

A man and a woman are standing on a beach, facing each other. The man is holding a bouquet of white flowers. They are both smiling. The woman is wearing a blue jumpsuit, and the man is wearing a light blue polo shirt and shorts. The background is a blurred beach scene with the ocean and some rocks in the foreground.

# A HUSBAND'S GUIDE TO HIS WIFE



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## **A Marriage Owner's Manual**

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A HUSBAND'S GUIDE TO HIS WIFE  
A Marriage Owner's Manual

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# INTRODUCTION

**M**en and women are different. They have different needs, hopes, desires, expectations and thoughts.

Women can be difficult to understand and even harder to deal with. This becomes more apparent when you get married.

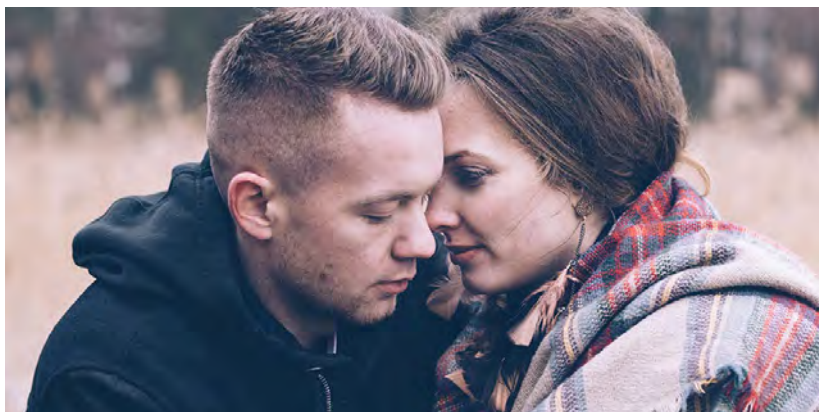
But this doesn't mean that you can't learn how to deal appropriately with your wife and have a great marriage together.

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# How Do I Show My Wife How Important Sex Is To Me?

By Jackie Coleman



*At the emotional level, guys need to feel wanted, loved, and desired. Sex is central to a man's confidence and well-being.*

**H**ow do men show their wives how important sex is to them? Let's look at the options:

- Being romantic just to get sex will be seen as manipulative.
- Hinting at your desires will most likely push her further away
- Not doing anything about it will make you resentful.

Fortunately, there's a better option—talk to her.

## Understand What Sex Means To You

Before you talk to your wife about sex, take some time to understand exactly what sex means to you.

Dr. Michael Sytsma, co-founder of the Institute for Sexual Wholeness, sums up the science behind sex. With orgasm, oxytocin and prolactin levels increase in males, helping them to feel connected and relaxed.

Furthermore, at the basic emotional level, guys need to feel wanted, loved, and desired. All of which is to say, sex is central to a man's confidence and well-being.

## Your Wife Doesn't Know This

The only problem: your wife probably doesn't understand this.

Thanks in part to Hollywood and mainstream sitcoms, you may seem to your wife like "one giant sex gland with no emotions attached." Nothing could be farther from the truth.

This is where the breakdown in communication typically begins. Most men do not fully understand what sex means to them, and therefore cannot communicate their desires.

Many women believe "he just wants more sex." They miss the fact that, for men, sex is more about feeling desired than about the physical act.

## Talk About Sex In a Neutral Place

To get beyond this, Dr. Sytsma suggests taking your wife to a neutral place where sex isn't an option.

Sit in a coffee shop. Go on a long walk. Talk to her about what intimacy means to you. Plan out in advance what you hope to say, and go with the attitude that you'll work through the issues together.

When you go out let her know that you would like to talk about what sex means to you and the benefits that a fulfilling sex life would bring the both of you.

## Talking Points For These Conversations

- When it comes to sex, it is important to me that you are engaged and satisfied.
- 75% of men say "I will not be sexually satisfied if my wife offers all the sex I want but does it reluctantly or simply to accommodate my sexual needs."
- It's important to me that you are content with our sex life.
- Having a regular, mutually enjoyable sex life makes me feel loved and desired, just like talking and being held makes you feel loved.
- I may make advances at times that seem to be the furthest from a sexual time. That's because making love is a comfort to me, just like being in my arms is a comfort to you.
- I feel more alive and confident in general when our sex life is working for both of us.
- The confidence you feel when you look great in a certain outfit, is the same confidence you give me when our sex life is working.
- When sex is repeatedly not a priority to you, I want to withdraw. This makes me feel just like you would feel if I stopped talking to you.
- When you say "No" to sex, I do take it personally and it hurts me. It's not just about having more sex.
- When you desire sex, especially when you initiate sex with me, it gives me a surge of confidence.

## Men and Women Are Different

Understand that men and women were created with physiological differences. Men typically have an assertive drive, which means they pursue sex.

Women, on the other hand, have a receptive drive, so they enjoy and receive sex, but rarely initiate. Talk through the differences and

brainstorm about potential solutions. One possibility may be to help her feel close not only in the bedroom, but also elsewhere.

Pursue her in non-sexual ways—with love notes, date nights, and midday calls. Give her warm-up time before sex. Flirt with her throughout the day. Create a context of closeness and emotional security.

Understand that some women with young children are physically exhausted by the end of a day. Help her plan ahead for a nap so she can feel more rested or wait until the weekend when she can get caught up on her sleep.

## **Open Up To Your Wife**

For her to understand you better, explain that if you don't feel desired, it affects all areas of your life. Three out of four men claim that sex gives them confidence, a greater sense of well-being, and satisfaction in life.

By understanding the male's emotional need, she'll see her own potential to help her husband gain the confidence he needs to face the world.

Your efforts in putting together a romantic candlelight feast may result in the desired after-dinner activity for one night. A meaningful discussion could benefit you both—and could lead to many nights of satisfying romance.



# Why Taking Care of Yourself is Important to Your Wife

By Shaunti Feldhahn



*If we want our wives to find us desirable and provide them security that means we have to make the effort to take care of ourselves, too.*

**I**n my research for my book *For Women Only*, men emphatically stated that it had an emotional impact to see that their wife was making an effort to take care of herself for him.

It makes a guy feel loved, because his wife obviously wants to be attractive to him. They don't expect their wives to look like super models. But the care and effort makes them feel loved and helps in fighting off the many visual challenges they face in their thought life.

## Your Health Impacts Your Relationships

What guys may not realize is that even though women aren't as visual as men are, the effort they put into taking care of themselves and being healthy has a huge impact on women.

I know from my research that every man wants to feel desired by his wife. That feeling desired gives them confidence in every other area of their life.

This is awkward to talk about, but in my women's conferences many women who say, "Doesn't he get it? It's hard to find him desirable when he doesn't take care of himself."

Even more commonly, "Doesn't he understand how important it is to me that he stays healthy so I have the security that he is going to be around for a long time and we can grow old together?"

My husband says: "If we want our wives to find us desirable and provide them security that means we have to make the effort to take care of ourselves, too. Most guys wish their wives would be more receptive to their physical advances and more passionate in the bedroom."

## Your Wife Cares About Your Health

In our interviews and surveys of women, many have privately said, "It's hard to be receptive and passionate towards a guy with a two-day-old beard and garlic breath."

The bigger health issues matter even more. It's not just about working out to stay in shape. Believe it or not, women actually feel more love and desire toward a guy who will go to the doctor when something seems wrong rather than being stubborn about it.

Guys may not realize it, but when they're in front of the TV multiple nights in a row, it can register in a woman's heart as, "It must not matter to him how much I need him."

One last plea to our guys: realize that most women are very sensitive about looking good for you, and if she is trying to get in shape or lose weight, it is so much easier if you care about it to.

## **Take Care of Yourself For Her**

If you will lend her encouragement by using her initiative as a chance to join in, and avoid bringing the junk food into the house it will make her feel really loved.

What's amazing is that God can use this as such an encouragement to both of you. Seeing the other person making the effort to care for themselves, knowing it will benefit their mate.

What a great way to be there for our spouse—now and for a very long time to come!

# Why You Get Mad At Your Wife

By Jeremy Isaacs



*Why do we get so upset about being wrong?  
Why do we lash out? Why do we lie to cover up  
our mistakes? Why do we get so angry?*

**T**he other night my wife, Corrie, was doing laundry and discovered something that had a stain on it. After searching the laundry room, she discovered that she didn't have what she needed to properly treat the stain.

She asked me to go to the grocery store and pick it up. So I did. Walked in. Went straight to the correct aisle. Looked at the detergents, but couldn't find the powder version she requested.

They had powder in every other name brand, but not the one she wanted. So I found the liquid in that same brand. It said "Stain Remover" on the front. I paid for it, and returned home.

When I walked in, Corrie immediately noticed that I had liquid instead of powder. She said, "I don't think this will work. I needed the powder."

I calmly responded, "They didn't have powder. I looked everywhere. They had it in other brands, but not this one." She replied, "I'm pretty sure they did, I was just in the store earlier today."

### **Why Do We Get Upset?**

This is the point in the story where I started acting like a child. In no uncertain terms, I told her it was insulting that she didn't believe me when I told her it wasn't there. I said if she was so sure it was there she could go look herself.

She remained calm and said, "I think you may have been looking with the detergents, but the powder would be with the stain remover. Did you look there?" I had not looked there.

I grabbed the liquid bottle, walked back out the door, drove back to the store, told the guy I needed to exchange it, walked to the correct aisle, and found the stain removers. There it was, right where she said it would be.

I came home, tail between my legs, and apologized to my wife for acting like an idiot. She was so kind the whole time it made my behavior even worse.

I don't tell you that story to demonstrate my ignorance about detergents. That's painfully obvious. I tell this story to ask us all a question: Why do men get so upset about being wrong?

### **Insecurity and Pride**

I know Corrie loves me. I know she knows I'm not perfect. Why did I take a posture that she was insulting me for being wrong, when I was wrong?

Why do we lash out? Why do we lie to cover up our mistakes? Why do we get so angry? Most of the time I think men act this way out of our insecurity. Other times it's our pride.

What if you took two minutes and evaluated your recent similar reactions to the one I just described? Why were you so upset? Drill down beyond your behavior to the motivations that caused your reaction.

Maybe these two minutes will save you embarrassment, hurt, and a necessary apology next time. Love attracts. Judgment alienates.

# 7 Tips For What To Expect When Your Wife Is Pregnant

By Jeremy Zach



*There are so many pregnancy resources, magazines, blogs, apps, and books for moms, but not many for new dads.*

**M**y wife was a schoolteacher and I was a youth worker. So we had an idea of what it meant to be a parent. We tried to be intentional in our marriage and build into each other before we started having kids.

As a guy, I had no idea what to expect, think, do or feel when I found out my wife was pregnant. All of a sudden, my marriage completely changed. It became all about mom and baby.

There are many pregnancy resources, magazines, blogs, apps, and books for mom, but not many for dad. So what's the new dad to do?

When my wife told me she was pregnant, I didn't know where to begin. Over the nine months of her pregnancy, I jotted down the areas where I failed miserably, and some things I actually did OK as an expecting dad.

## **1. Meet With Other Dads**

Find an experienced dad who has teenagers and a newer dad who has a baby six months or younger.

Grab a cup of coffee and ask them a bunch of questions about being an incredible husband and dad.

Invite them to share their stories and struggles about having kids. I've found it is wise to find someone who is ahead of you and someone who is alongside you as you go through life's big transitions.

## **2. Download a Pregnancy App**

There a ton of great pregnancy apps out there. The great thing about pregnancy apps are that they will inform future dads about everything that is happening with mom and baby.

I loved checking the size of our growing baby. The app gave a week-to-week synopsis of what's going on. It's helpful to know what is going on with your wife when she is baking a little one in her tummy.

## **3. Spoil Your Pregnant Wife**

It took me 29 weeks to learn this lesson. Your wife is creating a human. Treat her very special.

- Empathize with her. In another words, shut your mouth and don't argue.



- Hire a housekeeper.
- Pamper her (massages, nail and hair salons).
- Let her sleep.
- Run the errands.
- Handle some of the cooking.
- Allow her to go shopping for maternity clothes.
- Start thinking about the push present.

## **4. Go to Doctor Appointments With Her**

It is important for dad to be present with mom at the doctor appointments. The doctor will answer all your questions about pregnancy, too.

## **5. Be Involved With The Nursery**

Have a working knowledge of all the stuff you need for keeping a baby alive. Research the best stroller, crib mattress, car seat and video monitor.

Help get the nursery ready. Put the crib together. Hang the curtain rods and light fixtures. And make sure you know how to install a light dimmer.

## **6. Read This Book**

Read the book *Moms On Call: Basic Baby Care 0-6 Months*. I've found this to be the best book to encourage and equip parents on what to do for a newborn.

## **7. Pray For Your Wife and Child**

This is a simple thing to do, that most forget to do (myself included). I told my wife I would pray for her and our baby girl every day driving into work.

It isn't an elaborate prayer just a simple prayer talking to God about

how thankful I am to being have a daughter, asking Him to keep my wife and baby girl healthy, and to give me grace towards my wife.

As a new dad, it is stressful but also very exciting. There is just so much to think about and do. Keep in mind, every pregnancy is different. Best of luck and congratulations!

# 30 Questions To Ask Your Wife

By Casey Caston



*Our wives want to see that we show interest in who they are, their struggles, their dreams, their friends.*

**W**hat is it about woman and their ability to craft the perfect question to get conversations started? If you are like me, I get stuck on asking the same questions. I'm here to help.

I often refer to this list of questions for husbands to get the conversation started in the right direction. Trust me, you are going to score major points with this list.

Our wives want to see that we show interest in who they are, their struggles, their dreams, their friends. But we can't expect them to pour out their heart without our participation.

When asking these questions, listen with your eyes, turn off the TV, put your phone down, and rediscover the heart of your best friend!

1. What's something you always wanted to do as a child but never got to do it?
2. If you could have one super power, what would it be?
3. What is one of your dreams that I can help you achieve?
4. What makes you feel overwhelmed?
5. Which would be the hardest to give up: coffee or chocolate?
6. What is your best memory of our dating years?
7. What could I do to make you feel more respected?
8. If you could bring one fictional character to life, who would it be and why?
9. How can I demonstrate my love for you in different ways?
10. What can I do to encourage and support you better?
11. If you could master one musical instrument, what would it be?
12. How do you like to be kissed?
13. What is one thing I can do to show you how much I love you?
14. What is one bad habit you need to break but don't want to?
15. If you could change your age forever, what age would you choose and why?
16. What did your parents teach you that you appreciate now?
17. What is your guilty pleasure?
18. Describe to me your ideal day?
19. What is your favorite movie of all time?
20. What are ways I can make you feel safe?
21. How can I show you that I am listening to you?
22. What achievement in my life would bring you great joy?
23. Who is someone that inspires you?
24. What was the moment when you laughed harder than you've ever laughed?
25. What can I do to make you feel more confident in our future?
26. What are some ways I can help you around the house?
27. How often would you like to go out on a date night?
28. What is your favorite thing about yourself?
29. What mutual goal would you like to see us accomplish?
30. What is something you would like us to do to invest in our marriage this year?

# 3 Ways To Decrypt What Your Wife Is Really Saying

By Ryan Frederick



*Sometimes it feels like she's speaking a completely foreign language.*

**L**et's just be honest: we aren't wired like our wives, especially when it comes to communication. Sometimes it feels like she's speaking a completely foreign language.

We try to listen and respond the best way we know how. Why does it sometimes have the complete opposite of the intended effect?

This has happened to us more times than I care to admit. Is it because my wife is hard to communicate with? I don't think so. Is

because I'm dense? Perhaps.

We've been married for almost 12 years, so why do we still face communication issues? I have no clue.

As soon as we think we've found the help switch, it moves. Right when we've got the supportive dial tweaked perfectly, it stops working.

I may not know exactly why the communication-maze walls change, but I think I've found a few ways to help navigate them.

## **1. Hear What She's Not Saying**

Selena and I have had countless conversations where she presents a frustration, either with me or with a situation, and I simply address what she's saying.

"You never help with the dishes!" she might say. What do I do naturally? I tally up all the times in the past week I helped with dishes. Then I fire back: "What? I just did them yesterday, and three other times this week!"

Boom. Argument won. That'll set the record straight, right? She's frustrated about the dishes, so I'll simply state the facts and it will be done. Wrong.

Think! What is going on in her world that could be causing her to be on edge? Yes, it could just be the dishes.

But it could also be a co-worker that said something hurtful. It could be a family issue weighing heavily on her. Maybe she's dealing with an insecurity of her own.

The point here is that there isn't always a cut and dry solution. As husbands, we need to discern what's really going on and respond lovingly.

Address the issue at hand, but keep the conversation going until she

knows you're right there with her, caring for her, and feeling what she feels. It's called empathy fellas.

## **2. Less Fixing, More Listening**

This is a big struggle for me. I love to fix things. Most men are the same way. Got a problem? Here's how to fix it. Boom. Solved.

Men, your wife isn't one of your guy friends. She's not a flat tire. She's not a leaky faucet. And she's not a client submitting a help desk request. There is no manual.

She's a person who is coming to you for connection and compassion, not a simple solution. She needs to know that you're there, present with her, able to walk through her storm side by side.

Sometimes, yes—there is a quick thing she needs help with. Selena always makes her laptop do weird things I never imagined possible. Those are quick fixes.

But when your wife comes to you with a sense of despondency and deep frustration, it's time to perk those ears up and listen. Fixing it may break it more.

It's up to you to know and listen to your wife. You're the only one who can. Listen like your life depends on it.

Pray with her, encourage her, and assure her that every thing's going to be alright. Sometimes that's really the answer she's looking for.

## **3. Fight Frustration**

Don't be surprised when knee-jerk logic and fixes don't calm things down.

Once, Selena and I were discussing some financial hurdles we were facing. My tactless expense shaving became abrasive, this gave rise to a heated debate about every area of lack she felt we had. Of course, everything was magnified at that moment.

My first reaction was to get defensive and remind her of how hard I work and how blessed we are. How can she be so ungrateful? I started to steam and stew, simply waiting for my turn to speak so I could prove my point once and for all.

Then it occurred to me: the issue wasn't the issue. She was dealing with a lot and I just needed to see her, listen to her, and be present with her. Then I needed to love her, speak tenderly, and remind her that everything was going to be just fine.

The result? As I softened, she softened. The walls began to crumble, and we were able to connect on a deeper level.

## **It's Your Job To Know Your Wife**

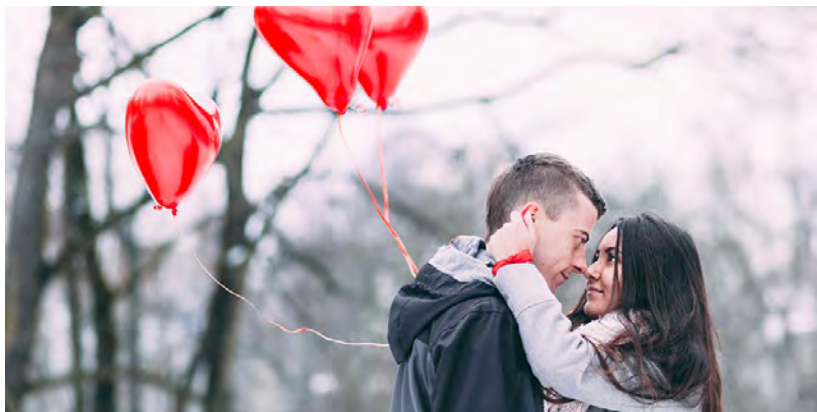
Bottom line: be in tune with your bride. You know her and what she needs right then. It's not always simple but it is necessary.

Next time you feel that burning desire to fire back a quick fix or logical retort, stop. Listen to what she's not saying and respond lovingly so she feels loved.



# 4 Ways a Man Can Make Valentine's Day Last All Year Long

By Justin Murff



*We don't need some fat cherub shooting love arrows or disappointing overpriced boxes of mystery chocolate to show how much we love our special someone.*

**O**ur romantic pre-Valentine's dinner consisted of an expertly prepared steak, served on the finest of paper china, and serenaded by the sound of laughing children.

OK, it was a far cry from the romantic, fireside, quiet evening I would have planned 10 years ago when we were newlyweds.

After all, being overwhelmed by the crowds at what is arguably the most artificial of all holidays is for rookies.

Real men make Valentine's Day look weak. We don't need some fat cherub shooting love arrows or disappointing overpriced boxes of mystery chocolate to show how much we love our special someone.

So here is the manly man's guide to not just be a player, but how to change the romance game.

## **1. It's Not Always About Sex**

Don't get me wrong. Marriage has its amazing benefits —among which is guilt-free, deeply committed, rock your world loving.

But believe it or not, your wife needs more than just physical romance. Even though she has been blessed with a modern-day, mortal incarnation of a Roman gladiator for a husband, what women also need is genuine connection.

When was the last time you took her out for coffee or tea and just listened to her? I mean really listened to her, asked questions, engaged in meaningful conversation, discussed her dreams, and your future together as a couple?

The good news is that you can do this anytime during the other 364 days of the year.

## **2. Engage In Chore-Play**

I have found that the fastest way to my wife's heart is oftentimes a clean kitchen sink. Women will tell you that there is perhaps nothing hotter than a man who helps out around the house.

Nothing kills the mood like putting on your A game, having candles and music ready, only to be asked, "Did you clean the dishes?"

When you have done your part to make sure the house is clean, the kids are put to bed, and the house is in order, what you are really

doing is showing how much you value and appreciate, your wife.

This may not have been in your grandfather's guide to husbandry, but it is a sure fire way to warm the heart of your valentine and set the mood.

### **3. Invest Time In Your Marriage**

Put the phone down and connect with your wife.

Recently, Jenn and I were at one of our favorite restaurants and noticed many young couples on dates. At least, I think that's what they still call them. The couples spent most of the time staring at their phones instead of talking with each other.

Deep down, people long to be truly known by someone in a meaningful way. That's hard to do when you say less than 10 words to each other over dinner.

So, put the phone on silent. Or better yet, keep it in the car when you go out on your date. You are making one of the most important investments in your future, so make the most of it.

### **4. Show Your Sweet Side**

Affection does not always have to lead to a home run. Sweet touches that show affection are a non-verbal expression of love.

A gentle rub of the arm, back, or neck can not only provide a feeling of affection. When accompanied by an affirming word, this can touch the heart better than a Hallmark card can.

Even after 11 years of marriage, my wife still needs to know that I adore her, and that I am looking for ways every day to show her that I love her more than I did the day before.

Valentine's Day is not only about the candles, fireside romantic setup, and best of Percy Sledge album.

It's really about remembering why you love that special someone and continuing to discover what you can do to show your love for them more and more.

Here's to the next 50 years of being in love and living this crazy life beside my Valentine!

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Justin and his wife, Dr. Jennifer Murff, are the founders of Millennials for Marriage.

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