



Marriage Rules[©]

“LISTENING, HEARING AND RESPONDING”

By: Larry B. Gelman, Psy. D.

Husband: Bitch! Bitch! Bitch! That’s all I ever hear!

Wife: If you would only listen to me and hear what I’m saying, I wouldn’t have to keep repeating myself.

Husband: I hear you just fine. You’re like all the rest of ‘em. Talk, talk, talk...never a quiet moment...never satisfied!

Wife: I’m not satisfied when you don’t respond to what I’m saying.

Husband: Your problem is that you are always saying something critical. You never leave well enough alone. You’re just a pain in the...

Wife: As a matter of fact, what I need right now is for you to stop name-calling, generalizing and not responding to me.

Husband: Huh?

Wife: I also need you to treat me as I need to be treated.

Husband: What the...?

Wife: Either we are both going to address one problem at a time and work to resolve it to our mutual satisfaction or...

Husband: Or else divorce, right? I just knew it! You’re setting me up! You want out! Damn you!

Wife: I just told you what I want.

Husband: A divorce! That’s what you really want!

Wife: A relationship that is open and honest and respectful and caring...

Husband: A relationship?

Wife: Where each of us takes good care of ourselves and also one another...

Husband: But I do take care of you. That’s a man’s job, to take care of his...

Wife: Where problems are faced together and solutions are achieved together.

Husband: So what you need is me...

Wife: What I want is you to work with me as an equal. What I don’t need is for you to take care of me because that’s your job. What I need is me...and you... to be a team.

Continued...

Husband: I guess I had you all wrong. I’m...

Wife: Sorry we’ve wasted all this time fighting instead of listening, hearing and responding?

Husband: Sorry.

Dr. Larry B. Gelman is a licensed Clinical Psychologist at Northern Illinois Counseling Associates, P.C. (NICA) located in downtown Crystal Lake, Illinois.

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