

How To Say What You Want in a Relationship – 4 Relationships Expert Reveal Best Tips + Strategies

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Follow the below dos and don'ts



We all have specific needs that must be met in order for us to thrive in life and in love.

Mutual expression of needs is essential to any healthy partnership.

But, how do you articulate your needs without coming across needy, clingy, or demanding?

To learn how to express your needs in a way that will offer you the best chance of your man really hearing and understanding you, follow these steps:

Identify your needs:

First, you need to identify your core needs. Core needs are rooted in your values, morals, ethics, and beliefs.

Get clear on what you need within a relationship, from a partner, and for yourself in order to be happy, healthy, satisfied, and balanced in a relationship.

Identifying your needs is your sole responsibility, your partner can't read your mind. Show up for yourself in a way that honors who you are and demonstrates self-love, self-respect, and worthiness.

Put it out there:

Now that you're clear on your needs, it's time to be brave and put it out there.

True connection and intimacy will only grow in a relationship if you allow yourself to show up and be fully seen.

Here are some Do's and Don'ts when expressing your needs:

Do's:

1. **Use “I” statements** – Expressing how you feel and what you need using “I” will enhance your chances of being heard. This will allow your man to see your request clearly and give him the freedom to respond honestly and genuinely.
2. **State your need in a positive manner** – Say what you need/wish for/hope for versus what you don't want. Don't turn this on your partner and make it about something he's not doing for you. Tell him what you need, not what you don't need.
3. **Be concise** – Your message will be lost in a sea of words if you ramble. Try condensing what you want to say to 3-5 sentences so your message is impactful.
4. **Describe why it is so important to you** – Sharing the deeper meaning may elicit shared understanding, validation, and empathy.
5. **Share some ideas on how your partner could help satisfy your need.**

Don'ts:

1. **Don't demand** – Demanding your partner meet your needs is a veiled ultimatum. If you demand your man do what you say, you are putting an enormous amount of unnecessary pressure on him.
2. **Don't blame, criticize, or attack your partner** – This will quickly get you off track and is the perfect recipe for a fight.
3. **Don't assume** – One of the most dangerous assumptions women make in relationships is that their man can read their mind and will figure out how to make them happy. Wong. No one is a mind reader. Instead, express what you need explicitly.
4. **Don't do it over text** – It may feel safer to open up to your man via text, but using your phone as a protective armor will ultimately stifle connection and intimacy.
5. **Don't take it back** – If you don't get the response you were hoping for, don't retract what you said. Remember, your needs are of high value and they should not be diminished.

Now what?:

Claps all around to you for putting yourself out there and expressing your needs. Now, the ball is in his court. It's up to him to decide whether he will meet your needs.

If you're two whole people with strong compatibility, chances are good he'll gladly meet your needs.

Better yet, your bravery may even inspire him to be more open with you about his own needs in the relationship. This will lead to a healthy, well-balanced dynamic where both of you both will thrive.

It's important to note that no one will ever be able to meet ALL of your needs, wants, and desires.

That just doesn't exist. You have to decide what you can and cannot live without.

Desires, wants, and preferences are usually negotiable and can be addressed by way of compromise.

Needs, however, are vital to our existence and cannot be negotiated. It's important to discern between a *need* vs. *want* so you can navigate your relationship in a healthy manner.

Ultimately, you are responsible for your life and the choices you make.

If you find yourself in a relationship where your vital needs are being denied, sacrificed, or unmet, it may be time to re-evaluate the relationship and move on so you can find a loving partnership that can fulfill you.

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Communicate with kindness and respect



Communication is one of the most important components in the dynamics of a relationship.

When it comes to saying what you want in a relationship, use this simple guiding principle: say what you mean, mean what you say, and don't say it mean

Saying what you mean can be a challenge.

It is not always easy to clarify our own thoughts and to discern exactly what it is that we need to say. Emotions can cloud our thinking, and it is sometimes helpful to separate the mind from the heart. If you are in an emotional storm or an overly emotional state, calm down before you decide to say anything.

We can often make irrational statements when we are highly emotional.

If you give yourself time for your emotions to simmer, you will have a better shot at saying what it is you really mean. It can be helpful to talk things through with another person, either a trusted friend or therapist, and then say what you really mean to say.

If you say something that you don't really mean, you could end up making the situation more difficult for yourself and your partner.

If you are setting boundaries, it is very important that you carry them out and stick to them. People need to know that you mean business when you are talking about something important, and that you don't say things lightly.

As long as you do it with kindness and respect, you can say almost anything to someone.

If you have a critical or unpleasant tone, the other person is likely to tune out and not hear a word you say, even if you are absolutely spot on. Remember that 80% of communication is nonverbal, and tone is a big part of that.

Keep your tone kind if possible, and if not, at least neutral.

Sometimes it is helpful to approach difficult conversations as though you were in a professional setting, and just try to be neutral. When something is said with love, people can feel it. And they generally do not care what you think unless they know that you care.

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When it is time to share your thoughts and desires, pay attention to all aspects of how you are communicating



Sometimes in relationships we are afraid to ask for what we want, to give our opinions, or share our desires for fear of coming across as needy, demanding, or clingy.

Communication can be one of the most effective ways to create and keep a strong, healthy relationship.

Talking is important in keeping us aware of each other's needs, working out problems, and negotiating and settling disagreements. If done right, communication is healthy and beneficial. We need to feel heard and understood in order to build a strong relationship.

Don't be afraid to talk to your partner.

Sharing your thoughts and feelings builds emotional intimacy in a relationship. What you say, the tone you use, and your body language while talking are all important.

When it is time to share your thoughts and desires, pay attention to all aspects of how you are communicating.

Do you sound angry or demanding?

This will make a difference. Sometimes how you say something and the specific words you use can determine the outcome of the conversation.

Feeling safe and being able to share intimate thoughts and feelings with your partner is essential to building and maintaining a healthy relationship.

If you are not comfortable doing this, start small with sharing an opinion, idea, or desire. Build up to more intimate topics as you feel safe. Make sure your words and body language are positive and not demanding or critical.

It is also important to remember that your partner may not always agree with you or be able to meet all of your needs. In relationships, we often have unrealistic expectations of a partner.

The ultimate goal is to accept each other as a whole person.

This doesn't mean you have to like everything about them, but you do allow them to be who they are. You accept their wants and needs as uniquely theirs and do your best to work together as a couple.

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Follow the below 3 step process



Before we get down to brass tacks on how to ask for what you want in a relationship, let's make sure you've done the important psychological groundwork to ensure your ask is coming from a position of health, maturity and strength.

First, let's distinguish between needs and wants.

Needs are those vital things that the relationships can't do without. The air and water in any relationship is mutual respect and care.

If you can check off those boxes, then you are looking for responsiveness and reliability in a partner.

These qualities form trust and create the foundation of intimacy in a relationship.

If the relationship has basic integrity (e.g. its structurally sound) then you can move on to expressing wants.

In general, wants are preferences that often require your partner to offer up something that may not feel as natural to them as it does to you.

Think love languages, people receive and give love differently and your understanding of that is critical.

For instance, you might say, "It makes me feel wanted by you when you initiate date night and I would like it if you did that more." Your partner may be shy or has a history that makes being more assertive in relationships difficult, your ask may be a bit of a stretch, but most likely is doable.

The three-step approach is:

1. *Take an “I” perspective.*

2. *State what success looks like vs. focusing on how they have failed you in the past.*

3. *Make it a request, not a criticism or demand.*

Checking your motivation is an important part of the process.

Are you motivated by fear? *I am terrified you don't love me, and I don't matter.*

Any want/need from this place is most likely unreasonable because it comes from insecurity.

If the motivation is coming from love with the goal that you are deepening intimacy, then you are showing up in your health and most likely making a reasonable request.

The skill is grounded in empathy.

Now remember, this goes both ways. It's highly possible your partner will also want you to stretch.

Maybe there is the request for you to be more cleanly and although you don't care about having all of the dishes done, you agree to the request because you know that gratifying each other's preferences when it's reasonable to do so shows care.

The relationship myth that can block this process is the idea that the “right person” is out there and that they will know what you want and provide it effortlessly.

Instead of being disappointed that your partner is not the perfect match, focus on whether your partner is willing to show up and do the work with you.

Good relationships come from taking responsibility, staying engaged and being willing to learn and grow. By making your partner an ally in this process you will most likely get the fulfillment you want in your relationship.

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