



*Workbook 3 in The Way to Change
Series for Men Who Have Abused
Their Women Partners*

Edward W. Gondolf

ISBN 1-55691-206-4

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Learning Publications, Inc.
5351 Gulf Drive
P.O. Box 1338
Holmes Beach, FL 34218-1338

Printing: 5 4 3 2 1

Year: 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America

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Acknowledgments

The author would like to acknowledge the contributions of David Russell, founder of the Second Step program in Pittsburgh. Many of the goals were developed by David. Also, Craig Norberg-Bohm and Don Long, founders of the RAVEN program in St. Louis, formulated several of the exercises. Bob Foster and Paul Burchfield of the Domestic Abuse Counseling Center in Pittsburgh helped test and ground many of the ideas in the workbooks. Bob Ackerman, an expert in working with alcohol-affected families, offered encouragement and guidance in the early stages, and Dennis Daley, who has authored several workbooks of his own in the alcohol and drug-treatment field, helped substantially revise and reformat the workbook series. Ellen Fisher and Barbara Hart are some of the many women who have alerted me to the women's issues inherent in working with men. Lastly, I am grateful to the men who have dared to face the issues raised in these workbooks and who have made substantial changes in their lives.

Workbook 3 in *The Way to Change* Series for Men Who Have Abused Their Women Partners

The way to change is a series of five workbooks for men. Each workbook takes men another step away from abusive behavior and towards better relationships. The workbooks together show men not only how to stop abuse but also how to change the thinking and attitudes behind their abuse.

Workbook 1: Checking Our Behavior focuses on monitoring one's behavior. It is designed to help men realize their ability to stop abusive behavior. ***Workbook 2: Discovering Our Self*** exposes the distorted notions of manhood that pull men down and shows what it means to be a "real man." ***Workbook 3: Appreciating Women*** is about respecting women more and not fearing their feminine nature. This kind of appreciation is the basis of healthy male-female relationships. ***Workbook 4: Reaching Out to Others*** points men toward their community and society at large. It shows how men can counter those social pressures that so often misguide them. ***Workbook 5: Relapse, Reuniting, and Progress*** addresses the stumbling blocks, like alcohol use, that often get in the way of progress. This workbook can be used with other workbooks or as a "refresher" along the way. (See the back cover for ordering information.)

These workbooks are meant to be used in a counseling program where response to the exercises can be discussed with other men. The workbooks can give direction to a group, increase participation, and deepen the discussion. The workbooks might also be used as homework to help keep men on track between counseling sessions. It is important for men to get some basic knowledge about abuse and how to avoid it, as soon as possible. The short book, *Man to Man: A Guide for Men in Abusive Relationships*, is a good place to turn for this. Also, men who heavily use alcohol or drugs, are severely depressed or have uncontrollable thoughts, have physically abused their children, or have been violent outside the home usually need extra specialized help in addition to these workbooks. They may need addiction treatment, psychiatric care, parent counseling, or additional restraint and supervision.

How to Use This Workbook

Appreciating Women is the third workbook in *The Way to Change*. It is to help you better appreciate, respect, and relate to women. Our uneasiness, fear, and misunderstanding of women often lead to abuse of our partners. Even if we stop being abusive for a while — perhaps to get back our wife or partner or to stay out of jail — a lack of respect could return us to physical or psychological abuse.

The workbook presents several goals along the way to appreciating women. It will help you to 1) recognize the differences between men and women, 2) assert your feelings without being abusive, 3) express intimacy in your sexual relations, 4) promote equality with your wife or partner, and 4) share power and feel good about it.

Each of these goals begins with something to think about — “think pieces.” After each “think piece” is a place to respond. Write some comments about how the “think piece” applied to you in the past, and what it says about your future. When you have finished the workbooks, you will have a diary to review, especially in tough times. Exercises of four to five questions are next. The exercises help apply each goal to yourself. There are no “right” answers to the exercise questions, just honest thoughts. An assignment at the end of each set of exercises will help you to put the goals into practice.

The activities for each goal are designed to be completed on a weekly basis. You may want to spend one day responding to the “think piece,” one day after that on each exercise, and the “assignment” on the next day. At the end of the week’s time, you can share your responses and assignments with others in your counseling group. Then take a day’s break before starting the next goal.

The Challenge of Change

Achieving the goals in this workbook will not be easy. You need to take them on as a challenge. As Abraham Maslow once said: “Self-knowledge and self-improvement are very difficult for most people. They usually need great courage and long struggle.” There may be some aches and pains along the way. But if you keep going, you will also discover a strength that you didn’t know you had. When you are finished, you will look back with a good feeling. Things that do not make sense at the start will make sense. And you’ll be a better person.

Change often goes against our common sense. It means looking at things in a different way. To get started, think about the statements below. They twist some of our “common sense” to show things in a new light. They can help open us up to the goals of this workbook and move us toward change.

Read through the statements and put a star (*) by a couple of statements that stand out to you. Write them on a card and keep them in your pocket to pullout and look at during the day. This will help bring a new way of looking at things and keep you moving ahead.

Responding to Your Partner

- Trying to change your wife or partner will only hurt her.
- The most ineffective way to make a point is to tell it.
- The best way to get others to talk about themselves is to talk about ourselves.
- The most helpful thing your wife or partner may do for you is to leave for a time.
- Forgiveness is a way of letting go of the past.
- Trust that is expected is not trust; trust must be earned slowly.
- Women may trust us the least when we have become more trustworthy.
- Men have much to gain from giving rights and equality to women.
- Doing chores in the house makes us part of a home.

Appreciating Women

Once we come to appreciate and respect ourselves a bit more and are not trying so hard to be something we are not, we are in a position to appreciate others for whom they are. The bulk of our abuse has been directed toward women. We've devalued them, as well as injured and terrorized them. Part of stopping our abuse is in respecting women and especially our wives or partners for whom they are. Even though we don't agree with them and are different from them, we can still admire their unique qualities and learn something about ourselves from them.

This workbook offers thoughts and exercises that help us examine our outlook toward women and the ways we relate to them. It considers our expectations, our communication, and sexuality. The object is to better perceive the worth of one another and respond to that worth. There are satisfying alternatives to constant control, fighting, power trips, and lack of intimacy.

*What is most beautiful in virile men is something feminine;
what is most beautiful in feminine women is something masculine.* —Susan Sontag

The lust for power is not rooted in strength but in weakness. —Erich Fromm

Caution: Make sure you do not use any of these exercises as a means to pressure or control your wife or partner. Discuss them with her only if she is willing and without any threats or promises. It is possible that you are completely separated from your wife or partner. If this is the case, some of the exercises in this part of the workbook may be more difficult for you to complete. You can still use the exercises to reassess your relationship when you were together and to get ready for a new relationship. If you are separated be sure to consult the exercises under the "Special Goal" entitled "Getting Back Together."

❖ Goal 1 – Appreciating Male-Female Differences

Something to Think About

Remember! You're two different animals. Men and women cannot totally unite. —Pierre Mornell

As we relate to women, we are often driven by needs, which no person could meet and are hampered by ignorance of what the opposite sex is really like. Perhaps we want to lose ourselves in a romantic closeness as we once lost ourselves in addiction or violence. Then we get hurt and angry when the impossible doesn't happen. Or we fail to understand that a woman's reactions are sometimes different from our own.

The dialogue between the sexes is as old as the generations. It will always be a mixture of fascination, mystery, frustration, and new understandings. When we realize we cannot merge with a woman, take her over, or be taken over by her, we will meet her as a separate person, and our relationships will become vastly more peaceful.

Thanks to God for the differences. Let me learn more about them and accept them.

Put Your Reaction or Comments Here:

☰ Exercise 1 – The Ideal Woman

Most of us carry in our heads a picture of the ideal woman — the kind of woman we would like to be with in our dreams. A lot of this image is something that is pushed on us by the world around us. Television, movies, magazines, and our friends all hold up an ideal woman for us. Oftentimes, we end up expecting the real women in our lives to be that ideal and treat them badly if they don't live up to what we expect. We can find out a lot about what we expect from our partners by looking closer at the ideal in our minds.

1. What is your idea of the ideal woman? (Name a person that is most like this ideal or just describe her.)
 - What or who does she look like?

- What or who does she act like?

- How does she behave sexually?

2. Where did your ideal of a woman come from? How did you get it? Number the list in the order of what has helped most to influence your choice of an ideal woman. Name an example of each. (e.g., 1 magazines: *Playboy*)

Television: _____

Movies: _____

Magazines: _____

Friends: _____

Women we've meet: _____

3. Look at the list below of expressions commonly used by men to refer to women. Put a check in front of each expression you've heard used over the last few months.

Common Expressions Associated With Women

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> cover girl | <input type="checkbox"/> unwed mother | <input type="checkbox"/> ball buster |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hen pecking | <input type="checkbox"/> chick | <input type="checkbox"/> women's work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not lady like | <input type="checkbox"/> little old lady | <input type="checkbox"/> perfect little lady |
| <input type="checkbox"/> isn't she cute | <input type="checkbox"/> loose woman | <input type="checkbox"/> wine, women, and song |
| <input type="checkbox"/> slut, tramp, "hoe" | <input type="checkbox"/> two-bit whore | <input type="checkbox"/> a girl in every port |
| <input type="checkbox"/> be a good girl | <input type="checkbox"/> Mother Goose | <input type="checkbox"/> pretty little maidens in a row |
| <input type="checkbox"/> girl talk | <input type="checkbox"/> dumb broad | <input type="checkbox"/> she's no spring chicken |
| <input type="checkbox"/> silly woman | <input type="checkbox"/> air head | <input type="checkbox"/> gentlemen prefer blondes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> just a housewife | <input type="checkbox"/> space case | <input type="checkbox"/> blondes have more fun |
| <input type="checkbox"/> knocked up | <input type="checkbox"/> plain Jane | <input type="checkbox"/> she's ugly but can cook |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the little woman | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish mother | <input type="checkbox"/> a woman's work is never done |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dumb blonde | <input type="checkbox"/> party doll | <input type="checkbox"/> she's really hot stuff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> my little princess | <input type="checkbox"/> virgin | <input type="checkbox"/> stand by your man |
| <input type="checkbox"/> old maid | <input type="checkbox"/> gal Friday | <input type="checkbox"/> a women's place is in the home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> just like a woman | <input type="checkbox"/> dizzy dame | <input type="checkbox"/> she's really bright for a woman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flighty | <input type="checkbox"/> earth mother | <input type="checkbox"/> don't worry your pretty head |
| <input type="checkbox"/> woman driver | <input type="checkbox"/> what a piece of . . . | <input type="checkbox"/> you've come a long way baby |

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> what a pair of . . . | <input type="checkbox"/> red hot mama | <input type="checkbox"/> nothing like a dame |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sex pot | <input type="checkbox"/> girl watching | <input type="checkbox"/> what a pair of legs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> girlie magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> flat as a board | <input type="checkbox"/> she's so cute when she's mad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> she's stacked | <input type="checkbox"/> foxy lady | <input type="checkbox"/> you can never understand a woman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> she's a bitch | <input type="checkbox"/> ladies first | <input type="checkbox"/> mommy's little helper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hysterical female | <input type="checkbox"/> playboy bunny | <input type="checkbox"/> telephone, tell a woman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> old bag | <input type="checkbox"/> mother hen | <input type="checkbox"/> daddy's little girl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> she goes all the way | <input type="checkbox"/> real babe | <input type="checkbox"/> playmate of the month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> find' em, feel 'em . . . | <input type="checkbox"/> biker chick | |

4. Now look over the list again and circle each expression you've used over the past few months.

5. What do these expressions contribute to our ideal and men's expectations in general?

-
- How have these expressions influenced your picture of an ideal woman? (In terms of what you expect or think is ideal.)

-
- How do these expressions influence how men in general treat women and what we expect from them? (e.g., as friends, lovers, mothers, and so on)
-

☰ Exercise 2 – Positive Images of Women

Men and women are different in many ways. But those differences can be positive. Recognizing those positive things can improve our ideal woman and make our expectations more realistic. We'll also see more good things in the women in our lives and in ourselves. Let's see what positive things we can come up with.

1. What positive expressions of women could we use that recognize women's differences from men? Try turning around some of the negative expressions in the previous list (e.g., she's a real brain, a strong woman, a working woman).

2. What could your wife or partner do, say, or feel if she were a man that she cannot do, say or feel now?

- Do:

- Say:

- Feel:

3. What do you think your partner would think of your ideal woman?

- Would she like her? Why or why not?

- What would she want to change?

- What would she agree with?

Assignments

1. While watching an evening of television, count the times a woman is cast as a sex object or manipulator versus an intelligent and powerful person.

- Number of times positive image: _____
- Number of times negative image: _____

2. Imagine a time during the week when you expect a woman to be your ideal rather than who they are. Describe that time below.

- What was the situation?

- What was your expectation?

- What was the woman really like?

2. Carol Giligan, in a book called *In a Different Voice*, says that women have a more inclusive, cooperative, and caring view of the world. Why do you think this is so?

- What is it about their biology or physical side?

- What is it about how they are raised?

- What is it about the kind of things they do?

3. Giligan also says that a woman's outlook is what the world most needs right now. Why do you think this might be? In other words, what are some advantages of this outlook?

Exercise 3 – In Women's Shoes

We could probably understand women better if we put ourselves in their shoes once in a while. We would be able to do different things, say different things, and think different things if we had been born a woman instead of a man. Let's try to imagine how the world looks from a woman's point of view.

1. What could you do, say, or feel if you were a woman that you cannot do, say, or feel as a man?

- Do:

- Say:

- Feel:

❖ Goal 2 – Being Expressive Without Being Abusive

Something to Think About

Not all disagreements are bad, in fact they are preferable to disciplined serenity. —William Atwood

A good relationship includes discussion, disagreement, and even arguments. Our abuse actually negates these and replaces them with conflict and power struggles. Disagreements, when we express them respectfully, sometime help break through the walls that build up. When we don't agree with someone, we owe it to that person to speak up and resolve the disagreement. It is because we care that we argue at times. But disagreements can easily turn into fights if we let them. We can promise ourselves and the other person that we will be fair through the disagreement.

In any relationship we care about, there will be differences. When we avoid or try to control all confrontations, our relationships go stale or become abusive. Being too careful or overcontrolling undermines love. Such action does not give us room to breathe. But disagreement and anger expressed in honest and respectful ways will open things up and helps love grow.

Today, I pray for the courage to acknowledge my disagreements and angry feelings with others and to accept their feelings toward me.

Put Your Reaction or Comments Here:

☰ Exercise 1 – Fighting Fair

Disagreements turn into abuse when we don't fight fair. Being "fair" means treating the other person with some respect. It means disagreeing with what another person says rather than attacking her or him personally. It means following some basic rules rather than "anything goes." Let's consider what it means to have a fair fight.

1. What do you and your partner usually fight over? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> money | <input type="checkbox"/> religion or church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the children | <input type="checkbox"/> jobs or employment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> in-laws | <input type="checkbox"/> partner's way of doing things |

- sex relations
- household chores
- other _____
- being told you're wrong
- suspected flirting

2. Think of the last argument or fight you had with your wife or partner. Check each of the behaviors in the two lists below that occurred during that argument.

Fair Behavior

- speaking one at a time
- looking for compromises
- trying not to generalize
- allowing for time-outs and breathers
- observing rules that you set
- no forcing, no threats, no hitting them
- making your agreements clear by repeating
- other _____
- other _____
- being honest with the other person
- giving reasons
- stating how you feel
- sticking to the subject
- admitting when you're wrong
- showing personal respect

Unfair Behavior

- name calling
- denying the facts
- reading the other's mind
- gloating over a "victory"
- getting off on tangents
- using sex as leverage
- making threats
- other _____
- other _____
- opening old wounds/dredging up the past
- withdrawing when things don't go your way
- changing the rules and not saying so
- appearing to ignore the other person
- expecting there to be a winner and a loser
- interrupting or cutting off the other person
- saving up gripes to dump all at once

3. Now go back and circle those behaviors that you usually exhibit in arguments. Then decide whether you are a fair fighter or not. How many "fair" as opposed to "unfair" behaviors did you check? _____

Check one: I am . . .

- very fair
- fair
- somewhat fair
- not very fair
- unfair

☰ Exercise 2 – How to Negotiate

It is not enough to say you disagree and show it. You need to express your disagreement in a way that it can be resolved. That doesn't necessarily mean coming to an agreement, but becoming clearer on what you can accept to differ about. It also means finding what you have in common so you can go on in some way together. A lot of experts try to deal with disagreements all the time between companies and workers, between one nation and another. Let's look at some of the steps they use to negotiate a settlement or resolve a disagreement.

1. Recall your most recent argument and apply these negotiating steps.

- State the *problem* as you see it. (In my opinion the problem is . . .)
-

- State her view of the problem.
-

- State your *feeling* about the problem. (I feel _____ about this.)
-

- State her feelings about the problem.
-

- State what you want as an *outcome*. (I want . . .)
-

- State what she wants as an outcome.
-

- State a *solution* that would be acceptable to both of you.
-

- State an alternative solution that would not necessarily be ideal but could work.
-

☰ Exercise 3 – The Difficult Parts

Negotiating often doesn't go as smoothly as we would like. Someone says something that sidetracks us from being fair. Or, we just can't understand where the other person is coming from. We have to relook sometimes at the difficult parts of negotiation. We negotiate again and again — with some breaks in between. Then things become clearer. Let's look at those difficult parts of negotiating.

1. Why might you not have a clear picture of your wife's or partner's view of the problem (e.g., you didn't listen very well, she was afraid to explain it all)?

2. Why has it been difficult for you to follow the negotiating steps in the past? (Are you too impatient? Do you think you should have your way?)

3. What are some of the reasons that it is difficult for you to ask for what you want instead of taking it? (Do you think you are not good enough with words? Does it just seem easier to take?)

4. What are some of the reasons that it is difficult to say "no" to things that you don't want, rather than using abuse to stop them? (Do you get too angry too fast? Do you think the other person won't listen?)

Assignments

1. If your wife or partner is willing, talk through a problem using the negotiating steps in Exercise 2 and abiding by the "fair behavior" in Exercise 1. After each of you states the problems, feelings, etc., repeat what you think he or she said in your own words before proceeding. Decide together how it went.
2. Check the inventory of fair and unfair behavior in Exercise 1 after having a real argument with someone. Write below what you learned from talking with your wife or partner and from the real argument:

Lessons from talk:

Lessons from argument:

Caution: The exercises in this goal are not meant to encourage fighting or arguing. They do not give you the right to use your anger against your wife or partner or verbally abuse her. They are intended to help you argue and discuss things fairly. They are to assist you in making your feelings known and hearing your wife's or partner's feelings without being abusive. This means that you may not always get your way but you will in the process get a better way.

❖ Goal 3 – Expressing Intimacy In Our Sexuality

Something to Think About

A richer, more fulfilling, and more peaceful masculine spirituality will depend in no small measure upon new ways of learning to be sexual. —James B. Nelson

For most men sexuality is one of the central issues in change. We may have treated ourselves and others as objects. Too often genitals were “tools” to be used, objects of our egos, or a way of taking care of someone else. Maybe we have used sex compulsively, as an escape from other emotions. Changing men commonly encounter problems with sexuality. Those problems often come from knowing deep within that we must change our attitude toward sex but don't know how.

It helps to create new images in our minds. We can imagine being relaxed and playful with our partners, of having sex with no goal in mind, and no judgment. We can imagine talking in detail with someone — our partner or a friend — about our feelings, anxieties, or frustrations with sex. We can imagine ourselves as alone, not with a partner, and okay. Bringing sexuality into the whole of our lives is an important thing to do.

May I find ways to include sexuality in my efforts to change.

Put Your Reaction or Comments Here:

☰ Exercise 1: Talking Dirty

We need to do some frank talking here. There is a lot behind how we view sex and how we use it. There are things we have learned from our friends as a kid, in adult magazines, or in locker room talk. *But we seldom look at those things out in the open. Let's get some of these things out in the open.* Then we might be able to do something about them.

1. In the first column write all the words you can think of that men use to describe their genitals. There are some examples in the first line that came out of a men's group.
2. In the second column write all the words you can think of that men use to refer to a woman's genitals. All those words you heard in the locker room, from your friends, in dirty jokes.
3. In the third column write all the words used to refer to sexual intercourse. Don't think a lot about it, just write down what comes to mind.

Dirty-Talk Chart

Men's Genitals	Women's Genitals	Sexual Intercourse
prick	pussy	banging her
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

4. What does your list say to you about the meaning of sex to men?

☐ Exercise 2 – What Dirty Talk Says

The dirty talk all around us says more than we hear. It says a lot about what we as men think about sex and what we expect from it. It also says a lot about the society we live in and how it wants us to act. Let's think about what the sexual words in the previous exercise are saying to us and about us.

1. Look down the column for *men's genitals* and summarize the nature of the words. Are they hard or soft, inanimate objects or alive?

2. Look down the column for *women's genitals* and summarize the nature of the words. Are they hard or soft, inanimate objects or alive?

3. Look down the column for *sexual intercourse* and summarize the nature of the words. Are they pleasurable or work, harsh or embracing?

4. What do these words say about how we view sexuality in ourselves and others? (Is it something shared between men and women, or forced by men? Is it something enjoyable between a man and a woman, or mainly for the man's pleasure?)

☰ Exercise 3 – Being Intimate

Our sexuality can be a very different thing if it is combined with intimacy. It can become something emotional and even spiritual. But it can also keep us from intimacy if we view it just as a physical thing. By “intimacy” we mean feeling and being close to someone, not just physically but also emotionally. You really feel like one, like friends, in touch, without fear or anxiety. Intimacy is something very private, very personal, something between just two people. We can all work on being more intimate.

1. Rate how intimate your current or most recent sexual relations have been (on a scale of 1 through 10 with 10 being very, very intimate) _____
2. What have you done to make that intimacy either high or low? (Have you been forceful or demanding about sex? Have you neglected your partner's needs or wants?)

3. In what way does the “dirty talk” in Exercise 1 go against intimacy? (Does it make sex seem like work, sport, or war? Does it always put men “on top” or in charge?)

4. What can we do to improve our sexual relationship and make it more intimate? (Not just use sex to get what we want? Ask our partners more about what they want? Take more time or be more relaxed?)

Assignments

1. Talk with your wife or partner about your conceptions of sexuality. Ask her about her fears of sex and expectations of sex and write them down below. What scares her about sex, or makes her uncomfortable? What does she want from sex or hope to get out of it?

- Her fears:

- Her expectations:

2. Ask your wife or partner what “intimacy” means to them and how to achieve it. Make a note of your findings below.

- Concept of intimacy:

- Attaining intimacy:

❖ Goal 4 – Promoting Equality in Relationships

Something to Think About

A woman should be able to be both independent and dependent, active and passive, relaxed and serious, practical and romantic, tender and tough minded, thinking and feeling, dominant and submissive. So, obviously should a man! —Pierre Mornell

Our relationships, especially with women, too often appear to be a power struggle. We feel our relationship is not what it is supposed to be, or that it's our responsibility to be in charge. We also have ideas about what the “man of the house” and “little lady” are supposed to do in the family. After all, our family growing-up may have been that way. A man's home is his castle.

We get real rigid and demanding. Our family members, in trying to get some breathing room, may push back or even rebel. We, in turn, attempt to put them in their place. In the process, we keep others and ourselves from being who we are. The tug-of-war often turns into abuse.

Things change, though, when we put down our end of the rope and treat others as equals. We find that we and our wives or partners can be more of who we are.

I pray to my Higher Power for the courage to accept equality in my relationships and the fullness of who we are.

Put Your Reaction or Comments Here:

Exercise 1 – Attraction to Our Wife or Partner

To treat another person as an equal we have to know and respect them. Some of us don't treat our wives or partners as equals because we don't really know them — or we know them in a limited way. We need to build toward a more equal and sharing relationship by re-knowing our partners, and finding out what we really expect from them. Let's look deeper into how you view your wife or partner.

1. Read the list below and place a plus sign (+) in front of the the four items that *attract* you most to your wife or partner.

Attraction Inventory

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> her hair or her eyes | <input type="checkbox"/> her emotional pain |
| <input type="checkbox"/> her sexual turn-ons | <input type="checkbox"/> her political opinions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> her idea of romance | <input type="checkbox"/> her feelings toward her parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> her frustrations at work or at home | <input type="checkbox"/> her outlook on life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> her achievements at work or in school | <input type="checkbox"/> her friends and/or family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> her breasts or butt | <input type="checkbox"/> her feelings toward you |
| <input type="checkbox"/> her clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> the way she dresses |

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> her sexual fantasies | <input type="checkbox"/> the way she moves |
| <input type="checkbox"/> her ideas about marriage | <input type="checkbox"/> her spiritual beliefs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> her sports interests | <input type="checkbox"/> her interest in new things and people |
| <input type="checkbox"/> her legs | <input type="checkbox"/> the way she takes care of kids |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ | |

- In the list above, place a minus sign (-) in front of five items that you *like least* about your wife or partner.
- In the list above, circle the items that you would most like to *know more about*.
- What do your responses suggest about your expectations of your wife or partner? What expectations do they imply? Do they say you expect sex from her? Do they say you expect her to be "up" all the time? Do they say you expect her to be at the home?

☰ Exercise 2 – Relationship Expectations

Most of us think that our relationships are pretty equal. We do some things and our partner does some things that balance out. If our partner does more to take care of the house or family, we may even think that that is the way it should be. A number of studies have shown that women, in fact, do much more than men in taking care of the house, the children, the groceries, and so on. What we expect or take for granted in our relationships can cause problems that lead to abuse. Let's assess our own relationships and what we expect from them.

- What do *you* expect in the ideal relationship? What things should your wife or partner do or take care of? These are things that you may help with occasionally but in which she takes the lead. Check all that apply.
 - cleaning the inside of the house or apartment
 - buying groceries and getting supplies for the house or apartment
 - preparing meals
 - cleaning up after meals
 - doing laundry
 - ironing and/or putting laundry away
 - taking care of young children when they wake up at night
 - getting the kids up and off to school

- taking the kids to after school activities
- helping kids with their homework or other activities
- talking to the kids about their personal problems
- talking to kids about sex, drinking, and drugs
- paying the bills
- bringing in some of the income
- keeping the car running
- keeping the car inspected and insured
- repairing or getting repairs for things around the house or apartment (e.g., toilet, heater)
- taking care of the garden or inside plants
- taking care of the outside of the house or apartment (e.g. cut grass, shovel sidewalk)
- answering the phone and taking messages
- other: _____
- other: _____

2. What does *your partner* expect or want in a relationship? What things does she expect or want you to do or take care of? Circle the items in the list that apply.

3. What things do you *expect or ask your wife or partner to do* that she doesn't like doing.

4. What things does your wife or partner expect or ask of you that you do not like doing.

5. How equal is the relationship?

- Do you think you have an equal relationship? yes no
- Does your wife or partner think you have an equal relationship? yes no
- Do you expect more than your partner in the list above? yes no

Exercise 3 – Sizing Up Inequality

An unequal relationship can bring us down as well as hurt our partners. But we can change our relationships — at least to some degree. If we see the problems that inequality brings, we may see that a change is worthwhile. If we see the resistance to equality, we may be able to step around it. Let's size up inequality for these reasons.

1. Unequal relationships often have a number of *side effects*. Which of the following apply to you? Check all that apply.

- I feel resentful toward my wife or partner.
- I struggle to assert my authority in our relationship.
- I find it difficult to trust my wife or partner.
- I do not feel understood or appreciated by my wife or partner.
- I make cutting remarks or put-downs even when we are not in an argument.
- I get upset if the house and meals aren't taken care of.
- I'm irritated when my wife or partner spends a lot of time talking to other women or acts friendly toward other men.
- other: _____
- other: _____

2. What three things could you do more of in your relationship to make it more equal, or at least seem that way to your partner? Pick from list in Exercise 1.

3. Why do you think some relationships are so unequal? Below are some reasons from the experts on relationships. Indicate which four are the most important by putting the number "1" in front of the most important one, a "2" in front of the next most important one, and so on.

- What men learn by watching their fathers.
- What men learn by watching their mothers.
- What men learn by watching television and movies.
- What men learn from other men.
- Men's different biology and genes.

- Men and women have different emotions.
- Men's past as hunters and warriors.
- A society that is run mostly by men
- other: _____
- other: _____

4. Circle the items in the list above that men might use as an excuse to *not* have an equal relationship. Do you ever use any of these in your mind?

Assignments

1. Review questions #1 and #2 in Exercise 1 with your wife or partner, if she is willing. Put an "X" in front of the items she picks.

- What responses of hers are the same as yours?

- How are her responses different?

- Why does she have some different responses?

2. Review questions #1 and #2 in Exercise 2 with your wife or partner, if she is willing. Put an "X" in front of the items she picks.

- What responses of hers are the same as yours?

- How are her responses different?

- Why does she have some different responses?

❖ Goal 5 – Sharing Power to Feel Good

Something to Think About

Power is strength and the ability to see yourself through your own eyes and not through the eyes of another. It is being able to place a circle of power at your own feet and not take power from someone else's circle. —Ange Whistling Elk

Seeing ourselves through our own eyes is difficult. When we were children we saw ourselves and other things as our parents or other adults told us to. As men, we first bring some boyhood ideas to what we see and experience. We may be arrogant, thinking we already know the answers to life; defiant, thinking we don't want anyone to tell us what to do; or self-indulgent, grabbing for the greatest pleasure. Those ideas delay seeing ourselves through our own eyes.

Personal power comes when we listen to ourselves and to others. To be independent of everyone may have been our youthful idea of power. In manhood, power comes in being open and honest about our dependency on others, yet knowing we have no claim on anyone else to make us happy.

I will work to find real power by giving more power to others.

Put Your Reaction or Comments Here:

📖 Exercise 1 – The Sources of Power*

We all want some amount of power. That is, we want some kind of influence, control, impact, and strength in our worlds. There are a lot of ways to be and feel powerful — some of them are helpful and some of them are hurtful and destructive. Some of them belong primarily to men, and some of them are left to women. Let's learn a little more about "power."

1. Make a list of all the *sources of personal power* that human beings can muster. Put your answers under the first column titled "sources of power." A couple of suggestions are listed to get you started.

*Adapted and reprinted with permission from John Beams, Men for Nonviolence, 1122 Broadway, Fort Wayne, IN 46802.

Source of Power	Gender
money	M
physical strength	M

- Go back to your list in #1. Look at each “source of power” and decide whether it is associated more with men or women. That is, who has this power the most? Use “M” for males, “F” for females, and “M/F” if you really can’t decide and think it is associated with both.
- Why are there more power sources attributed to men than women? Does it have anything to do with what we learn we should do when we are growing up? Is it because of the opportunities that are there for men, but not as much for women? Does it have anything to do with who runs more things in our society, or tries to run them?

- Which of the items you listed in #1 are related to physical violence — they involve or lead to violence. Indicate with “*” to the right.
 - How many * are there for items with an “M”? _____
 - Does it look like a man can still be powerful if he stops his violence?
 - yes no maybe
 - What sources of power does he need to use to be powerful but not violent?

☰ Exercise 2 – Power Rating

The real question is how much power do we have? Most of us think we don't have enough or very much. Others usually see us differently. Let's evaluate how much power we have. Do we need to be trying to get more of it by taking it from others? Or can we find other ways to accept the power we have or get more by sharing what others may have?

1. Look back over the list of "Sources of Power" in Exercise 1. Rate the amount of *power you have* based on the list. Use a scale of one through 10 with 10 the highest.

• Rating: _____

2. Rate your wife or partner on a scale of one to 10 as to how much *power you think she has*.

• Rating: _____

3. How would *your wife or partner rate you*?

• Rating: _____

4. Why are there differences in ratings between you and your wife or partner (#1 and #2)? Is it because you are bigger and stronger physically? Is it because you have more access to money?

5. What does it feel like *to have no power or less power than another*?

6. What do *you do* when you feel like the underdog?

Assignments

1. Find three ways to feel more powerful while letting others be more powerful. (Name them below.)

2. Try any of the “powerful” ways above. How did other people actually respond to your power sharing?

3. What did you get out of the power sharing?
