

Do ALL men have a degree of babyiness within them?

This article is taken from the book by Gwendoline Summers – A Woman’s Guide to Babying Her Partner - available at www.abdiscovery.com.au

I would like to introduce the controversial but intriguing idea that babyiness is in all men and now I want to expand on that.

Before we get much further, I want to state categorically that I am not being negative or abusive about or to men and in fact, quite the opposite. I love men – one in particular! Men and women are dramatically different people. We vary in almost every aspect that exists and we are all very thankful that we are different.

It is observed and oft-stated that girls mature faster than boys and with rare exception, is axiomatically true. And no one actually cares about it. It is just a fact of life that we all accept, and the theory is that by age 20 or so, they have caught up. I would dare to conjecture something quite different. I would suggest that by the definition of ‘maturity’ that women employ, most men *never* fully mature! They might have a veneer of maturity but inside – and not necessarily *deep* inside – they are still young boys.

Once again, I am not being insulting or derogatory about men. I am stating an observable fact that we often hint at but rarely admit or expand upon. Nor am I saying it is a bad thing either. I am simply declaring that it *is*.

The statement: “*the only difference between men and boys is the price of their toys*” is something we smile and laugh at while admitting its basic truths but then fail to truly understand what is being said. When we say this as a joke, pretty much nobody suggests it is incorrect – even men themselves. Men accept that having ‘toys’ makes perfect sense to them. It can be cars, tools, model aircraft, guns, bikes or a variety of things that are still essentially toys. This is not to suggest that women can’t be collectors and one of the ironies of that statement is that it is acceptable for a woman to have a teddy bear or similar in their bed until way past teens and beyond while for a boy, it is not considered appropriate or ‘manly’.

But is that truly correct? One study suggested that American teen boys going off to college often packed their teddy bear in the luggage. It would be kept hidden and perhaps only ever used in secret, but it was there just the same. Peer pressure dictates that the teddy bear not be openly used in the male dorms while in the girls’ dorms, they are far more acceptable and even ubiquitous. We are all familiar with the character of Radar O’Reilly in the TV series M*A*S*H and his teddy bear and yet no one mocks him for it. It is a subtle admission that there is a child inside all men – even soldiers. They accept it, acknowledge it but tend not to act upon it. The inner child inside men is acknowledged internally but usually not discussed.

The societal expectation for men is to be tough and strong and a provider and even in the 21st century, this stereotype continues. It has abated a little in that men are now permitted to have emotions and to engage in nurturing et cetera but still, the cultural norms are for men to be ‘men’. We all know that men are in general, taller, stronger, faster and have some advantages over women in spatial awareness and some areas of dexterity. Out of this comes the sexist notion of masculine superiority which we are thankfully starting to see ebb away. Physical advantages clearly play out in competitive sports and athletics and in careers that are based on strength. None of this is news. But when it

comes to emotional and developmental maturity, the balance tends to tip in the other direction, if only slightly.

Let me get back to the area of maturity.

Think of all the men you know reasonably well. Do they not act in ways that are sometimes silly and childish? Do they not behave sometimes just as large-scale boys? Watch social sports like football or cricket (sorry Americans! Cricket is a real game!) or rugby or the like. Doesn't it at times look like you are watching a group of overgrown primary school boys playing games at lunchtime?

Men won't easily see this because they are still the boys themselves while women can look on and see it clearly if they look closely enough. Their competitiveness is sometimes nothing more than childish attempts to be 'bigger and better' than their friends - just as they did as little boys.

And then there is the 'other type' of man. You may know one or two such examples. They don't have 'toys'. They don't do sports - either watching or participating. They tend to dress immaculately without dirty clothes, unkempt hair or messy bedrooms. They don't play games of any kind and they have colleagues, not friends. No, I am not talking about gays! I am talking about actual *mature* men.

They are boring.

They truly left their childhood behind completely and as a result, don't have a lot in common with the rest of the male gender.

You know the type, right? All the elements of maleness that we as women sometimes bemoan and complain about; that immaturity and childishness that we find inexplicable; those attributes combine to form the men we love and admire (and often want to scream at!) We are often drawn to that childishness as much as to the adult man.

So here is my point. Within (almost) every man is a young boy still controlling much of their thoughts and desires, creating that wonderful, complicated and infuriating individual that we love and fight with.

Note that I said *young boy*. I didn't say *teenager* or *young adult*. I said *young boy* and I meant it. And what is the step just below *young boy*?

Toddler boy or baby boy.

That's a clue for you to absorb and understand. Take a breath and think about it for a moment.

I'm not talking about adult babies here. That is a special case I will introduce later. For the time being, I am talking about the average man (which is a mythical beast in its own right!).

Now, women are very different as you well know. Men, of course, don't know just how different we are and so many of our relational conflicts seem to exist because men think we are like them but with 'boobs and a pussy'. To be fair, some women fall into the same trap of thinking that men are like them but with a penis. Both beliefs are chronically dumb!

Teenage girls start their trip through the hormonal years as immature children and at times exquisitely 'brainless'. But as the years progress, maturity erupts and by the advent of legal adulthood, they are women. Women with a maturity and an understanding

of themselves and others that outstrip their male peers by quite a margin. 18yo boys, however, are still boys. The maturity gap is enormous and while it narrows considerably over the next few years that gap never really disappears.

And I am so glad it doesn't!

Some of this may sound like 1950s faux-wisdom, but please don't think that is where it comes from. Firstly, I was not alive in the 50s and that period of time was a women's prison and I want no part of it. But, I am still glad that the differences between men and women exist.

Women are natural nurturers. I know this isn't always true, but for a majority, it is. Men tend to be *providers* rather than traditional nurturers. Fortunately, these roles are merging more and more and women are providers as well and men are also expected to be nurturers. This is a big improvement and long overdue. But at the same time, men find nurturing more difficult and less natural than women as a whole. Mind you, I'm not excusing them from it, only saying that nurturing is more difficult for most men than for most women. I know I am seemingly rambling here, but my point is coming, trust me.

Women have a very strong maternal drive. I admit, some women don't want children and that number appears to be growing, but it is still true that the large majority of women want children. Men are more ambivalent about it and while they have a 'paternal' drive, it is very different from a woman's maternal drive.

Most men want to have a family. They want to have children, but it is more of an intellectual issue for them than a deeply emotional one. Women *want* children. They *want* to nurture and guide and to love their children. Men, however, want to have families but they tend to leave the nurturing and the 'messy bits' of parenting to the women. They are happy to play with them and rough-house and all the childish aspects of parenting, but the nurturing is still left in large measure to the mother. I know a lot of this is a stereotypical assessment and much of it is changing, but I am referring to the *general nature*, rather than to what one particular mother or father may do or not do in their actual families.

Watch a woman playing with a young child and you will see someone guiding and interacting. Watch a man playing with that same child and you will often see peer-based behaviour. They are playing *with* the child, often at the same level. They are the larger, stronger, more dextrous... child.

If you stand back and watch or think about what you have seen in the past, you will observe what others have also discovered: men are still boys, wrapped in larger bodies, more maturity and more experience. But still boys at their core. And there is nothing wrong with that at all! It is a wondrous and amazing thing and to be honest, sometimes I am jealous of that ability to be childish and immature and to enjoy elements of childhood in a pseudo-genuine manner. I'm a grownup. My husband is only partly so.

Okay, so we have established that men are still larger versions of young boys. That is not particularly complex or even controversial. If you said that to most women they would agree and probably offer their own anecdotal evidence in support of it. But I want to take it further.

Men are boys.

But are men also toddlers and perhaps babies?

Now that is an intriguing question and certainly more controversial and complex.

So, let's explore this.

Babies and toddlers are really quite different from young boys and so it is easy to say that men are still boys, but not *baby* boys. And perhaps in most cases, this is true.

Or is it?

The elements of babyhood include total dependence on a mother, limited-to-no demands put on them and a lack of external pressures. When you put it like that, the appeal of babyhood is obvious! Another attribute is a lack of control and a lack of responsibility.

But is a young boy all that different from a toddler? The biggest one is perhaps toilet-training, but how many young boys are still in nappies at night for bedwetting? Lots! So that difference is one of degree at most. A night-napped ten-year-old is a minority for sure, but not rare. A five-year-old night-napped boy is so common as to be unremarkable. A bedwetting teenager is also not a rarity. So, perhaps toilet-training isn't that big a change after all and the difference we are looking for is not to be found here.

Older boys are expected to take some responsibility. They might be expected to put their toys away or to tidy their bedrooms to a (low) standard that their parents expect. Not perfect, but with a degree of effort. Even toddlers have a few responsibilities albeit very minor ones. But babies, have no responsibilities at all. None.

We all like to avoid responsibility at times. It is who we are. But babies and young toddlers are exempt from responsibility. There is an attractiveness to this. And here is the core of my premise: I assert that in almost every man exists an element of babyhood that still wants those attributes of infancy I spoke about.

- They want dependence on another to care for their every need.
- They want the unrestricted, limitless nurturing of a mother.
- They want the significant or total absence of responsibilities.
- They want to do whatever they want, whenever they want it.
- They want to cry and scream and throw a tantrum.

In effect, they want to be babies in some ways and to express it. When you look at that list, you may see a lot that you find attractive. I know a lot of women feel the same way and there are a lot of similarities there. But in the case of non-AB women, they are more likely to be attracted to the maternal or parental side of the equation. They want to be the person that *provides* the nurturing and total care.

I just want to repeat that to date, I am referring to *non-adult-baby* people. Being AB adds a new and powerful element to the equation that I will refer to later. What I am talking about now is the average person in society and how infancy and childishness is still a part and parcel of being a man. Now, to my next thought.

Bedwetting. Hmm...

Did you know that bedwetters past the early teenage years are overwhelmingly male? And this is despite their vastly less complex and less 'messy' urinary systems. I checked out some information about bedwetting in older years and the one thing that stood out for me was the notion that some people wet the bed for reasons like '*it didn't really worry me*' or '*I didn't realise I wasn't supposed to do it until I was 16*' or '*it was hard*

to stop so I didn't try' [AB Discovery Bedwetting Survey 2020]. And in almost every case, it was a boy, not a girl.

They were effectively saying that they weren't trying to stop wetting their beds (or night nappies) for reasons that can be summed up simply as... immaturity. They lacked the emotional maturity to stop wetting the bed. The physical changes of growing up had occurred, but the emotional maturity had not developed as fast and so bedwetting – a typical baby/toddler attribute – remained. They hadn't as yet decided to not wet the bed.

So, can we assert that for a few at least, the attractiveness of infancy can also be the lack of responsibility with the bladder? It is a stretch I will admit, but for some at least, it is true that they stopped wetting at night only in their teens or later for reasons external to themselves. They were pressured into it by parents or peers. They got night-dry for reasons other than their own maturity. An argument was made for becoming night-dry that didn't really align with their own level of understanding or maturity, but they did it anyway.

Despite their superior plumbing, men remain the majority of adult bedwetters and that does raise the question of why this happens when you exclude genuine and obvious physical reasons.

Decades ago, mattress protectors were cotton affairs designed to keep the mattress free from the occasional sweaty night or light overflow of other adult activities. Now, however, most of them offer proper 'fully waterproof protection'. When talking to a saleswoman while buying a new mattress a few years back, she asked if I wanted a waterproof for it and since I have a husband often in night nappies and occasionally with wet sheets, I said yes. Then, unbidden, she regaled me with stories of women coming in wanting waterproof protection because *'hubby pisses the bed sometimes'*. It was more information than I asked for, but as she went on, I became aware that my own bedwetting hubby was less of an anomaly than I suspected. Suddenly, I became aware that a bedwetting man was common enough for there to be mattress protection made available everywhere. I was intrigued.

It is one of my own thoughts and not one which is proven, that perhaps the surprising frequency of adult male bedwetting unrelated to physical reasons (or alcohol!) is due to the hidden infant nature inside most men. It erupts occasionally (yes, deliberate choice of words) in bedwetting or wet pants. It erupts in other ways as well, but bedwetting or pants-wetting may be one of the more obvious ones.

So, my first premise is this: inside most men is a hidden infant or toddler that occasionally comes out as a young boy but is still... a baby. That baby/toddler/boy wants to come out more often than it is allowed.

Are you interested in letting your partner's inner baby/toddler/boy out a bit more?

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