

Tips for Connecting

How a Woman can help her Man with His Shame:

1. **Believe in him;** see his good points, as you did when you first fell in love.
2. **Help him be a good lover.** Let him know how he pleases you and what especially pleases you.
3. **Help him make you happy.** The angry, controlling, or shut-down male is trying to avoid feeling like a failure because he hasn't been able to make you happy. Tell him how unhappy you are, and you risk losing him. Focus on how he makes you happy, and he will do more of it.
4. **Accept that he, too, has the best interests of your children at heart** even when you disagree with his parenting style and then negotiate respectfully about specific parenting issues.
5. **Let him know what he does to make you feel safe and secure.**
6. **Let him know that you appreciate his work.**
7. **Respect him.**
8. **Receive his repair attempts.** If your man was forced to apologize as a child – and most little boys are – apology will likely feel more like submission than reconciliation; he will have trouble starting repair with an apology in the way that your girlfriends can. He is more likely to try repair behaviorally, by trying to resume routine connection, doing something for you, doing something with you, touching, or kissing. See these small things as gestures of your importance to him. They may not be eloquent, but they are sincere expressions of love for you and a symbol of your importance to him.

How a Man can help his Woman with her Fear:

1. **Respect her.**
2. **Listen to her.** Choose to stop what you're doing and face her.
3. **Express confidence in her.** Tell her you believe in her and be her greatest fan.
4. **Help her as much as you can.** Anytime you come alongside in the home, you give her a gift.
5. **Touch her more,** but try to make it eight affectionate, nonsexual touches for every one sexual touch.
6. **Respect her bonds with her family and friends.** Allow her de-stress by having outside relationships.
7. **Apologize if you fail to do any of the above.**
8. **Receive her repair attempts if she offends you.**
9. **Remember she fears isolation or not being loved.** Affirm your love for her.