

RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS



Mars and Venus in Love

John Gray

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About the Book

There is something for everyone in *Mars and Venus in Love*. From bestselling relationship expert, John Gray, an astonishing collection of first-person stories from couples who have made his principles work for them.

John Gray's *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* titles have brought a powerful message to millions of people across the world.

But how do his methods work? How can they be put into practice? After the incredible response to his books, John Gray thought the success of couples who have followed his example might inspire others like them.

Mars and Venus in Love offers fascinating true-life stories of how relationships really work - and how problems can be overcome. Readers will recognise themselves and their own relationships in this absorbing collection of heartfelt personal stories - which offer hope, advice, forgiveness, encouragement and humour for every couple. They will inspire everyone to work towards developing fulfilling, healthy and loving relationships.

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Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus

*A Practical Guide for Improving Communication and Getting What You Want in
Your Relationships*

MARS
AND
VENUS
IN LOVE

INSPIRING & HEARTFELT STORIES
OF RELATIONSHIPS THAT WORK

JOHN GRAY

Vermilion
LONDON

This book is dedicated with deepest love and affection to
my wife, Bonnie Gray.
Her love, vulnerability, wisdom, and strength have allowed
me to fall in love with her again and again.

Introduction

AS THE AUTHOR of *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, I have the regular benefit of hearing inspiring success stories from individuals and couples. Practically each day, someone will recognize me and come up with a smile on his or her face thanking me for writing “that book.” For years I was amazed. I knew that my seminars were transformational experiences and helped to save thousands of marriages, but I didn’t realize that simply reading a book could have the same effect.

In a presentation, with thousands of people listening to me speak, I can watch an idea or a little story sail out into the crowd and see faces here and there light up, like lightbulbs. I tell a story and with hardly a pause see people around the room unmistakably and instantaneously transformed. There is a wave of recognition and a tremendous relief, followed sometimes with a burst of laughter that for most reflects the following reactions:

- He *knows* what I’ve been feeling. Other people must have felt that too. And here I’ve been feeling like I was the only one in the world who just couldn’t get love right.
- The way he told about that couple’s problems, it sounded so *regular*, not crazy at all. Does that mean the way our marriage has been going might actually be *normal*?
- Pheww! I’m not alone. Other people have felt that too.
- Aha, that’s why that happened. Now it makes sense. I can deal with this. It’s not so hopeless.

These “lightbulb” experiences are no small things. They’re quick, but they aren’t transitory. People’s relationship problems are probably the most isolating events they experience. They are hard to define and talk about, particularly in a way that invokes compassion and understanding from our partners. When things aren’t working and we don’t know how to put it into words or understand what is happening, then naturally we begin to feel doubts.

In the time it takes for a single lightbulb to go on, people here and there throughout the audience are visibly transformed by one message or another—the one that makes a difference to them personally:

- *We’ve gone through that! There’s nothing wrong with us!*
- *That describes me. I’m not alone.*
- *I’ve always thought that love was enough, but I guess there are things we needed to know to make it work.*

In my seminars, I invite individuals and couples to stand up and share examples from their own lives. The insights I relate from understanding the differences between men and women are certainly very helpful, but what crystallizes these ideas best—most quickly, dramatically, unforgettably—are their stories.

As participants begin to share personal examples of how they have used these insights to improve their relationships, everything suddenly comes together. A story shared by one that directly relates to others causes faces to shine with joy, inspiration, and relief.

Mars and Venus in Love is a book of personal examples of relationships that work—a collection of true-life tales. You may not recognize yourself in every one, but there’s bound to be several that will crystallize your own truth, showing you something about your own love story that might have been eluding you for a long time. With each

story you will share the clarity and love that others like yourself have found to make love work in their lives.

These stories come directly from individuals and couples who have shared in my seminars as well as from letters to my office. Each year, I receive thousands of letters, spontaneously written, telling love stories. The people who write these letters are husbands and wives or lovers or seekers-after-love; their relationships have seemed to be on the verge of ruin, but they have been saved by what they discovered in my work.

Some are readers or listeners who have loved their partners deeply, but who have—through my books, tapes, or seminars—found ways to enrich their love relationships beyond all imagination and expectation. Some are single people who had longed for love in their lives, but had never quite attained it—until they learned to identify and appreciate the differences between men and women.

Sometimes, at the end of a letter they would write, “If you think my story could help others, please feel free to use it as you wish.” One day, in thinking about it, I realized that it was a very good idea. If true stories and examples could have an instantaneous and permanent transformative effect in face-to-face encounters in my seminars, why not assemble an array of them in a book?

Mars and Venus in Love covers the basic ideas presented in my books, tapes, and seminars, but in a real-life way from the *inside*, giving you the opportunity to see yourself in the stories of others and to recognize your patterns in the circumstances they describe. In psychological terms, the book gives you a safe and private opportunity to *identify* with others, but in everyday terms it shows you in a hundred different ways some comforting realities:

- that problems in love are normal,

- that there's nothing wrong with you if you have difficulties in your relationships,
- that almost everyone who tries to love has problems getting it right,
- that even big mistakes like infidelity can be forgiven and healed,
- that even where people are deeply in love, their relationships won't work if they don't recognize certain truths about men and women,
- that women and men really are different,
- and that the key to falling and staying in love is to recognize and embrace those differences.

While some of these stories are heartwarming, others are fun and humorous. What can be more satisfying than hearing of a love affair on the brink of ruin that suddenly revives and comes to life? Trying to understand how this happens is what keeps us sitting at the kitchen table long after brunch is over, pouring another cup of coffee and turning over the details of the situation—our own or somebody else's—one more time. I'm hoping that the experience of reading this book will be for you like lingering over the end of a meal, thinking about love, and suddenly lighting up—like a lightbulb!—with the realization that “Oh! That's me!” or “Look at this, honey! They're talking about us!”

Mars and Venus in Love

I M AGINE THAT men are from Mars and women are from Venus. One day, long ago, the Martians traveled in their spaceships to Venus. When they arrived it was love at first sight. Both Martians and Venusians fell madly in love, married and lived happily ever after—that is, until they decided to visit Earth ...

At first everything was perfect, but after some time the effects of Earth's atmosphere began to take hold. Both men and women experienced "selective amnesia." They forgot they were from different planets.

Without an awareness of how they were different, the Martians began to think the Venusians needed to be fixed, while the Venusians thought the Martians needed to be improved. As they set out to "change" one another, the love they originally felt started to disappear.

Although most of the Martians and Venusians forgot they were different, some were spared. These lucky ones remembered that they were from different planets. With this special insight they continued to grow together in love.

**Although most of the Martians and
Venusians forgot they were
different, some were spared. They
continued to grow together in love.**

This one realization—that men are from Mars and women are from Venus—has been the missing key for thousands of couples to experience increasing love, better communication, and lasting passion in their relationships.

Unrealistic Expectations

When we mistakenly think men and women are the same, then suddenly our relationships are filled with unrealistic expectations. Women assume men will do the things women do when they love someone. Men assume women will react the way a man would react when he loves someone. Without clear insight into the ways men and women respond differently, it is no wonder that our feelings get hurt and we end up battling with the one we love most.

When we mistakenly think men and women are the same, our relationships are filled with unrealistic expectations.

Through understanding and remembering that men are from Mars and women are from Venus, we begin to interpret our partners' behaviors and responses in a new light. The old war between the sexes becomes instead the misunderstanding of the sexes. Something very magical takes place in our relationships; our hearts are filled with the warm glow of forgiveness and inspired by a new sense of power to realize our hopes and dreams.

Suddenly our relationships look very different. We see that our partners are struggling to be loving and in their own way doing their best. With this new insight, we are able to recognize our partners' many attempts to be loving. The clouds of confusion, frustration, and disappointment

begin to clear and suddenly their actions and reactions start to make sense.

The old war between the sexes is in truth a misunderstanding of the sexes.

When we can see clearly our partners' loving intention, our relationships automatically begin to change. Instead of feeling rejected or unappreciated, we begin to see the love that not only was always there but is still there.

An Overview of Stories

With this important insight, thousands of couples have discovered how to rekindle the love in their relationships in their own unique ways. Throughout *Mars and Venus in Love* we will explore their heartfelt and inspiring stories. In their own words, we will share in their successes and learn from their mistakes.

The stories in each chapter will bring you new and crucial insights. While many of these ideas are already outlined and explained in my other books, hearing these stories will assist you in pinpointing some of your own feelings and experiences, and in some cases give you new ways of creating the relationship you want.

It is important to note that not everyone will directly relate to each of these stories—nor should you. Not everyone fits these general descriptions of how men and women are different. These stories were selected because many men and women *do* relate. As you find yourself or your partner described again and again, you will have a reference point for discussing these ideas with your friends and family and in your intimate relationship.

In [chapter 2](#), “Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus,” the stories explore how a deeper understanding of the ways men and women differ generates lasting love. Simply remembering that we are different from one another frees us from feeling rejected and unappreciated, and inspires a willingness to take the time necessary to understand our partners and get what we need.

The stories in [chapter 3](#), “Men and Their Caves,” illustrate how a woman’s understanding of a man’s healthy need to withdraw into his cave can dramatically improve a relationship. Many women have discovered that accepting a man’s need to withdraw at times frees him to be a better listener. And other women find that when they accept a man’s need to withdraw, he comes out more often.

In [chapter 4](#), “Speaking Different Languages,” the stories illustrate how differently men and women communicate—and how different is their understanding of why we talk at all. Both men and women use language to make points and solve problems, but women also use language to discover what they want to say, to talk out their feelings, and often to experience greater intimacy. The stories here show communication improving dramatically as men and women come to understand these differences.

[Chapter 5](#), “The Martians Are Coming,” relates stories of relationships so wounded that they were on the verge of dissolving—and yet, based on new insights into the differences between men and women, were healed and began to flourish. Here we see women and men growing in love and finding ways to get their needs met and to meet their partners’ needs, where before all was confusion and resentment.

[Chapter 6](#), “Greetings from Mars and Venus,” shows the different ways in which women and men give love. Without a clear understanding of these differences, we are frustrated and disappointed in our experiences of love. The stories here serve as real-life examples showing men the

importance of making a woman feel cherished, and women the value of expressing appreciation for their mates and their accomplishments.

Finally, in [chapter 7](#), “Mars and Venus Together Forever,” we look at particularly difficult problems at the heart of some marriages—abuse, addiction, deceit, and infidelity. The stories here are memorable not only for what they show about the profound effect of such problems on love, but also for their revelations of the paths away from heartbreak and toward strong, healthy, loving relationships.

In each chapter of *Mars and Venus in Love*, you will discover new ways to integrate and apply this new understanding of the differences between men and women. Each story will bring an increasing awareness of how to solve the inevitable problems and conflicts that arise not only in our intimate relationships but in all relationships.

The Magic of Sharing Stories

By hearing these relationship stories, to the extent that you can see yourself or your partner in each story, your own understanding of what makes relationships more loving will be automatically reinforced. As you focus on what makes relationships work, those qualities spontaneously become enlivened.

As you discover what may be missing in your relationship, instead of just feeling a loss, you will be inspired by new possibilities of finding fulfillment. As you begin to laugh at your own mistakes or your partner’s mistakes, old resentments are released and your heart is filled with the magic of love and forgiveness.

Whether you are inspired by these success stories or simply grateful for the love and understanding you already have, sharing in the personal transformations of people like

yourself—as they grow in their ability to love and respect each other—is a nourishing and enriching experience.

Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus

MEN AND WOMEN are different. So different that at times we could be from different planets. Remembering this single idea frees us from blaming our partners and helps us to take the necessary time to understand our partners' needs. Rather than perceiving our partners' different ways of acting and reacting as signs of weakness, or as neurotic tendencies that need to be corrected, we can begin to love and accept our partners the way they are. In each of the following stories, men and women share how helpful and reassuring it is to begin understanding the differences between men and women.

We Are Not Alone

Barbara told me this: "Roger and I are wonderfully in love today but it was not always that way. We had constantly felt a tug-of-war feeling. There were so many things that he did that bothered me. When I read *Men Are from Mars*, it was like John Gray had been following us around in our home. What we thought were our own conversations were written in his book. I had thought it was just us. To know that others were having the same experiences was immensely helpful.