



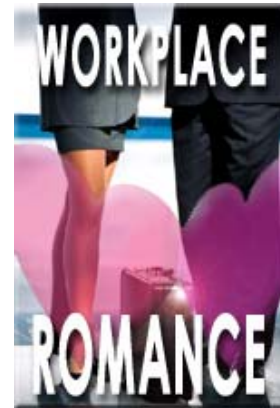
## WORKPLACE ROMANCE

# FEELING FEMININE

## FOR THE FIRST TIME

Dear Couples Company

Let me first explain my situation which is quite unique...I have been married for quite a few years and my husband has in no uncertain terms, and over the course of our marriage, hinted that he is gay (I had had the feeling that was the case from the time we first met-although he has never been with another man and has never officially come ""out of the closet""). We do have children and that is the main reason I stay in the relationship. We do care for each other very much, but since about 3 years ago, it has been a celibate relationship.



My husband has never really had any sexual attraction for me throughout our relationship (he didn't even KISS me until our wedding night) and on top of that now takes several medications that considerably lower his libido. I have been content with the relationship up until a couple of months ago when I met a young man at work who I took an immediate liking to (the hormones came into play on this one). Most of my years of working I have been in a mostly female work environment and have never given a second thought to another man. But as soon as this person was introduced to me and he smiled and shook my hand, my hormones took a turn for the unexpected.

At first, I really didn't give it much thought. I thought he was attractive and very nice and that maybe he was attracted to me by the way he would choose to talk with me on breaks, or make it a point to talk with me on other occasions and the way he would always make a point of giving a big smile and saying hello whenever he passed me - these were small things granted, but done in such a way that it was sort of flirtatious. Now I haven't had much experience with the dating game or relationships, but you know it just struck me as being very sexy and intriguing in an innocent sort of way. The more I talked with him and saw him; the more and more flirtatious I got with him too. And before I knew it my hormones were raging!! Another twist on this whole situation is that although I think of myself as an attractive woman, I didn't think he could even be attracted to me since I'm 20 years older!! (Although people are surprised when I tell them my age and most think I look 10 and sometimes 15 years younger). He's 23, so I'm sure he can tell that I'm older, just not HOW MUCH older! So, now my womanly side of me is thinking about this guy constantly. I'm online looking up websites on relationships, men, flirting, you name it and I've looked for it.

Finally it came to a head for me...I was making myself look very feminine and dressing a little more provocative, I was doing all the flirting and attracting body language that I could without being blatantly forward at the workplace, I went out of my way to see him, and it was all I could do to keep him from my mind. And we know the kind of thoughts that can happen when you let your mind go! During this time he (or so it seemed) seemed to cool down some; either that or I was so heated up that it seemed like he did, although he still seemed comfortable around me. I was really surprised at what I did next - I asked him for his email address, which he gave me quite freely, and then about a week after that asked him if he wanted to have lunch together (we work at an evening job together so lunch would be outside of work). I'm definitely not someone who puts herself out on a limb like that, but there it was and I couldn't stop myself. I figure if these thoughts were going to go continually go through my mind that I might as well see how they would play out in reality - my thought being you only live once and I'm too old to be playing the shy young thing. I also ""knew"" that if anyone was going to make the first move that it would probably have to be me since he knew that I was married. During this entire time I'm not thinking about my husband and what effect this could have on him either. I'm just feeling more feminine and sensual than I have ever felt in my life!! A couple of days later, he emailed me back saying he didn't feel comfortable meeting me outside of work.

But not to feel like I couldn't still talk with him at work. I didn't take this hard, I appreciated his honesty and told him so and that I understood and everything was ""cool"". Since then though (I'm sure you've already probably guessed) he does seem a little more uncomfortable around me - he is a very confident male so we still talk and he is still very nice to me, but the flirting has cooled down and I have tried to make sure I don't make him feel uncomfortable by flirting too much with him either. The problem is that I still can't get him out of my mind and he did tell me that the main reason he didn't feel comfortable having lunch was because he had had a bad experience with another coworker.... it wasn't even the married thing that was the main reason! (Or at least that's what he said) I'm DYING to let him know about the marriage (or lack thereof) I have with my husband, only so that he'll know that it's OK to want to be around me. I think he is still attracted and would go out with me if these things were brought out, but I don't want to tell him this if it isn't the right time and scare him off either. And although it's a little uncomfortable for me now at work because I don't know what he's thinking, and don't want to push anything, I would STILL like to have a relationship with him because I feel so good when I'm around him, so feminine and sensual, which, although I have tried to have that with my husband it has never worked.

The problem is that those things that made me feel good around him - the flirting and such - have all but stopped. I know I could get all kinds of advice about my marriage, but I'm not sure where that is heading at this point.

What I really want is to know the best way to go about getting back to the stage where I and my coworker are flirting and enjoying each other's company (if there is such a way to do that). I need advice on how to make him more comfortable around me and that I'm still a ""safe"" person to flirt with and have fun with even though I've asked him to lunch - I mean it was only lunch and it didn't even happen! And eventually I'd like to know how

to get to the point where I eventually and completely drive him crazy, so that he can't stop thinking about me and would have a relationship with me coworker or not. Another shocker to me is that a good portion of me really does want to just have a sexual relationship with him, but I've never let on to that and I'm not sure he would be open to that (it's just a feeling-could I be wrong?). And that opens up another question...since I think I would be ok with simply a sexual relationship with this person, is there a way to let him know that without completely scaring or turning him off? I don't follow him around like a puppy, I don't act desperate around him, I don't email him anymore or act like a lovesick individual nor do I think I'd be that way at work if we did have a sexual relationship (or any relationship for that matter). I'm a very self-confident woman, so to keep myself at bay at work wouldn't be that difficult for me. I'm simply wanting to cultivate a relationship with this man where ever it may lead because I like these feelings I get around him and need the best advice I can get considering all of the circumstances surrounding me. Please no advice on the marriage – I'd have written one of the other advice experts if I wanted that.

*Samantha (F) 43  
Raleigh, NC*

Dear Samantha,

You married before you were a woman, to a man who could not help you become a woman. Your husband clearly is not the kind of man who knows how to make you feel special, feminine or sexy. You also came from a family that did not do these things for you, or you would never have married a man who wouldn't kiss you until you're wedding day. You settled for less than most women would accept. Now that you've experienced some of those feminine feelings, you of course want more.

Most women have crushes in their teens, discover what it's like to be looked at and experience a first love with the devastating void that follows when it all ends. By having these experiences, teenage girls become familiar with their feelings, learn to manage them and discover how and when to express them. You came from a family that didn't make you feel special, married early and missed experiencing the feelings you have now. With this young man, you feel young and it's as if the process of emotionally becoming a woman has started anew for you.

Whether you want to get this man back, or write the experience off as part of growing up, my advice to you would be the same: back way off. If he is to come around again, it'll only be because he deems you safe again, and that may take months. The more you try to get his attention at this point the more you will push him away.

It goes without saying that you are not respecting your husband in all this. You may not have noticed that you're also not respecting the young man either. He's gone through a painful experience of getting involved with someone at work. It's painful because after the break-up you re-experience the heartache, abandonment or betrayal every day when you see them at work. He's learned that some behavior carries the risk of immense consequences, and he's asked you to respect his position.

Following your feelings could lead to the ending of your marriage, endangering your children to that break-up. It could compromise one or both of your jobs depending on your employer and work culture. Or, it could merely be a fling that leaves you both uncomfortable seeing each other at work.

If you're still hoping to create in real life the fantasy you have in your head, patience is your friend. A slow re-establishment of your prior relationship may come if you act indifferent and take things at whatever speed he sets. It's all about letting him approach you instead of you taking the lead. He might, and he might not. But it's your only chance at fantasy fulfillment.

Your other option is to back off, learn to control your feelings and even speak to yourself about what is and isn't in your long-term best interest, and gain some personal growth and maturity. If you do this, he may come back and be flirtatious. Then you can enjoy those feelings you seek again, possibly without taking them so seriously and again having a great time at work. <END>

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It is Couples' Company's policy to never promote infidelity and to reserve divorce for cases of abuse, addiction and extreme violations of ethics and morals. Our main objective is to help couples stay together rather than pull them apart with marriage taking the priority. This question deals with a wife living in a celibate relationship with her husband who has lost sexual desire and her interest in pursuing a relationship outside of her marriage with a co-worker. She's asked we not address her marriage, which Andy has done in his response. However it would be irresponsible for us as a company not to address the adultery issue as well.

*Have you talked with your husband about your need to feel feminine? He's likely as frustrated as you are and feeling powerless to deal with the situation, and may have an experience in his past he hasn't dealt with that causes him to shun sexual intimacy from the start. The drugs as you mention also play a significant role.*

*The cooling off of your co-worker is a sign of his strength; the majority of single people will not date a married person. Your co-worker's backing off is a sign of his integrity, not rejection of you or a lack of interest. He was probably beginning to become interested and pursuing that interest would require he cross a line he is not willing to cross. You are in fact, married. Having a relationship with a married person is adultery, even if you are not the one who is married. To ethical men, you are not available and off limits. The other possibility is he may not want to date people at work. Many people hold to this idea. It can complicate things significantly.*

*95% of all relationships started in infidelity, even if marriage occurs, fail. More importantly you will never be fully in a new relationship if you are still within the old. End one relationship before pursuing another and deal with the issues that created the ended relationship first before undertaking one anew.*

*Finally, resist the excuse he may be gay. This is pop-culture interceding and a convenient exit. The Gay Rights movement states people are born gay. There is no credible medical or scientific evidence to support their opinion, which is a hypothesis, not a fact. Science and medicine consistently conclude homosexuality is a behavior, not innate.*