

GOTTMAN EMOTIONAL BIDS & CONNECTION HANDBOOK

Micro-Interaction Analysis, Emotional Bank Accounts & Relational Longevity

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Psychological Research & Core Tenets

- **The Anatomy of a Bid:** A bid is any verbal or nonverbal gesture—a sigh, an observation, a touch—asking for attention, affection, or affirmation.
- **The Predictive Ratio:** Couples who remain happily married turn toward bids 86% of the time; divorced couples average only 33% responsiveness.
- **Cumulative Micro-Moments:** Infrequent romantic grand gestures cannot repair the relational erosion caused by hundreds of daily ignored micro-bids.

Typology of Relational Responses to Everyday Bids

Response Category	Behavioral Demonstration	Partner Impact	Long-Term Dyadic Outcome
Turning Toward	Active verbal or physical acknowledgment	Fosters safety & validation	High marital resilience & trust
Turning Away	Preoccupation, silence, scrolling phone	Triggers rejection & loneliness	Gradual emotional withdrawal
Turning Against	Irritation, sarcasm, defensive rebuke	Activates amygdala threat response	Chronic contempt & defensiveness
Enthusiastic Turning	Asking follow-up questions with eye contact	Deepens shared dopamine signaling	Peak intimacy & romantic satisfaction

Daily Micro-Connection Field Protocol

- [] **Establish Device-Free Thresholds:** Maintain strict phone-free transitions during morning coffee, dinner, and the first 20 minutes reunited after work.
- [] **Acknowledge the 3-Second Bid:** When a partner remarks on an article or view, pause tasks and make brief 3-second reciprocal contact.
- [] **Master the 'Soft Start-Up':** Initiate emotional inquiries with positive observation rather than critique or defensive posture.
- [] **Audit the 5:1 Positive Ratio:** Ensure at least 5 positive conversational acknowledgments exist for every 1 critical or corrective remark.

PRO ARCHITECTURAL TIP: Diffuse Physiological Arousal (DPA)

Ignoring a bid elevates the bidder's heart rate by 8 to 12 BPM, activating sympathetic vigilance. Turning toward even mundane bids discharges this low-grade vigilance, keeping the emotional bank account securely funded.