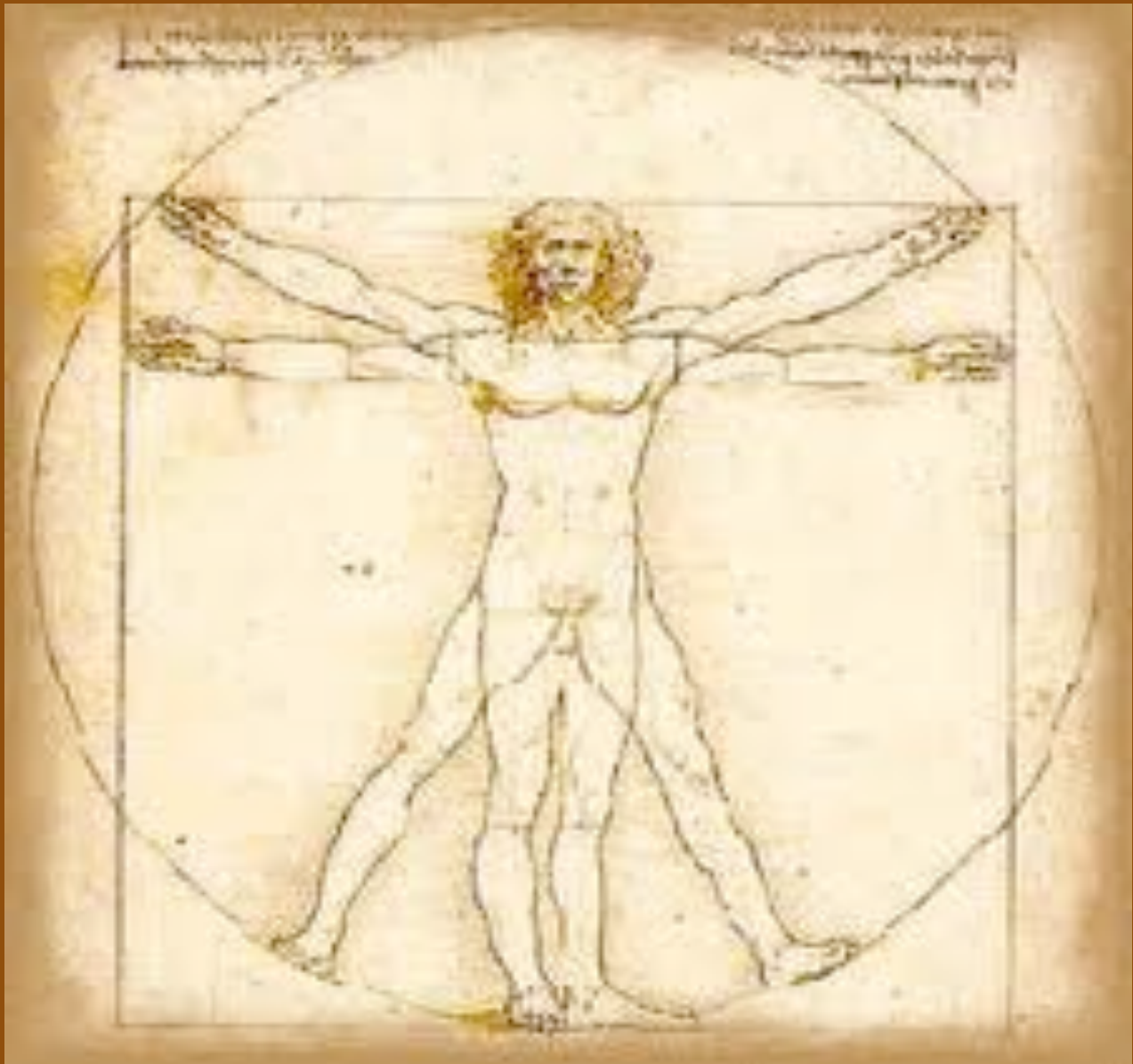
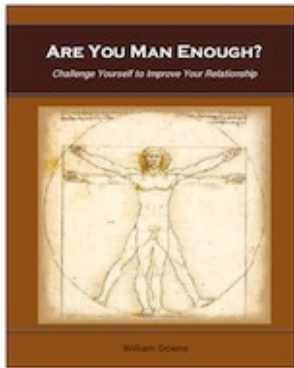


ARE YOU MAN ENOUGH?

Challenge Yourself to Improve Your Relationship



William Downs



Are You Man Enough is written by the layman for the layman. It is written by a man who has done the research and is sharing what he found with any man willing to listen to what he has found out and what he has to say.

Are You Man Enough?

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this book to the following people:

- ◆ My counselor Ray, who sat and listened, talked, gave counsel and made me look at myself through a different pair of eyes and made me think about what I needed to be.
- ◆ My brother Louis, for his support, love, and understanding. His encouragement helped me find myself and make myself whole again.
- ◆ Last but by no means least, Nancy, the love of my life, the woman that helped to inspire the book, and has inspired me to reach heights I did not know were possible. I love you!

A Word of Thanks

Although the names have been changed to protect anonymity, all quotes used in this book come from real people, most of which were made through personal contact via email and personal interviews.

I wish to thank all those who contributed to my research.

A Thought to Ponder:

All women's issues are to some degree men's issues and all men's issues are to some degree women's issues because when either sex wins unilaterally both sexes lose.

Warren Farrell

CHAPTER 2 - What is the Challenge?

In the introduction, I challenged you to see if you were willing to take one step forward to accept a challenge. The first step is to understand what that challenge is, and what it means to you.

It starts with what your idea of what defines "a man" is. That has an effect on what you think the challenge means to you.

Being a man isn't easy, especially since what defines a man's role has changed so dramatically in the last fifty years. Once you understand a man's roles and responsibilities, living up to the man's role can be difficult. We go through the process of being reshaped, maturing, and doing away with the little boy in exchange for all of what makes a man.

June, a state supervisor says, "I believe a man should be passionate, strong, reliable, compassionate, tender, understanding and respectful of others. He treats others how he wants to be treated, and is always forgiving." I find this to be a fairly common woman's response. Let's look a little closer to what she is saying.

Passionate is a word used to describe more than sensual behavior or sexual activity. It also means "expressing intense feelings." These can range from lust to passion about a hobby, from expressing your love for a person, to how you feel about a political ideology. The fact is men should be passionate on many levels.

Strong, another word I see in the female response. This means much more than physical strength. Physical strength is important to be sure, but it also means "having moral or intellectual power." This is a crucial part of what defines "a man" or what it means to be a man.

Reliable is another word often seen in the typical female responses I have collected. Another way to describe *reliable* is "dependable." When you say you will do something, go somewhere or meet

someone, honor your commitment and BE THERE. In our context it also means to be “available when needed.”

Compassionate is a word that comes up often with women, and it is often misunderstood. The word is defined as “sympathetic to other’s distress with a desire to alleviate it.” Notice there are two parts to the word, the feeling and a call to action. This should also be part of a man, as men are pre-wired with the power to take action.

Tender is a word that also comes up often. In this context it means “responding to or expressing the softer emotions.” Tenderness is one of the things that we, as men, are often told to suppress, yet it is one of the things women often seek in a man. We will discuss this more as the book starts to reveal itself.

“Understanding, respectful of others, treats others like he wants to be treated.” These words are self-explanatory. A man should try to understand and respect those around him, and treat them properly. No surprises here.

A similar viewpoint came from an unemployed 30 year old woman named Seanna who said, “Personally someone who will be there for me when I need them for support, who will take at least an hour a day to ask how I am doing, tell me about his day, and more importantly is not afraid to spend time with other people.”

This not only enforces the things said above, but adds the words *friend* and *companion* to the definition. This also reinforces the word *reliable* to what “a man” should be.

Terri, a software writer says, “my definition of a man - a real man - a real man is not ever afraid to show a genuine emotion including crying, is not afraid of making fun of himself or laughing at something he does, is loving and caring in such a way to make a woman feel she is THE most important person in his life, and does not feel that following the macho way is the only way to

prove you are a man. Also a great sense of humor is 1,000% important to me for me!”

Terri points out another aspect of what I saw from many women who replied to my queries. Most women want a man to show genuine emotion, something unpopular and unfamiliar among most men, especially those raised in a traditional environment.

The other aspect it points out goes back to being passionate and reliable. To be passionate includes making that special someone feel special and important. Believe me, any emotion you show will be given back to you and then some. That includes both the good and the bad.

So what do you define as a “real man”?

What do the men say that I asked this question to? Stoney, a communications technician said this: “Be a loving, caring husband, Dad & a Granddaddy because God will let you take the memories and your family to heaven.” Now if you believe in God or not makes no difference in our context. I say that because whether you believe in heaven or not, you will live on in your families memories if you treat them well.

Stoney is fairly typical of all the male responses I got. Unlike the women that responded, the men who did not respond as Rocky did responded in a cynical and even demeaning way. That alone speaks volumes.

The men who responded cynically were all men that have had trouble in relationships. I got responses like the one sent by Marty, a technician who responded, “you have to come across as a moron worthy of knowing and convince them you are worthy of staying with.” Marty shows all the signs of being emotionally unready or unavailable for a stable relationship. He is talking about blaming the woman he was with for their relationship not working out. I put to you, would a “real man” blame someone

else before looking inside first to examine what else might have gone wrong?

Herein lies the challenge. Are you man enough to look inside, to really look at yourself with the critical eye and really examine what may have gone wrong that you yourself could have avoided?

Once you get yourself to the point where you can answer “yes” to that question, you understand what “the challenge” really is.

Are you willing to examine yourself, not just in relationships but also in your day to day life? Can you be honest enough with yourself to really examine your behavioral patterns in a way that will create the positive change you desire?

**ARE YOU MAN ENOUGH TO CHANGE WHAT HAS TO BE CHANGED
IN YOURSELF TO GET THE RESULTS YOU WANT?**

*Every man must decide whether he
will walk in the light of creative
altruism or in the darkness of
destructive selfishness.*

Martin Luther King, Jr.

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CHAPTER 4 – Becoming Man Enough

Frank Liszt once said, “Real men are sadly lacking in this world, for when they are put to the test they prove worthless.”

This comment, made well over 100 years ago, is a sad commentary on the condition of men. Could it be that men have not evolved in the last 100 years? We all would like to think we have grown as a gender since then. Yet when I look around me at men today, I see the trouble in their relationships, especially with women. I see so many mistakes, things that would be so easy to change with a little thought, a little consideration, and a little common sense. I can say this because I had the troubles and made the mistakes too.

Men and women are not as different in their wants and needs as you may think. I go back to a quote from Seanna whom I quoted in Chapter 1. “Men and women are fundamentally the same. We have the same things that drive us...”

A noted psychologist discovered that males and females from childhood to adulthood are more alike than different on most psychological variables.

We have quit teaching The Golden Rule in schools. It says “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.” For the sake of this book, let’s paraphrase it to say “Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself.” That is especially true about women.

Women as a rule are more openly sensitive than men. Men tend to get angry where women tend to feel hurt about not being treated as they like to be.

This is where men, including myself, have failed. Having a good relationship is about respect, and respect of yourself is where it all starts. I am sure you have heard the saying, “No self-respecting man would do that!” What does that mean?

One definition of *self-respect* is “a sense of dignity”. The root of any relationship is this: you have to start with yourself! Treat yourself with dignity and respect and you will find it much easier to treat others the same way. Dignity suggests consciousness and self-control, also being worthy of honor. What I am suggesting is to show you are worthy of honor by using some self-control. If you want a relationship that will last, it all starts in you. You are the key to your future. You can rely on no other person.

After my second marriage crashed, I knew that I could not, I would not, put myself through that kind of emotional and financial pain again, and never again would I put myself in a position of feeling so alone, so foreign to everyone I knew. I took that time to get to know myself, find what needed to be changed, and did the work to be whole again.

This is what BECOMING MAN ENOUGH is all about. Doing the work on who and what you are is THE MOST IMPORTANT piece of the puzzle! I cannot emphasize this enough. The key to EVERY relationship in your life with ANYONE is YOU!

Look back on your past relationships. Look deeply at your role in all the relationships in your life, and BE HONEST with yourself. This is the part that can hurt, and can take some hard, honest self-evaluation. What worked FOR YOU? What did not work for you? If you could change something in that relationship, what would it be?

Accomplishing this might require a coach, a professional counselor, or someone you know and trust to be totally honest with you. I recommend a good quality relationship counselor because a counselor probably won't know you and can be totally objective. The important thing is to find someone to help you do the work. Do not rely on the counselor or friend for anything more than the information you need to change any shortfalls in yourself and how you react within a relationship, as they can only help you to access the information inside yourself. The change, or the ability to change, begins and ends with you.

One aspect of being a man and being masculine involves being a healer. Being a healer to yourself and your partner is probably a new concept to you. Within the dynamic of masculine and feminine energies, a powerful resource exists for healing areas of pain caused by old emotional or physical patterns. This type of healing is about becoming whole. You are going to need to learn how to be the healer, and to be masculine in that healing role. How can you be a healer if you are not healed? See [Recommended Reading](#) "Tantra: The Art of Conscious Loving" for additional information.

Take the time to heal yourself, take the time to grieve and evaluate past relationships. You must learn from your mistakes, heal yourself and move on so you can take on the role as a healer.

I was raised, as many of you may have been, with a father figure who taught me never to show pain or emotion. This makes the work I mentioned even harder because in admitting there is a problem, you seemingly have to admit you have a flaw, something inside you that is a weakness that needs fixed or cured.

This is where stepping up and being MAN ENOUGH comes into play. Are you strong enough to admit there is a problem? Are you MAN ENOUGH to seek the help you require? These are not easy things for the male ego to surrender too. The male ego hates admitting there is a problem or flaw, so you will have to be stronger than you ever have been, you will have to be MAN ENOUGH to put the ego in its place so the work can begin.

The root of the relationship is that you have to start with yourself! Treat yourself with dignity and respect and you will find it much easier to treat others the same way. Dignity suggests consciousness and self-control, also being worthy of honor. What I am suggesting is to show you are worthy of honor by using some self-control. If you want a relationship that will last, it all starts in you. You are the key to your future. You can rely on no other person.

CHAPTER 5 – Understanding Yourself

Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it.

Rumi

How many compromises do we make in our lives? My answer is simple: we make a lot of them. If you work for someone else, you have to compromise a lot. You may have to do things differently than how you would if you were working for yourself. We all know about compromise, we all make them. Sometimes we should refuse to compromise.

When it comes down to relationships, what compromises do we want or need to make?

This is a very good question. By the very nature of what a relationship is, some compromises are inevitable and desirable. Let's explore what compromises we do and do not want to make.

In answering this question, you should first ask yourself "what do I want from this relationship?" This really ties back to you, and why I propose that you are the basis for your relationships.

Alleen, a designer told me "I just made a list of things I had to have, a top 10 list. I told myself I would rather be alone than to do without the things on that list."

This is why knowing and respecting yourself is so important. You have to know what you positively have to have out of the relationship and what you cannot live without.

A leading relationship authority, Dr. Dennis O'Grady, had this to say: "The biggest hazard of being male, or more specifically, being socialized in a masculine way, is disconnection. Masculine socialization disconnects men from their inner lives, their bodies, their sexuality, and most importantly, their relationships. In short, it slowly erodes and eventually destroys their personal selves. Specifically, it results in alienation from their children, the objectification of women, disconnection from their bodies so they

lose touch with their physical selves, and in the area of sexuality, disconnection causes them to experience their penises as disconnected plumbing, rather than experiencing their sexual response and problems as a direct expression of who they are as people.”

To purchase Dr. O’Grady’s book, [click here](#).

What the doctor is saying here is that we become disconnected from who we are. This is why getting to know who and what you are is so important. You need to learn things about yourself, your personality, your likes and dislikes, and to get comfortable with your sexuality again.

Knowing about yourself is the basis of all the relationships you are going to have. There are things we not only want, but need from one another. We all have inherent weak and strong points in our characters and personalities. One way to fill those areas in a relationship is to find a partner that can enhance us and help us grow.

In looking for a partner, there are other areas to consider. For example, most of us have a sense of humor, to some it is more important than it is in other people. Do you want someone that has an identical sense of humor? How important is that to you?

Physical attraction is a big factor among men. Keeping in mind that beauty, yours and hers, fades with age, how important is that, and is it a quality that you can make secondary or not? Is this a quality that can become less important as you age together? Ask yourself just how important are looks to you. Physical attraction can and should be more than just “good looks”. It includes aspects like chemistry and compatibility. Since physical looks diminish over time, other aspects become more important. Always keep that in mind when you contemplate physical appearance.

Intelligence is another factor to consider. Just how smart do you want your future mate to be? Certainly you want them to be smart

enough to communicate with you as an equal since communication in a relationship is so important and is a cornerstone for the rest of the relationship. That should be a minimum requirement for all of your relationships.

How important is your belief system to you, whatever it may be? Do you have children? If so it is important for your future mate to love children.

Consider how physical and affectionate you are. Is it important to you to have someone as affectionate as you are? How important is having someone that likes to express their love to you with gifts or acts of service?

Another approach could be concluded from what Vicki had to say: "Well, first thing I noticed about [name withheld] was his eyes and long hair ... We are total opposites for sure. I think that is why we complement each other."

All the things we touched on here and a few more have come into play. Ask yourself again, what do I want and what do I have to have to make the next relationship everything I want it to be? It can be very beneficial to make a list of the things that are important to you in a relationship, ranking the most important "must have" traits at the top of the list, and putting the "like to have" traits further down the list. Then stay true to yourself by adhering to your list. I have included a list with some options for you on page 61 of this book.

Over the years, I have known many couples who were polar opposites and seemed to enhance each other very well. It all depends on you and what you want from a relationship.

I had a friend once that used to say "Become the love you seek." That is very simple yet very profound! How do you get that relationship going? You do that by becoming that lover you wish to find through incorporating the desired traits in to your own personality.

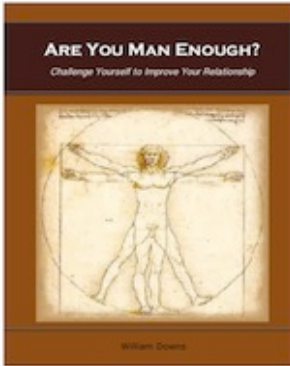
The bottom line is to get to know yourself, and to come to terms with what has not worked for you in the past. Come to terms with what you need, and what you positively have to get from your next relationship.

Prioritize how important certain attributes are to you in your next relationship, and most importantly, become the person you are looking for. Then you will attract the kind of person you want and need.

Next chapter, we will explore the woman's point of view to greater detail.

There are things we not only want, but need from one another. We all have inherent weak and strong points in all our characters and personalities. One way to fill those areas is to find someone that can enhance and help us grow in those areas.

BECOME the love you seek!



Are You Man Enough is written by the layman for the layman. It is written by a man who has done the research and is sharing what he found with any man willing to listen to what he has found out and what he has to say.

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