



The reason he tells it is just as important as the lie itself.

The #1 Lie Guys Tell Their Partner

▶ When Tiger Woods first denied those “rumors” circulating about him, we wanted to strap the dude down and force him to take a lie-detector test. But according to a recent survey, the number one man-lie isn’t about cheating. Turns out, it’s this: “Nothing’s wrong. I’m fine.” More than half of men fessed up to feeding their girlfriends this line. That means that more likely than not, your man has used it on you.

According to experts, this go-to fib is all about avoiding drama and protecting male pride. “Most guys know they’re not as good at talking through their feelings as women are,” says Seth Meyers, PhD, a Los Angeles relationship expert. “He’s worried that if he tries to vocalize what’s bothering him, he’ll say the wrong thing, make you emotional, and cause the issue to escalate into something worse than it is.” In other words, he doesn’t want to make a mess that he can’t clean up.

And he’s not the only one ducking drama: “Most women know intuitively when a guy is holding back

but won’t challenge him on it because they don’t want to seem like a nag,” says Dory Hollander, PhD, author of *101 Lies Men Tell Women*. But if you’re giving your man a free pass, you’re missing out on an opportunity to strengthen your bond...and putting your relationship at risk.

FEEL HIM OUT. When he utters those four little words, it isn’t necessarily a red flag. Most likely, he just doesn’t feel like talking about something he thinks will make him seem weak in front of you—especially if he’s hit a snag at work. “Work is where men feel the greatest sense of power and stability in their lives,” Meyers says. “So when things go wrong there, they can feel like their life is spinning out of control.”

That vulnerability is yet another emotion that guys would rather not express. “Men have this idea that women are looking for their knight in shining armor, the man who can handle anything,” Meyers says. “They’re afraid they’ll be less attractive if they don’t keep up that facade, so they need to be told flat out that you actually like it when they open up a little.”

Make a joke to get your point across without entering seriously cheesy territory. Say something like “Not to go all Dr. Phil on you or anything, but I kind of like hearing about what goes on during your day...even the bad stuff.” Then back off if he doesn’t want to have a heart-to-heart that instant. By giving him the option to discuss it later, you’ll help him feel like he’s still in the driver’s seat.

“Women make the mistake of wanting to fix everything in one long talk,” says Paula Rinehart, author of *What’s He Really Thinking*. “We approach problems that way, but men take more time to figure things out.” Give him a couple of days, then ask him if he’s still bummed...and why.

DANGER SIGNS. As for the guy who drops this lie often and won’t say a peep no matter how much you gently encourage him, you have to call him out. “At this point, it’s a more serious situation,” Meyers says. Use this line to let him know it’s not okay to keep his lips zipped: “I’ve been trying to connect with you on this, but everything I’ve tried has failed. What do you think I should do here?” It’ll let him know that you’re considering his feelings but that he has to speak up to make things right.

—ROBIN HILMANTEL

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