massively addictive, meaning it produces high levels of dopamine. And dopamine desensitizes the brain to where you can't enjoy life as much as.

But because men pull away, in a sense, it forces you to now look at other things that make you happy so you're not having so many orgasms, although most women don't anyway. But the idea there is in a way it forces you as a woman to go, okay, I can feel victimized, he's ignoring me now we just had this great romantic moment. Or it can go, okay, now it's time for me to go downstairs and cook something for myself or time to do an art project or time for me to go play golf. Whatever it is that you love to do, it could be one of those things, games are another one of those things.

So it's like learning other things that make me happy and fulfilled. And sex just has the tendency, if you have sex with somebody, to take you higher than anything, if you're doing it right and you have love and support. But it produces the highest level of dopamine. And basically that desensitizes the brain, which makes everything not so fulfilling unless you reconnect with other things that are not as high and that causes receptor sights to upregulate. That was a little scientific, a little more complicated. It's ok to take longer to understand that if you didn't, that's okay.

I wrote a whole book on the brain called, what is it, *Staying Focused In A Hyper World: Solutions For ADHD, Memory And Brain Performance*. It's really important to understand brain function for all the mothers who have little boys who are hyper and addictive.

**Meagen Gibson - [01:06:15]**

I have two of those.

**John Gray**

It really helps us understand ADD, and it's really affecting all of us. For women, it's when you feel too much, okay, I have to do this, I have to do this and you can't just come back to being happy with one thing. And for men, we have ADD, these are common symptoms of it, is that we focus on one thing and we can't shift gears to other things.

You take even a boy playing who can't listen to a teacher but put him on a video game and he'll stay there for hours. He has total focus because it's not about focus. It's about being able to have flexible focus for males. And it's about women having more focus so she can forget all those other things. So this is called inhibited dopamine function. And addiction to romance, addiction to orgasm is one of the big things that causes ADD in men is too much masturbation. And for women, it's too much complaining. Complaining is massively addictive.

Now you don't suppress complaints, but you need to hear them yourself and not use them to change the outer world. You use it to change your mood, to change yourself by reflecting and writing out or sharing with a friend, your processing. You're saying, okay, this isn't my high self. This is my reactive self. So let me listen to it like a child who's throwing a tantrum and that child will calm down if you learn how to listen and give love and support.

**Meagen Gibson**

Yeah, and complaining, there's nothing action oriented there. There's no solution, it's just processing.

And so much of what you said, I was reminded so often that even in these moments of irritation with our partners, that that process, and then you mentioned the book for people who have been divorced, and they're kind of processing that, is that closure in these moments between men and women is an inside job always.

Sometimes our first line of defense is to just communicate what's wrong instead of having that internal process, having that closure being an inside job and then remembering that you're on the same team and that your actual goal is fostering the connection and fostering your healthy relationship, not being a venting receptor. I mean, of course, we get turned off by that.

**John Gray**

You are so amazing. Absolutely. What a clear, clear understanding.

And I hear that, I hear everyone listening too, and I know that we talk about these ideals, and it's not like you can't do it all the time. To have a good relationship, a wonderful life and whatever it's really about growing one step at a time. And I guarantee, as you try these things, try them on for size. When you take a step, you feel good and you feel more connected. And then another step and another step and you step back a bit and move forward.

We can't expect perfection when we do this, but we don't want to just be out there following what we feel because, remember, ice cream tastes good and it's not good to do too much of it. So to have that North Star that makes sense to us. So a North Star is when you're, navigating, in the old days you would have to navigate a ship, you look at what's the North Star. You always want to navigate where you are in relationship to north. That's all we're doing here.

So that when a relationship goes south of it you know you're part of it, you know your partner's part in it, and you know potential ways to bring you back together. But accountability is a really important part of it. And vulnerability is the other side of that.

And how you ask for help. We covered that a little bit today, which is if you want your partner to do something and that's a big subject, it's a huge subject. There's so many big subjects because we're learning how to do these things.

Historically, women never had to ask a man anything because you picked a man who had the status and the skills necessary and you said, okay, he can provide the money in this protection for me. That's all I really need. But today, women's needs have changed to how to be in a relationship and be more vulnerable. How to have more romance in your relationship, how to get domestic help, how to get him to vacuum the floor and wash the dishes. In a man's mind, he just goes washing dishes, my dad didn't do that, my grandfather didn't do that. It's in our wiring of, that is a job that doesn't pay.

### **Meagen Gibson - [01:10:39]**

Meanwhile women are like, we know, we've been doing it forever. Not to mention the mental load of all that we carry. You were saying a while ago that men are trained to forget, and I love you for it because you carry a lot less mental load in your brains all the time about the next pediatricians appointment, and the next vaccine, and when so and so has got soccer practice, and you're just like, oh, tell me where to show up when.

### **John Gray**

That's right.

### **Meagen Gibson**

There's a lot.

### **John Gray**

We have to rewire our brains to be able to provide the kind of support women need, and women need to know the kind of support they need and how to communicate it in a way that works for him. Because women today need more help around the house, the domestic chores and so forth. Women need to know how to communicate their feelings. They need to learn how to process their feelings. But even after you process them, how do you then communicate it to your partner?

That day when I was so late from the talk, Bonnie came back in the room and she said, okay, I've processed my feelings. I just want to tell you three things. When you don't call what happens, I get triggered inside. And what I begin to feel is, why do I bother to make you a meal if you don't appreciate it? And inside of me I've learned and so don't argue with that. My tendency if I didn't know how to handle a relationship, I'd say, of course I know how important your meals are. Or if I'm a fool, I might even say, listen, it's okay, the meal is cold. I'll just get pizza.

### **Meagen Gibson**

You're not that great a cook anyway. I didn't miss anything.

### **John Gray**

That's right. Right. Right.

So the first one is, why do I bother to cook for you? Another is, John, you have to realize when you don't call I think you've died. You could have been in a car accident. You could need me. And I was scared. And what's going on? And I would say, but, honey, you know, I'm gonna be fine. And my

assistant would call you if something happens, she's there with me. But that would be talking her out of it instead of hearing these are real feelings, regardless of being rational and reasonable at that time, the feeling she's having is, why do I bother making a meal for you? And I'm scared if you don't show up. And the third one is I start to feel like your work is more important than me. And those people are more important than me. And my heart starts to close. And I know John, and then she basically expresses her understanding, which is a form of accountability.

And I know you love me and I know that you appreciate my meals, and I know that if something was wrong somebody would call me. That's the logical side of it. And she didn't have to say that. And I know you love me more than those people but this is how it feels. And if you can do something about it, I'd appreciate it. And right then I said, okay, from now on, I hear you, and since you asked for a solution, from now on my assistant's job is always, if I'm 5 minutes over, give you a call because I know my limitations as well.

So that's part of solving problems. But I have to say, when she did the thing about the light, three times she did that thing where she says, I've noticed you've been doing it. I really love it. And she did it again. She did it again. Ever since that day, I turn out all the lights, and I feel like I've just given her a flower and she smiled. Even if she doesn't, in my mind, I remember the smile on her face.

Men remember what makes women happy. We forget what makes you unhappy. And we don't change our brain wiring. That's how you change wiring in the brain, upgrade it through love and success in relationship. That's for men and for women, the success of trying new things and seeing that it works.

And the irony here is that so many women when they do these calls and they talk about the results they get from the me time course, women only. And the women are always saying, it was like jumping off a cliff to do this thing you asked me to do, and it worked, it worked. I can't believe it worked.

So really we're in a new world now where we have to try new things and a lot of the ideas that are being promoted today, a lot of them are really good, and some of them are backwards if they don't understand the actual biological differences between men and women that regulate our stress levels.

### **Meagen Gibson - [01:15:06]**

John Gray, I think that's a good place for us to stop.

Fantastic. Thank you so much for being with us.

If people want to find out more about you or your work or your daughter's courses and work, where can they find that?

### **John Gray**

They go to [marvenus.com](http://marvenus.com)

Very simple. [marvenus.com](http://marvenus.com)

And there's wonderful, wonderful well produced short videos on all kinds of topics.

### **Meagen Gibson**

Fantastic. Thanks so much for being with us today.

### **John Gray**

Thank you.