

How a Man Can Tell if a Woman Loves Him, According to Sir Walter Raleigh

Not long ago, I overheard a middle-aged male mention his obliviousness in college to how many girls were probably interested in him. Contrary to what some may think, his comment wasn't necessarily sexist or egotistical; it was simply an observation of how clueless men are to the signals women give that they are actually interested in a guy.

This conversation came to mind when I ran across a letter from Sir Walter Raleigh to his son contained in the book, [*Practical Wisdom: Letters to Young Men*](#). Besides giving advice on friendship and wise living, Raleigh wrote several interesting paragraphs on love and marriage. Raleigh cautioned his son to avoid choosing a wife solely on her physical merits, for marrying for beauty, he said, binds a man to that which "perchance will neither last nor please thee one year."

Instead, Raleigh advised his son to find a woman who truly loved him, a fact which would be displayed by the following two indicators:

"[F]irst, if thou perceive she have a care of thy estate, and exercise herself therein; the other, if she study to please thee, and be sweet unto thee in conversation, without thy instruction; for love needs no teaching nor precept."

What's that mean in plain English? In essence, the woman who truly loves a man will not be seeking after her own needs, but will instead be looking out for his. And it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that this works the same way for a man who truly loves a woman!

[Statistics](#) show that increasingly large percentages of today's young people will never marry, and such percentages are likely caused by a number of factors. But when we view them in light of Raleigh's advice for a loving marriage, is it possible that the current generation's self-interest and focus on themselves is a prime reason behind the decline of marriage?

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