

CAN THIS BE LOVE?

WISHFUL READING Self-help books someone should write

I have a recurring dream in which I walk into my local bookstore and find a new section exclusively for volumes dealing with the problems of man/woman relationships: books that tell you what to do if your partner keeps calling you by his mother's name, or behaves as if your father has a disease communicable by eye contact; books that help you find out whether a man has all the facts at his command when he says that marriage is bad for his heart; books like the following:

How To Tell if He's Cut Out for Monogamy An indispensable volume for the woman who never wants to ask, "Why did I ever get involved with this cluck?" Here are foolproof techniques for finding out if the man you love will fight commitment to the bitter end. You'll learn exactly how many address books are *too* many, what it means if his apartment is stocked with a supply of women's underwear and toiletries and why his calling you "the most wonderful woman he's ever met at a bus stop" is not necessarily an encouraging sign.

How To Handle a Slob Tired of tripping over the same sneaker every morning—and that one a size fourteen? Ashamed to let the building superintendent into your bathroom to fix a leak, because it looks as if it just hosted the Miami Dolphins post-game cleanup? Unhappy because your partner's idea of keeping records involves extensive use of paper napkins, or because his idea of formal attire is wearing enough so that his underwear doesn't show? This book can help you. Learn what Nancy Reagan did to get Ronnie to stop leaving jelly beans in bed. Find out how Nancy Kissinger finally got Henry to say "Hello" to their guests distinctly, instead of mumbling through a mouthful of guacamole. And learn how to get your partner to think of your home as something other than a waste disposal site.

No-Fault Sexuality This book is for couples whose talks about their sex life invariably deteriorate into the kind of degenerate brawling usually associated with waterfront saloons. It teaches partners to steer clear of accusatory "you" sentences, such as, "You handle my body as if it were a lump of clay," and to use the less threatening "I" sentences, such as, "I feel like a lump of clay when we make love." And that's only one of this volume's indispensable tips!

When To Shut Up The book for anyone who has ever told her lover that his new coat

makes him look like a hunchback, volunteered that she was the one who used the last half of his bottle of pre-World War I brandy to make a fruitcake, or that her hair color isn't *exactly* natural. You'll learn how the sphinx got its name (and how you can get it, too), the proper way to glue a mouth closed, and the pros and cons of wiring your teeth together. Read this book, and from now on, your secrets will be safe with you.

How To Get Him To Shut Up A book for anyone who has ever listened to her innermost secrets being bandied about by a loudmouthed lover. The reader will learn the basic techniques of retaliation and humiliation necessary to creating a well-modulated partner. Here, too, the reader can find the Secret of the Conversational Diversion, so that never again need she listen to a long-winded monologue about the discovery of the microchip, or the convoluted reasoning behind the decision to buy a sound system that makes it possible for Billy Joel to join you in the bathroom.

Getting Your Partner To Listen Has he ever asked you to pick up something from the hardware store on your way home from work when you no longer work near the hardware store *and have not done so for*

over six months? Has he ever inquired, "What's your mother up to these days?" only hours after you've mentioned that she is going back to school for a degree in dog grooming? Has he ever brought home tickets to a hockey match, completely forgetting you told him on your first date that you consider hockey, like clubbing baby seals, a "blood sport"? This book teaches you how to make yourself heard without making yourself hoarse. You'll learn the latest, most effective techniques in listening-behavior modification, like "forgetting" he once told you that anything cooked with chicken livers makes him completely nauseous.

Do You Really Love One Another? Have you ever asked yourself whether yours is a true love relationship and found the answer to be, "Search me"? Then here's the book for you, the book that proves that you don't have to think your partner is even tempered, good natured, mild mannered or even altogether sane in order to feel that you'd as soon commit murder as let anything come between you. (Come to think of it, maybe I'll write this one myself.)

by Bette-Jane Raphael



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