

WHAT I WISH MORE MEN KNEW

By: Lynda Savage, M.S., LMFT, LPC

I have seen hundreds of men in therapy. I am in debt to these men for sharing themselves in deep ways. They are doing the hard work of bettering their relationships and their inner workings. This takes emotional energy and guts. I am privileged to have sometimes helped.

With this in mind, I come to writing my part of our newsletter which this quarter, is about men. As an older woman now, and as a therapist, I am able to look at the present and the past with an appreciation for men. They have taught me to see things from their perspective. This is a great gift. In a small way, I write these words to give back to them.

What I wish more men knew:

*Many men do not notice the positive changes in their loved one's faces, especially their babies and children, when they walk into the room. Even very young babies have a delightful expression as they recognize dad. Fathers may provide structure and challenge to their families as well as play and excitement. Babies and children respond to their fathers with excitement and interest. This continues with children into adulthood. If more men knew this, they would be encouraged.

*Men know positive things about their spouses that would surprise the women they love. Some men do not express these things well to their loved one. If women are willing and able to listen, and men are willing and able to work to express these things, both grow.

*Marriage is complicated. Most men would actually die for their wives. When men connect the dots that usually women are not trying to make their lives miserable, no one will work harder to make marriage work.

*Men need to know that a woman's response is cumulative. What that means is that a woman relates to a series of interactions with her man. That series stays with women until the situation resolves. Men generally are operating in the here and now and not to everything that happened in the last hours.

*Men are more important than they realize.

There are many exceptions to the above of course. One of the most special of these items for men to know is how much their children delight in them. The fact that this delight lasts forever is powerful.

May each man and woman reading this find food for thought, perhaps fodder for discussion, and most of all, encouragement.

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