

Sylvia Gearing, Ph.D.

# Woman-Sense Rules!

## The Spiritual Woman's Guide to Finding Yourself When You Didn't Know You Were Missing

Plano's own Sylvia Gearing, Ph.D., has one thing Dr. Phil doesn't have – woman-sense! The well-known author, psychologist, and TV medical expert introduces woman-sense in her latest book, *Woman-Sense Rules!*

"Having woman-sense means drawing on that sacred part of a woman's spirit that assists us on many levels ... that intuition," Gearing said. "It's that sacred part of our mind and feelings we draw upon at the most extraordinary times, often in a crisis."

In *Woman-Sense Rules!*, medical research, real-life stories, and journaling exercises revolve around "50 rules to avoid missing the best years of your life."

The best years of Gearing's life began in 1983 when she moved to Plano, married Milt Gearing, Ph.D, and had two sons, Charlie and Chris. The Gearings co-founded Gearing Up in 1986, a consulting clinic located off Independence Parkway and Parker Road.

Gearing has been a practicing psychologist for 20 years. She attended Duke University and received a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at the University



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of Texas Southwestern Medical School. For her post-doctoral work, she studied at the Masterson Institute in New York City.

No doubt, esteemed teachers and colleagues influenced Gearing's career, but her mother, to whom she dedicates the book, has influenced Gearing's life the most.

Ruth Scott had various discussions with her daughters, Sylvia and Rebecca, when they were little girls ... discussions on body image, intuition, and love. Each time Mrs. Scott bestowed some "bit of wisdom" or life-lesson to her daughters, she'd say, "Girls, you can write that down in your little book."

Of course that was years before Gearing had written any book. "I'd say, 'what book? There's no book!'" Gearing laughs.

That "book" was her heart.

Now, Gearing opens her heart to women across the country; and, she urges them to do the same when she asks

one critical question: "Are you missing from your own life?"

Many women feel they ought to be married by 25, have children by 30, and be an established working woman by 40. But Gearing believes that a person's success doesn't unfold on his or her own timeline. "Nationally, the average age to get married is 26-27 for women and 27-28 for men," she said. "The higher you go in education, the later you marry. For those with graduate education, Ph.D.s, and M.D.s, the national average age of marriage is now 30 and rising." To Gearing, though, a timeline doesn't dictate a happy relationship.

Gearing offers rules in her book to guide women toward happy relationships. Rule #14 "Relationships are like Houses" compares a new relationship to a new house with two large vans full

of furniture. Each van is filled with each partner's past experiences. "All their core beliefs about relationships are stored in those vans," Gearing said. "As the couple fills their new 'house' together, they must compromise and negotiate the fundamentals of the relationship. They must negotiate 'the psychological furniture' of relating as they build a new life together."

Sorting baggage (no pun intended) may uncover differences between partners. Gearing said that 70 percent of differences between partners will never change during a lifespan of a marriage. Her and her husband's goal at Gearing Up is to teach their clients "how to have a conversation around those differences."

"The most successful couples learn over time to overlook any negatives. They are very aware of what is a shortcoming in their partner," she said. "They achieve a state of mind in which they choose to step over shortcomings and not dwell on them. ... No person is perfect."

Perhaps that is one of the biggest mistakes women make in a relationship – expecting her partner to be "perfect." Although Gearing suggests, "The biggest mistake a woman makes in a relationship is to love her partner the same way she wants to be loved."

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And it goes the same way for men. Said Gearing, "Men and women unknowingly make the same mistake in love. We love and cherish one another according to *our* interpretation of what communicates love."

Gearing Up has a scientific formula to help couples create a strategy for love called Cherish Codes. These codes define different ways a person wants to be loved. "Marriages have personalities. There's really no set standard for what makes people happy," said Gearing. "There are, however, characteristics in happy marriages that stand out from marriages that are just mediocre."

How a woman views herself could

make or break a relationship. According to Rule #10 "Your Relationship is a Direct Reflection of How You Feel about Yourself," women choose men based on their own self-image. If a woman believes she is inadequate or undeserving, for example, she'll find a man who fits this formula, according to Gearing.

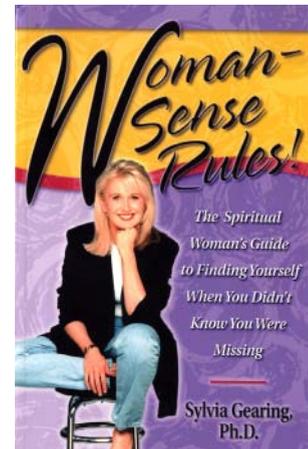
But finding "Mr. Right" can add years to a woman's life. Research in *Woman-Sense Rules!* has revealed that a satisfying long-term relationship is linked to health benefits. Gearing calls this the "marriage effect." "For women, the 'marriage effect' only applies in a happy marriage. We risk our physical and psychological health if we remain in an unhappy situation because our bodies absorb the tension and disappointment. Over time, our immunity is eroded and we suffer tremendously. ... Men, if in a dissatisfying marriage, have a better ability to compartmentalize unhappiness."

Women are generally more relational than men, which may be why women are more likely to suffer from depression. "Women are more than twice as likely to suffer from depression than men," said Gearing. "According to the National Institute of Mental Health, approximately 13 million American women are suffering

from depression today."

Will this statistic decline as more and more women say "I do" to woman-sense? "Woman-sense comes into play in a variety of different ways but I think it's one of the guiding lights in our civilization," said Gearing. "It's just coming into its own."

*Gearing can be seen on Saturdays at 8:15 a.m. and Wednesdays at 6:40 a.m. on CBS 11. She is currently working with Cindy Lee Webster, an award-winning artist and spiritual teacher, on a third book called Masterful Women, Abundant Lives. For more information on Gearing or on Gearing Up, visit www.gearingup.com.*



### Excerpt from pages 102 - 106

Woman-Sense Rule #15 "Couplinks - the Nine Secrets to Passionate Sex and Love" (A brief description for each Couplink is available in *Woman-Sense Rules!*)

"Every year I see dozens of road-weary couples who struggle to keep their families together while their marriages erode beneath them. They are locked into a pattern of tolerating their marriage rather than enjoying it. Their most satisfying relationships exist outside the unhappy marriage, like small outposts on the frozen arctic tundra. Most often, they have an unstated financial deal—they make more money together than apart. Although each partner may have harbored pain and resentment for years and even considered divorce on several occasions, they have avoided the attorney's office as long as possible.

The best defense you have against divorce is Couplinks. ... These Couplinks are the essential head and heart connections that weave a committed relationship together day in and day out. ... They are not listed in any order of priority even though some may be more important than others to you."

Link One: Sex Link

Link Two: Community Link

Link Three: Sharing Link

Link Four: Complementary Link

Link Five: Fun Link

Link Six: Cherish Codes Link

Link Seven: Trust Link

Link Eight: Altruism Link

Link Nine: Spiritual Link