

Hungry for intimacy

Are you holding back?

**RELATIONSHIPS**
With Joanne Wilson

YOU know when you're out and really hungry? You try to ignore it, hope somebody notices and offers a snack? Maybe you just wait to see if it subsides before you pass out?

No?

What about when you're a guest, ridiculously thirsty and just hope it sorts itself out before your mouth turns into a cocky's cage and you can't speak?

Still no?

The reason is somewhat obvious. Not communicating that you're hungry or thirsty is a bad idea. You can die if you hold those sorts of needs in for too long. Even if you're one of those who don't like to bother others, chances are the discomfort you feel when your hunger or thirst gets bad enough will override your politeness and you'll do something to help yourself – or ask.

Now let's apply this kind of thinking to a relationship. Grab a drink and stay with me on this one.

Everyone has a history, and sometimes they're 'Horrible Histories'. Sequential life setbacks can leave emotional scars. They can even make us cynical, pessimistic, and give up entirely on the idea of ever finding love. Every new failure can become a brick in the wall between you and other people.

Once that wall is up, one of two things happen: either you refuse to let other people through that wall, or refuse to let yourself *out* of it. Now you're withholding love. You try to protect yourself from getting hurt. This is not the best recipe to constructing a delectable relationship. The lack of communication creates assumptions, drama, confusion and a feeling of insecurity. Your cake will flop! You're now keeping back the one thing a relationship needs to thrive: intimacy. It's



► Start by sharing a conversation in the kitchen.

like purposefully leaving out the eggs that binds it all together.

Withholding love is to a relationship what withholding the fact you're hungry is to living; it's not going to end well.

10 red flags you might be withholding love

You reject feedback and your reflex is to blame your partner.

Complimenting your spouse is uncomfortable.

Despite knowing their love language, you're unable to meet their needs.

Conflict means you are silent and emotionally unavailable.

It's easier to criticise than to find positives in your partner.

Activities such as work, volunteering, social media, internet, books and other friends take priority over quality relationship time.

You avoid sex or do not actively participate.

Porn has become an addiction as it doesn't require emotional attentiveness.

Authentic feeling words are off topic.

You exhibit controlling behaviours around finances.

What can you do about it?

If you're displaying such hangry-like symptoms above, here are some questions. Being truthful and honest with your answers will help you start to see not just *what* you're withholding, but may give some insight into *why*.

■ What profound, beautiful and joyful thought have you not shared with your partner?

■ Can you recall an experience that was so poignant, fantastic, or gratifying that you didn't know how to talk about it?

■ When do you feel a little aggravated and critical and what behaviours do you exhibit?

■ Are you afraid of the response when you sincerely share with vulnerability?

■ Do you feel the right to assertively ask for what you need in your relationship?

■ What is your self-talk as a result of soul destroying words from any previous relationships?

■ Have you found peace and freedom from forgiving either yourself or others for betrayal, disappointment and grief?

You'd be surprised what you can learn and achieve through some serious introspection.

Hopefully now you have something meaty in your tucker bag to know:

■ What you're missing out on by withholding love.

■ How to recognise the signs.

■ Prompts for self-reflection to adjust your responses and enjoy a quenching and satiating relationship.

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