

We'd Pick Our Partners Wisely (Sheila Ellison, editor)
Excerpted from *If Women Ruled the World* (Inner Ocean Publishing)

When I first sat down to think about contributing to this book and imagined completing the sentence "If women ruled the world . . ." I found myself becoming increasingly perplexed. "Well," I explained to myself, "it's impossible because I can't speak for other women; they need to speak for themselves!" But this isn't really true. An important aspect of my work in the world is leading seminars (with my husband), teaching women (and men) basic relationship skills and the psychology of romantic love. We often speak in very broad terms about what's at least relatively true for women (and men) in our cultures. So it wasn't that I couldn't speak for other women. I often do.

At last I figured it out: It was the "If" -- the premise itself that we don't already rule the world -- that threw me.

The fact is, to my way of thinking, women do rule the world. We rule it a number of ways, partly by default, by our non-decision decisions, and certainly most directly, by our very deliberate real-life choices, not only how we live our own adult lives but equally by whom we choose to mate with. Because right in line behind our obvious need to know how to provide for our own physical and material needs, educate ourselves and find work that expresses who we really are, knowing how to choose a healthy life mate is our most critical adult task -- and responsibility.

Let's imagine for a moment that we were all perfectly healthy and properly trained in this regard:

For example, how different would our world be if we women had the raw self-love necessary to establish core conditions for relationships -- non-negotiable standards of eligibility for any man we might consider as a mate? What if we fell strictly for men who drew the line at all forms of violence and addiction, made honesty and transparency a personal goal and wholeheartedly reserved their sacred sexual energy exclusively for us?

What if it were automatic and natural for us to lovingly insist that any partner of ours, if not already embarked, be committed to a path of personal development? To be on the same page when it comes to doing whatever emotional healing and education is necessary to keep the symptoms of childhood traumas from corroding our shared adult lives?

What if we limited our selection of life partners to those who saw the wisdom of learning relationship skills? Who consider as a matter of fact the need to become emotionally literate and fluent in the language of the heart? Who would not argue with the importance of learning simple anger-management and

conflict resolution techniques?

For those of us who choose to create families, how different would our world be if we did not equivocate when it came to picking partners who grasped the supreme logic of parenting education *for both parents*?

How different would our world be if, beyond committing to the discovery and development of our own soul-inspired work, we made sure that any person we planned a life with also was actively pursuing his own mission in life? That he be seeking or doing work that we respected, that contributed to the greater good and ultimately contributed to beauty, order and peace, rather than competition, violence and lack in the world?

How different would our world be if all women learned the critical adult task of enlightened and healthy partner picking? If we proudly declared: "For the sake of myself, my children, the community and the world, I WILL NOT SETTLE!"

Let's imagine in our hearts and minds a world where women are really, really fussy. As my wonderful husband always points out when we teach and counsel women (and men), "Women have more power and leverage than they use. Men want something women have got: Themselves."

Seana McGee