

## Love and Sex Prescription

By Jasbina Ahluwalia and Anju Mulchandani

### QUESTION

My question is related to what women can do about the intimidation factor. When men learn you are highly educated and successful, they can get very intimidated, so how does a strong, successful woman deal with that? It is so disheartening, especially after having worked so hard to achieve these goals.

### ANSWER by Jasbina Ahluwalia

I'm sorry to hear that you're feeling disheartened—that won't be of any help in the dating process. I think it's time for a mindset shift. I'd like to encourage you to confidently consider your educational and professional accomplishments as assets, as opposed to liabilities in your dating efforts. To help you get there, I'd like to share statistics you (and other highly accomplished readers) will find reassuring.

Nearly half of all single women believe their professional success is intimidating to the men they meet. However, a 2005 article in the *American Journal of Sociology*, based on a study of interpersonal relationships in 60 communities nationwide, concludes that women in positions of power are sexier to men than women in less powerful positions.



Photo by Camilo Morales

According to research by Christine Whelan, an Oxford-educated scholar of social history and author of *Marry Smart: The Intelligent Woman's Guide to True Love*:

- As many as 71% of high-achieving men said a woman's educational or career success makes her more desirable as a wife.
- As many as 92% of men who describe themselves as either "very successful" or "successful" say they are more attracted to women who are successful in their careers.
- As many as 89% of high-achieving men say they'd like to marry, or have already married, a woman who is as or more intelligent than they are.
- As many as 68% of single high-achieving men report that they would like to marry a woman who is as committed to her career as they are to theirs.

Now are some guys turned off or intimidated by successful women? Absolutely! So just don't waste your valuable time with those guys. Given the findings above, there are many guys out there who will view your accomplishments favorably. The good news is that it is a myth that men are generally turned off by successful women. The bad news is that this myth can insidiously become a self-fulfilling prophecy for successful women who believe it to be true.

By buying into this myth, some successful women can be their own worst detractors in dating. If men were generally turned off by women's success, there would not be much that women with high educational and/or professional aspirations could do (apart from lowering their standards for themselves). Consider the possibility that successful women, who become anxious about turning men off, may give off negative or desperate vibes, and that those women's own attitude, rather than success, may be what is actually repelling men. Given that our attitudes are under our control, we can do something about them.

Below are some concrete things successful women can do:

- Let men know what you do in a confident and not arrogant manner.
- Transition into discussions about non-work-related topics and interests.
- Ask men about what they do, both professionally and for fun.
- Actively listen and show interest in the guy's responses.
- Make time in your busy life for guys so they know they will be a priority and not always take a second-seat to your career.

#### Advertisement

Jasbina Ahluwalia is the founder of [Intersections Matchmaking](http://www.IntersectionsMatch.com), the first elite, personalized Matchmaking firm for South Asian singles nationwide.

As a former practicing lawyer with a graduate degree in philosophy, Jasbina can relate first-hand to the demands and challenges facing her accomplished clients. As a second-generation Indian-American, Jasbina has a unique understanding of the successful blending of South Asian and American cultures.

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Finally, keep in mind that certain demeanors or traits that may be perceived in a positive light in certain professional settings may be perceived in a negative light in personal relationships. Examples include being particularly non-conciliatory and hard-driving.

Best Wishes!

### QUESTION

My husband is in love with his blackberry! It always bothered me, and I never really knew what to do about it, but it's getting worse and worse. It's true that he is doing work a lot of the time, so if I ever say anything, he gets defensive and says that it's important. But I know that he isn't expected to respond as frequently or as quickly as he does. And I know that it's not always work; he uses it to text his friends, too. It's driving me insane. What can I say to get through to him?

### ANSWER by Anju Mulchandani

There is a dark side to the admittedly useful blackberry, hence the nickname "crackberry." This addiction can be identified by constantly checking emails and texts, answering phone calls at inappropriate times and needing to always have the device within reach. Like any addiction, it can impede a healthy relationship.

Significant others, like yourself, often feel like they are competing with the device for attention (I know plenty of women who have a name for their husband's blackberry!). Of course, when you do express your frustration, the response you get is, "But I need it for work." It's hard to come up with a counter for that argument; after all, blackberries are very helpful for getting information quickly, and really are often necessary for work. But with email pinging into your pocket 24 hours a day, there's a compulsion to keep on top of it and never switch off from work mode to relaxation mode. And let's be honest, not all the messages that come in are equally important.

Your husband may never fully understand your frustration with his blackberry, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't have a conversation about it and come up with a compromise. Explain to him that you are not trying to ruin his career, but his constant blackberry usage affects his ability to be present and engage when you are spending time together. You don't have to be incredibly needy to want some one-on-one time. Even if it's just watching TV together, you should be able to share something and not have to repeat it to a distracted husband!

While there is no 12-step program, you might try proposing a plan to set some limitations. Here are a few possibilities:

- Make your bedroom technology free. Get rid of anything that uses technology, except for your alarm clock. Bedrooms should be an oasis for sleep and sex.
- Whether eating in or dining out, no blackberries, cell phones, computers or other tech devices should be used.
- Assign specified blocks of time each day as non-blackberry hours, except for important phone calls.
- When you and your husband go on outings to spend time together, ask him to put away the blackberry.

Remind him that relationships are more fragile than technology, and hopefully he will be able to stick to the plan!

Have a question for our Love and Sex expert? Enter it here and your question might be answered in the next issue!

Send e-mail

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