

Are You Making Requests or Demands in Your Relationship?



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Prince William canceled an important appearance to stay home with his wife, the Duchess of Cambridge, while she dealt with a second round of severe morning sickness. Many times you want your partner to support you, but work or personal needs take priority. So what was different in this situation, and how can you communicate your needs to your partner? Sometimes, it is all in how you ask.

You know what it's like to have something demanded of you, right? From the time we were little kids and we were told to wash our hands and look people in the eyes, to our romantic relationships when we're told to get the dry cleaning or to make that dinner reservation, we know it doesn't feel very

good. If anything, it puts you on the defensive and makes you not want to do something. So imagine how your partner feels when you tell them to clean the house or take the dog for a walk. Who wants to do something nice for someone when they are forced to do it?

In my book *What About Me? Stop Selfishness From Ruining Your Relationship*, I talk about this as being one of the important rules of engagement.

Learn how to make a request rather than a demand.

To put it simply, ask nicely. This will tell your partner that you respect them, and will give them the opportunity to make a choice. When you make a demand of your partner, they often feel manipulated and controlled by you because they feel they have to do what you are telling them to do. So rather than being cooperative, they'll be resentful. When you make a request, however, it gives your partner the freedom to make their own decision about the task at hand and lead them to, hopefully, decide to follow through because they want to please you. It gives your partner the chance to take ownership of whatever it is you are asking of them.

In the end, it allows you to have a conversation about what you want to get done, and offers the opportunity to have a give and take. It also lets you move away from a parent-child dynamic and into an equal partnership, which is where every healthy and happy relationship should be.