



## Direct Answers

from Wayne & Tamara  
**Untrainable**

I have been in a relationship for a year and we now live together. After about six months I realized there was a communication problem between my boyfriend, Jack, and me.

He believes, when expressing a problem, there is nothing wrong with negative criticism. He uses such words as thoughtless, careless and selfish to express himself. He claims I am responsible for responding appropriately regardless of what he says. He calls this the "harsh truth."

He claims if he says anything that hurts my feelings, I need to remember he didn't mean to hurt me. It's just that "truth hurts." Jack does not agree with my feeling that his criticism is hateful, belittling and hurtful. It's my opinion you can express yourself without verbally attacking the other person. Hurtful criticism only creates more problems, which it has.

We started counseling, but Jack does not believe this is a shared problem with communication, or that we must work on it together if our relationship is to succeed. He believes he has excellent communication skills and I am the sole problem. He believes I am overly sensitive and need to learn in counseling how to receive criticism appropriately.

Jack believes in a healthy relationship, you each take turns "conceding" to your partner's demanded solution to a problem, even if you have a different opinion. Is this how problems are solved in a relationship?

### Autumn

Autumn, the biologist E.O. Wilson was fascinated by the behavior of one colleague at Harvard. This man was notoriously weak in research and teaching. But he was a master of dominance. At faculty meetings he would arrive early. As each person entered, he would look at him or her in a patronizing manner. When the meeting began, this man would address the chairperson as if he were spokesman for the entire group, and demand to know something.

He followed an unspoken rule: don't explain yourself, take ownership of a space as if it belongs to you, and treat others as your inferiors. Wilson said this man's performance always reminded him of a chimpanzee in the wild.

You had the wherewithal to bring Jack into counseling, which is good. But Jack may have picked you as a person he could dominate, which is bad. He is looking for women to abuse, but luckily, you've had the means to withstand him.

From his point of view, he has a problem. He needs to get you over the hump from fighting verbal abuse to accepting it. He's a verbal batterer trying to teach you how to take a punch, and he builds himself up by tearing you down. It gives him satisfaction.

Constructive criticism never includes insults. But constructive criticism is not his aim. That's why you need to ask yourself why you stay with a man who does something you know is wrong. If there is a role for counseling here, it's for individual counseling, for you, to answer that question. David Byrne, the lead singer of the Talking Heads, said, "You will never find the other ocean if you never leave the shore." You are looking for that other ocean. It's time to leave the shore. You need to be with a man who respects you, which means you need to respect yourself and guard your dignity. No. Only two letters but so much power. Don't explain or justify yourself. Just learn to use the word. On him. There is a harsh truth here. Jack acts like a chimp, and he can't be domesticated.

Wayne & Tamara

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## WHAT ARE VITAMINS ?

Vitamins are biochemical substances required by the body in minute trace amounts for normal function. Nearly all are co enzymes in a biochemical cascade essential to life. They can be divided into two groups - water soluble and fat soluble. The water soluble vitamins are groups B and C. Fat soluble groups are ADEK. A mnemonic I always remembered by thinking of them as a character in Star Wars!

I have previously talked about vitamin C in this newspaper column so rather than duplicate please go to my website [www.medicusherbis.com](http://www.medicusherbis.com) to review it. The group of vitamins which fall under B are 1,2,3,5, 6, 12, folic acid, biotin, choline, inositol. All these compounds are water soluble and found in similar food sources. They also work together. For example to get adequate iron uptake you need sufficient B12 and folic acid. It is very rare to find someone deficient in B vitamins (except B12) and there are few symptoms to indicate a deficiency. Interestingly, part of the pathology of Alzheimer's disease is a continuous deficiency of B vitamins over a prolonged period of time say 30 years. Maybe there is more deficiency than is appreciated and we simply do not have the evidence. B vitamin deficiencies commonly arise from alcoholics, those who eat junk food, consume certain drugs, contraceptives, anti biotics, and pregnant ladies. For those of you who read my last article on Alcohol will now start to appreciate why those who consume more than 4 glasses of wine a week are likely to be deficient in B vitamins. Alcohol has a high affinity with water and B vitamins are water soluble so it results in less available of important key nutrients in the body's tank. All water soluble vitamins are not stored in any quantity in the body - they are excreted automatically if there is too much unlike the fat soluble vitamins.

Vitamin B1 is also known as thiamine. Beriberi is a wasting disease caused by lack of B1. In the past in the Far East when polished rice (white) was considered a luxury and consumed in favour of brown then beri beri developed as the outer brown husk of rice contains B1. Refined and processed foods tend to not have any B1 - peas and lentils are a better option.

Vitamin B2 or riboflavin is similar to B1 but plays a more important role in the liver; it is widely available in whole cereals, meats and vegetables. Although water soluble it dislikes light so leaving your bowl of leafy green veggies out in light will destroy it.

Vitamin B3 otherwise known as nicotinic acid has specific effects on cholesterol metabolism. A typical deficiency of B3 results in Pellagra. People who rely on corn for a large part of their diet often suffer from a lack of B3. The major sources of B3 are beef, whole grains and fish. Those with hyperthyroidism and Crohn's disease can be deficient in this vitamin

Vitamin B5, pantothenic acid is widely distributed in food sources, but we still are not aware of the precise levels needed for human health.

Vitamin B6. This is a much more familiar vitamin to the general public and it is critical for the absorption of protein and the formation of DNA. Any deficiency of this vitamin will result in an immediate negative effect on mood and behaviour. Vitamin B6 is necessary for the formation of B3 and the metabolism of certain minerals in the body. It is easily consumed with meats, fish, eggs, leafy greens, nuts and seeds.

Vitamin B12 - probably the most well known of all of the vitamins and the one which is critical in those who suffer from pernicious anaemia. It is only found in animal based foods which means that vegetarians are likely to be chronically deficient. I was taught it was most likely to be found in the elderly, those with grey hair and blue eyes! In practice I have not found this to be the case. Deficient patients come in all shapes and sizes!!

Folic acid goes hand in hand with B12 and is stored in the liver usually sufficient for 4 months in a healthy person. Like B12 it is critical for the nervous system. Again it is found in eggs and leafy greens but much can be destroyed by cooking. Enjoy your salads!

Biotin is needed in very minute trace amounts and hardly ever justifies the use of a supplement devoted to the B vitamin. Scaly dermatitis is often a symptom but as it is widely distributed in food sources supplementation is unlikely to be needed.

Choline is a constituent of lecithin but there is virtually no literature describing deficiency states in humans as the production is likely to be sufficient in most people. For a time it was touted as a benefit in dealing with high cholesterol but I have not seen any evidence to support this.

Inositol is also involved in fat metabolism with high levels found in diabetics and those with kidney diseases - almost certainly as a result of years of inappropriate diets and alcohol.

As previously mentioned one of the effects of a lack of specifically all the B vitamins over time is Alzheimers' and Dementia. All those who drink alcohol to excess will be deficient in B vitamins. The lack of B vitamins has also been heavily implicated in those with psychological disorders and neurodegenerative diseases. A much more common association is the link with Diabetes types 1 & 2. When metformin is given to patients it has the side effect of inhibiting the absorption of B12. Over time this has huge side effects on cognitive function and replicating DNA. It is no surprising mortality data shows close associations with Alzheimers and Diabetes and Cancer. For more on this link please see my website. The moral of the story is to eat a well rounded home cooked diet and you are unlikely to be deficient in B vitamins.

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## Geraniums: Make Those Insect Pests Bug Off



Geraniums are brightly-colored perennial flowers that are known to repel insects. They bloom in spring and last

throughout the summer, until the first frosts of fall.

Why do Geraniums Repel Insects?

Geraniums repel insects due to the oils that the plant secretes. One of these natural oils is citronella, which is widely used in bug repellants and candles to drive away insects.

The plant belongs to the genus pelargonium and is commonly known to discourage mosquitoes, Japanese

beetles, cabbage worms, rose chaffers and leafhoppers.

How to Use Geraniums in Your Home

Geraniums deter bugs from social areas and repel insects from other plants. Place them in planters on windowsills or in pots around a porch to keep bugs at bay. Plant them in flower beds and vegetable gardens to fend off insects from other plants like roses, grapes, corn and cabbage.

There are a variety of geraniums to choose from, including:

- Zonal
- Fancy-Leafed
- Regal
- Stellar
- Scented

Zonal, fancy-leafed and regal thrive in pots in sun-filled areas. If using the repellent agent for other plants, stellar and scented varieties are a good choice as they do not grow as tall and need less sunlight than other geraniums.

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