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. . . ABOUT LIFE LINES . . .

The Life Lines series is designed for *real* people in *real life* situations. Written by published authors who are experts in their field, each book covers a different topic and includes:

- information you need, in a quick and easy-to-read format
- practical advice and encouragement from someone who's been there
- "life support"—hands-on tips to give you immediate help for the problems you're facing
- "healthy habits"—long-term strategies that will enrich your life
- inspiring Bible verses
- lists of additional resources—books, Web sites, videos, and seminars to keep you headed on the right path

Life Lines is a joint effort from Marriage Alive International and Smalley Relationship Center. Marriage Alive founders and directors David and Claudia Arp serve as general editors.

Whether you need assistance for an everyday situation, a life transition, or a crisis period, or you're just looking for a friend to come alongside you, Life Lines offers wise, compassionate counsel from someone who can help. This series will connect with you, inspire you, and give you tools that will change your life—for the better!

Titles in the series:

Life Lines: Connecting with Your Husband—Gary Smalley

Life Lines: Connecting with Your Wife—Barbara Rosberg

Life Lines: New Baby Stress—David and Claudia Arp

Life Lines: Survival Tips for Parents of Preschoolers—Becky
Freeman

Life Lines: Communicating with Your Teen—Greg and Michael
Smalley

Life Lines: Making Wise Life Choices—John Trent

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. . . INTRODUCTION . . .

Do you ever wonder . . .

- why your husband gives one-word answers to your questions?
- why when you vent about a frustrating coworker or a clueless salesperson, he launches into point-by-point instructions on how you could address the situation next time?
- why he cringes every time you say the word *emotions*?
- how he can come home after a stressful day, walk in the door to shrieking kids and a stopped-up sink, and immediately be ready for sex?
- why it takes him five hours after losing a game of Monopoly to talk to you again?
- why he can remember the batting average of every player on his favorite baseball team but can't remember to rinse the sink after he brushes his teeth or pick up the kids after soccer practice?

If you've ever been stymied by your husband's behavior or convinced that he's speaking a completely different language, then this book is for you! Make yourself comfortable, and let's delve into a topic

that's a mystery for many women: the inner workings of a man. The information here will help you understand the man in your life—a man you love and are committed to, but who sometimes drives you crazy.

How do I know this book will help? Because I've spent hundreds of hours counseling couples whose main problems stemmed from the fact that they didn't understand each other.

My guess is you've picked up this book because you'd like to figure out your husband. Someone who sometimes seems about as foreign to you as leaving the toilet seat up. Someone with habits and vocabulary and personality traits that can make you laugh out loud—or cry yourself to sleep.

Misunderstandings between you and your husband keep your marriage from being the best it can be. They can bring frustration and resentment and, in some cases, can even lead to constant arguing, depression, and broken relationships.

I'm sure that's not what you want for your marriage—and it's also not what God wants. The first mention of marriage in the Bible refers to the permanent and intimate relationship God planned for couples: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24 NIV). Marriage is a gift from God. It's an opportunity for two people to sup-

port, encourage, and sustain each other as long as they both shall live. But how do you reach that goal of one-flesh unity if you're frustrated and distracted by things your husband says or does that you just don't understand?

This book will help you get a grasp on the differences between husbands and wives and the problems that arise as a result of those differences. You'll receive the very latest research on the distinctions between men and women. After surveying and counseling thousands of people and researching the scientific reasons for the differences between men and women, I've come up with some information that might open your eyes and let you see men like you've never seen them before.

As you learn about these differences, I am confident that you will better understand your husband. You'll understand the way he talks and the way he acts related to the specific areas of communication, intimacy, competition, and daily living.

I'll give you Life Support advice that's easy to implement and will help you ease the day-to-day friction that might exist between you and the man you love.

Then you'll be given tools to enable you to establish some Healthy Habits. Tools that will help you

**Misunderstandings
between you and
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express your love for your husband in a way that will work for both of you. Habits that will help you “cleave” to him and will give you a smoother road for your relationship all through this journey of life.

My hope is that you’ll keep my name out of it (us guys have to stick together) but pass on the information to your friends. Because the truth is, guys have a lot of shortcomings when it comes to relationships. And most women I’ve met need a great deal of help understanding the man in their life—a man they love with all their being but sometimes can’t relate to any better than, say, a bologna sandwich.

Ready? Okay, here’s the lowdown on us guys.

MEN: THE MORE TROUBLING SEX

The joke goes like this: A man was walking along the road one day when a genie stopped him and offered him a single wish.

“Well,” the man said, scratching his chin. “I’ve always wanted a bridge to Hawaii.”

“A bridge to Hawaii?” The genie’s jaw went slack.

“I hate flying,” the man explained. “But I love the islands. Imagine how often I could travel to Hawaii if there was a bridge from here to there.”

The genie began to sweat. “Have you considered how much steel is involved in something like that? What kinds of supports that type of bridge would need to sustain the force of the Pacific?” The genie

Be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Always keep yourselves united in the Holy Spirit, and bind yourselves together with peace.

EPHESIANS 4:2-3

drew a deep breath. “Isn’t there something else you’d rather have?”

The man pursed his lips and gazed into the sky. Then his eyes widened. “Actually, there is. I’ve always struggled with understanding women. I had trouble getting along with my sisters, my mother, and now my wife. If I could have one wish, it would be that I might really and truly understand women.”

The genie blinked twice. “You want that bridge two lanes or four?”

That’s the joke.

But the more I hear from women, the more I realize the truth is no laughing matter. At least from your vantage point.

In reality, we men are wired so differently that *we’re* the ones who need to be understood. You, after all, are born so attuned to personal interaction that you almost have a built-in relationship manual. Men, well, we’re a different species altogether, and you need to know why—especially if harmony with the man you love is what you desire.

Want to know why your husband is hard to talk to and sometimes insensitive, dominating, or driven? Curious about why he doesn’t seem interested in your

hobbies or friendships, why he doesn't respond to your desire to know about his day?

Keep reading. The secrets are just ahead.

Because of the limited space in this book, we'll need to generalize. Not every man will exhibit the characteristics I'll talk about—or perhaps not to the extreme I'll talk about—but a great many will.

WOMEN ARE FROM THE CLASSROOM; MEN ARE FROM THE PLAYGROUND

One of the simplest ways to note the differences between men and women is to watch them with their children. If you've ever left the children with Dad or watched your brother handle his children, you know what I'm talking about.

It isn't that men aren't loving and concerned; we are. Truly. It's just that the chemical differences in our brains mean we handle children in a fatherly, not motherly, fashion. Keep in mind that we're talking generalities here, but they are generalities that apply to the majority of guys.

A mom's day with the kids includes:

- neatly laid out clothing
- matching socks
- clean underwear
- clean hands and faces

- structured, timed activities all within predetermined safety standards
- planned meals pulling foods from all major food groups, including carrots and broccoli
- specific bedtimes
- chores and predetermined rules about running in the house and jumping on furniture
- a standard cleanup time that involves all children

A dad's day with the kids includes:

- mismatched clothes
- mismatched socks
- dirty clothes
- dirty hands and faces
- questionable, sometimes dangerous activities
- questionable food, including Twinkies, soda pop, and candy necklaces, moments before dinner
- loose bedtimes
- loose house rules
- few cleanup guidelines

Or, as Bill Cosby once said while imitating his children's reaction to a day alone with him, "Dad is great! Gives us that chocolate cake!"

Granted, the children love the idea of spending a day with Dad. The above activities make for a day filled with laughter and fond memories . . . and one that will

require two days of follow-up once Mom's back in the picture. One man I counseled put it this way:

"When my wife's gone and I'm alone with the kids, I like to have fun and play hard. I never understand why she's upset when she gets home. The kids are safe; we've had a good time. What's the problem?"

The problem is, when analyzed through the eyes of a woman, the actions of a man can seem careless, potentially dangerous, or almost childish. Would it amaze you to know that the man you love—this unique creation of God, whom you are trying to understand—might have a reason for the way he acts? Could there be a scientific basis for why he responds the way he does? Why he says the things he says? We'll get to

TEN MALE CHARACTERISTICS

Eighty percent of men exhibit these strongly male characteristics:

- Aggressive behavior
- Factual
- Less emotional or unemotional
- Not talkative
- Powerful
- Great desire to win
- Strong need to conquer
- Driven personality
- Not very sensitive emotionally
- Not very sensitive to physical touch

Nearly all these personality traits stem from the first characteristic: aggressive behavior.

that in just a minute. But first let's take a brief glimpse at the man's man hall of fame.

Scripps-Howard News Service, 1992—A Colorado man drove out of a gas station near Washington, Pennsylvania, and continued on through West Virginia and part of Ohio without realizing that his wife—the mother of their two children—was still back at the gas station in Pennsylvania. In Ohio, the man pulled over and—assuming everything was well in the back of the van—decided to take a nap. It was only ninety minutes later that he awoke and recognized the fact that his wife was no longer in the vehicle. At this point he turned around and began driving frantically back east on Route 70 getting as far as Wheeling, West Virginia, where he hit a deer. The crash damaged the van, so he hoofed it to a truck stop where a trucker helped reunite him with his wife.

This happened on Mother's Day.

Okay, so you believe me already. You could write stories of your own about strange situations or odd

**THE GOAL: LEARNING TO UNDERSTAND
THE MAN IN YOUR LIFE**

- Learn to talk to him
- Learn to share with him
- Learn to play with him
- Learn to live with him

behaviors exhibited by the man you love. The question is this: *Why are men so different?* And the answer is simple: testosterone.

THE BIG “T”

Evidence today suggests that physiology may shape a man’s personality and tendencies. What that means is *testosterone*.

A miraculous physiological occurrence happens to an unborn baby between the fifth and seventh week of development, and the outcome makes a vast difference in the male or female tendencies of that person. Baby-girl brains are very much like baby-boy brains until this point in fetal development. But this is what happens: Between the fifth and seventh week something like a faucet turns on inside both the masculine and feminine brain and drips microscopic amounts of testosterone onto the baby’s brain. Whereas the girls get a few drops here and there, the boys’ brains are fairly soaked in the stuff.

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We will refer to this male hormone as big T.

Testosterone makes people aggressive; there’s no way around this scientific truth. The principle even

holds among animals and has been proven in multiple experiments. When researchers inject monkeys with big T, the monkeys become so aggressive that they very nearly overpower their fellow monkeys. The female canary, which no longer sings once it has become an adult, will sing once more when injected with testosterone.

One study referenced in the book *Brain Sex* by Anne Moir and David Jessel showed that because of testosterone men are 50 percent more aggressive than the average female.¹ In addition, men are five times more likely than women to commit murder and twenty times more likely than women to commit a robbery.²

Male and female characteristics

The amount of big T that drips on the brain during fetal development will determine how strongly a child demonstrates certain characteristics typically considered male or female.

A brain soaked in testosterone is . . .

- assertive
- individualistic
- self-confident
- self-reliant
- competitive
- rough

- playful
- singly focused

A brain not soaked in testosterone is . . .

- nurturing
- considerate
- affectionate
- gentle
- compassionate for those in pain
- multiple-task minded
- emotional
- generous³

The amount of big T that washes over an unborn baby's brain is going to determine—at least in part—his or her personality as an adult. And there are a host of real-life situations that are affected by the fact that a man, in general, has more testosterone permeating his brain than a woman has.

What are some of the affected areas? We'll examine four: communication, intimacy, recreation, and daily routine. To begin with, let's take a look at the way men and women communicate.

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