

Gender Differences

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Sorting Systems: How We Organize our Realities

The Male Paradigm	The Female Paradigm
task	relationship
solution	empathy
conquer	relate
focused tracking	rapid switching
I got a deer!	You shot Bambi!
independence	intimacy
group/team	best friend
dominance	connection
ranking	linking

Everyday Illustrations of Differences

Going Places: He penetrates the snarling traffic to achieve his goal, never stopping. The goal is always there, like the prey that was in his ancestor's mind.

She is going too, but not that way. She meanders. She looks in store windows. She notices the coat on that woman, and the children of another, or the luscious new cherries in the supermarket. Like her foraging ancestors, modern woman looks and differentiates. Her radar is on, her attention circling, sorting and investigating.

Coming Home: Most men speak on the average of 12,500 words a day. Women speak around 25,000 words a day. When they come home from work, she is ready to talk some more, to relate, to share the myriad subtleties of the day's encounters. But often he already gave at the office. He's out.

The things she saw and subtleties she noticed and *what she felt* are important! The *things he got done* are important! The way someone in the office acted towards her was important to her, and she wants to talk about it and how she feels. How he held his own with that bastard in accounting was important! But how he feels about it won't change a damned thing, so he chooses not to talk about it.

Work: He defines himself by what he does gets. She defines herself by who loves and likes her, by who she knows, how she feels, and now also by what she does and gets.

Shopping: He goes into the store looking for a London Fog raincoat, 42 long. They don't have it. He leaves. She goes to the store looking for a blouse. She finds some, doesn't buy any, and, wandering, ends up the furniture department.

Children: She is always on the alert for them, constantly scanning, listening. He, when questioned about the children he was watching, says, "Oh, they were here just a few minutes ago."

Nurturing Styles: He problem solves automatically, focusing his attention on the difficulty *out there*, which seems to be causing discomfort or unhappiness for one of his loved ones. Equally automatically, she soothes, focusing her attention on the discomfort or unhappiness *inside* one of her loved ones.

Sports: He wants to see the other warriors. She is not interested unless she knows somebody.

Voice Tones: Women often speak in a variety of high and low tones. Men tend to speak in a more flat, steady tone of voice.

And we blame each other!

Male and Females Ways of Being

Verbal Behaviors

Preschool boys have a smaller vocabulary.	Preschool girls have a larger vocabulary.
Boys begin to talk later than girls.	Girls begin to talk earlier than boys.
Boys are slower to use full sentences and use fewer words in their sentences.	Girls use sentences earlier than boys and use more words in their sentences.
60% of noises from little boys are conversational. The other 40% are noises, pushing and shoving -- bam, brrrrumm.	100% of noises made by little girls between ages 2 and 4 are conversational and about relationships.
Men speak 12,500 words a day.	Women speak 25,000 words a day

Conversation

Men talk one issue at a time, going for a solution.	Women begin speaking about one for a thing and bring up other things as they come to mind.
Men like to have a focus for conversation.	Women are comfortable with no plan at all.
Men ask longer questions.	Women ask more, shorter questions.
When asking for clarification, men ask long questions making clear just what it is they want to know.	Women listen to context waiting to understand by hearing the rest of the story.

Listening

To listen means to feel subordinate.	To listen is learning, simply means to listen.
When listening, men make fewer response comments.	When listening, make many response comments.
Interrupt to clarify or correct the speaker, which means they are interested.	Use fewer interruptions.
Men interrupt to establish dominance.	Women interrupt to signal understanding.

Problem Solving

Men approach problems to find the solutions.	Women approach problems by affiliating
Men want to fix problems.	Women want to relate to the problem they hear
Men listen to a problem and offer the solutions.	Women listen to a problem believing the speaker will sort out a solution while talking it through.
Men create a ten-point plan.	Give sympathy, "Aw, poor baby." They just listen
Men avoid verbal conflict with women because they don't want to be pushed into a right brain feeling mode.	Women consider verbal back and forth as a part of communication, and are not afraid of the resulting vulnerability.
Frequently men will not even respond when they suspect women might throw a verbal barrage of words at them.	"Talking it out is how we sort it out, Darling." she says. He may withdraw or get angry at her.
Men listen to a point best when it is offered in a story.	A woman listens well to fragments filling in details in her mind.

Nagging

Say a thing once, expect results.	Say a thing again if you get no response. Men call this nagging.
The hen pecked husband.	The rooster pecked wife.

Status

Often, initial conversations used to create status-- Who is one up? Who is one down?	Often, language is used to create a relationship. Do I like you? Do you like me?
Boys achieve status by giving orders and making them stick.	Girls achieve a sense of belonging by creative compromise
Boys learn to boast (status).	Girls learn to understate their achievements.
Boys practice hierarchy in playtime.	Girls in play are egalitarian except in matters of playing "house", then a bartering for status occurs.
Men speak to be right, using insistence to convince	Women agree with speakers with some frequency, establishing rapport and relationship.
Giving praise is done in a hierarchy only by the one who is "one up."	Giving praise is simply part of nurturing the person.

Conflict

Boys use insistence to win out in conflict.	Girls mitigate conflict by compromise. They can fight dirty, use blackmail, or endlessly lobby (to the male) to win their point. Or they leave.
To present opposite points of view shows interest.	To present opposite points of view means to argue.

Sharing Concerns

Men are irritated by women's wish for them to share concerns.	Women share concerns.
He doesn't see this as something to share, but something to fix.	A woman talks more easily about her ills, aches and pains, and may not understand that the sharing of these woes is an act of dumping, in his point of view, onto her husband.