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If Only He Knew

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If Only He Knew

1

HOW TO DRIVE YOUR WIFE AWAY WITHOUT EVEN TRYING

Marriage Checkup Quiz

1. Do you make your wife feel good about herself?
(yes ____ no ____)
2. Do you value the same things in your wife that you value in yourself?
(yes _____no _____)
3. Does your face spontaneously break into a smile when you see your wife?
(yes ____no ____)
4. When you leave the house, does your wife have a sense of well-being, having been nourished by your company?
(yes _____no _____)
5. Can you and your wife tell each other honestly what you really want instead of using manipulation or games?
(yes ____no ____)

6. Can your wife get angry at you without your thinking less of her?
(yes _____ no _____)

7. Can you accept your wife as she is instead of having several plans to redo her?
(yes _____ no _____)

8. Is your behavior consistent with your words?
(yes _____ no _____)

9. Do your actions show you really care for your wife?
(yes _____ no _____)

10. Can you feel comfortable with your wife when she's wearing old clothes?
(yes _____ no _____)

11. Do you enjoy introducing your wife to your friends or acquaintances?
(yes _____ no _____)

12. Are you able to share with your wife your moments of weakness, failure, or disappointment?
(yes _____ no _____)

13. Would your wife say you are a good listener?
(yes _____ no _____)

14. Do you trust your wife to solve her own problems?
(yes _____ no _____)

15. Do you admit to your wife you have problems and need her comfort?
(yes _____ no _____)

16. Do you believe you could live a full and happy life without your wife?
(yes _____ no _____)

17. Do you encourage your wife to develop her full potential as a woman?
(yes _____ no _____)

18. Are you able to learn from your wife and value what she says?
(yes _____ no _____)

19. If your wife were to die tomorrow, would you be happy you had the chance to meet her and to marry her?
(yes _____ no _____)

20. Does your wife feel she's more important than anyone or anything else in your life other than God?
(yes _____ no _____)

21. Do you believe you know at least five of your wife's major needs and how to meet those needs in a skillful way?
(yes _____ no _____)

22. Do you know what your wife needs when she's under stress or when she's discouraged?
(yes _____ no _____)

23. When you offend your wife, do you usually admit you were wrong and seek her forgiveness?
(yes _____ no _____)

24. Would your wife say you praise her at least once a day?
(yes _____ no _____)

25. Would your wife say you are open to her correction?
(yes _____ no _____)

26. Would your wife say you are a protector, that you know what her limitations are?

(yes _____ no _____)

27. Would your wife say you usually consider her feelings and ideas whenever making a decision that affects the family or her?

(yes _____ no _____)

28. Would your wife say you enjoy being with her and sharing many of life's experiences with her?

(yes _____ no _____)

29. Would your wife say you are a good example of what you would like her to be?

(yes _____ no _____)

30. Would you say you create interest in her when you share things you consider important?

(yes _____ no _____)

If you answered "yes" to *10 or fewer* questions, then your relationship is in major need of overhaul.

If you answered "yes" to *11–19* of the questions, your relationship needs improvement.

If you answered "yes" to *20 or more* questions, then you're probably on your way to a good, lasting relationship.

If Only He Knew

2

WHERE HAVE ALL THE FEELINGS GONE?

One Hundred Ways

The rest of this chapter is devoted to showing you one hundred ways you can love your wife *her way*. Discuss this list with your wife. Ask her to check the ones that are meaningful to her, and then arrange them in order of importance to her. Use the list as a basis for learning her views. I know your relationship will be greatly strengthened as you learn how to use these suggestions:

- Communicate with her; never close her out.
- Regard her as important.
- Do everything you can to understand her feelings.
- Be interested in her friends.
- Ask her opinion frequently.
- Value what she says.
- Let her feel your approval and affection.
- Protect her on a daily basis.

- Be gentle and tender with her.
- Develop a sense of humor.
- Avoid sudden major changes without discussion and without giving her time to adjust.
- Learn to respond openly and verbally when she wants to communicate.
- Comfort her when she is down emotionally. For instance, put your arms around her and silently hold her for a few seconds without lectures or put-downs.
- Be interested in what she feels is important in life.
- Correct her gently and tenderly.
- Allow her to teach you without putting up your defenses.
- Make special time available to her and your children.
- Be trustworthy.
- Compliment her often.
- Be creative when you express your love, either in words or actions.
- Have specific family goals for each year.
- Let her buy things she considers necessary.
- Be forgiving when she offends you.
- Show her you need her.
- Accept her the way she is; discover her uniqueness as special.
- Admit your mistakes; don't be afraid to be humble.
- Lead your family in their spiritual relationship with God.
- Allow your wife to fail; discuss what went wrong after you have comforted her.
- Rub her feet or neck after a hard day.
- Take time for the two of you to sit and talk calmly.

- Go on romantic outings.
- Write her a letter occasionally, telling her how much you love her.
- Surprise her with a card or flowers.
- Express how much you appreciate her.
- Tell her how proud you are of her.
- Give advice in a loving way when she asks for it.
- Defend her to others.
- Prefer her over others.
- Do not expect her to do activities beyond her emotional or physical capabilities.
- Pray for her to enjoy God's best in life.
- Take time to notice what she has done for you and the family.
- Brag about her to other people behind her back.
- Share your thoughts and feelings with her.
- Tell her about your job if she is interested.
- Take time to see how she spends her day.
- Learn to enjoy what she enjoys.
- Take care of the kids before dinner.
- Help straighten up the house before mealtime.
- Let her take a bubble bath while you do the dishes.
- Understand her physical limitations if you have several children.
- Discipline the children in love, not anger.
- Help her finish her goals—to pursue hobbies or education or career.
- Treat her as if God had stamped on her forehead, "Handle with care."

- Get rid of habits that annoy her.
- Be gentle and thoughtful to her relatives.
- Do not compare her relatives to yours in a negative way.
- Thank her for things she has done without expecting anything in return.
- Help with the housecleaning.
- Make sure she understands everything you are planning to do.
- Do little things for her—an unexpected kiss, coffee in bed.
- Treat her as an intellectual equal.
- Find out if she wants to be treated as physically weaker.
- Discover her fears in life.
- See what you can do to eliminate her fears.
- Discover her sexual needs.
- Ask if she wants to discuss how you can meet her sexual needs.
- Find out what makes her insecure.
- Plan your future together.
- Do not quarrel over words, but try to find hidden meanings.
- Practice common courtesies like holding the door for her or pouring her coffee.
- Ask if you offend her sexually in any way.
- Ask if she is jealous of anyone.
- See if she is uncomfortable about the way money is spent.
- Take her on dates now and then.
- Hold her hand in public.
- Put your arm around her in front of friends.
- Tell her you love her—often.

- Remember anniversaries, birthdays, and other special occasions.
- Learn to enjoy her hobbies.
- Teach her to hunt and fish or whatever you enjoy doing.
- Give her a special gift from time to time.
- Share the responsibilities around the house.
- Do not belittle her feminine characteristics.
- Let her express herself freely, without fear of being called stupid or illogical.
- Carefully choose your words, especially when angry.
- Do not criticize her in front of others.
- Do not let her see you become excited about the physical features of another woman.
- Be sensitive to other people.
- Let your family know you want to spend special time with them.
- Surprise her by fixing her favorite meal.
- Be sympathetic when she is sick.
- Call her when you are going to be late.
- Do not disagree with her in front of the children.
- Take her out to dinner and for weekend getaways.
- Do the “little things” she needs from time to time.
- Give her special time to be alone or with her friends.
- Buy her what she considers an intimate gift.
- Read a book she recommends to you.
- Give her a framed letter to hang on the wall, assuring her of your lasting love.
- Write her a poem about how special she is.

If Only He Knew

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CLIMBING OUT OF MARRIAGE'S DEEPEST PIT

Identify the Ways You May Have Hurt Your Wife

To help you avoid hurting your mate, I have included a list of ways a husband commonly offends his wife. Go through the list and see if you can identify some of the ways you have failed your wife in the past. If you need help, you have an expert in your own home—your wife. Calmly and gently ask your wife to identify some of the problem areas as well, and listen carefully to her answer. You may be amazed at how well she remembers your unloving words and actions. Hearing her words and seeing the list in black and white may help you realize how offensive these behaviors are and how deeply your actions can wound her.

1. Ignoring her.
2. Not valuing her opinions.
3. Showing more attention to other people than to her.
4. Not listening to her or not understanding what she feels is important.

5. Closing her out by not talking or listening to her (the silent treatment).
6. Being easily distracted when she's trying to talk.
7. Not scheduling special time to be with her.
8. Not being open to talk about things that you do not understand.
9. Not being open to talk about things that she does not understand.
10. Not giving her a chance to voice her opinion on decisions that affect the whole family.
11. Disciplining her by avoiding her.
12. Making jokes about areas of her life.
13. Making sarcastic statements about her.
14. Insulting her in front of others.
15. Coming back with quick retorts.
16. Giving harsh admonitions.
17. Using careless words before you think through how they will affect her.
18. Nagging her in harshness.
19. Rebuking her before giving her a chance to explain a situation.
20. Raising your voice at her.
21. Making critical comments with no logical basis.
22. Swearing or using foul language in her presence.
23. Correcting her in public.
24. Being tactless when pointing out her weaknesses or blind spots.
25. Reminding her angrily that you warned her not to do something.
26. Having disgusted or judgmental attitudes.

27. Pressuring her when she is already feeling low or offended.
28. Lecturing her when she needs to be comforted, encouraged, or treated gently.
29. Breaking promises without any explanation or without being asked to be released from the promise.
30. Telling her how wonderful other women are and comparing her to other women.
31. Holding resentment about something she did and tried to make right.
32. Being disrespectful to her family and relatives.
33. Coercing her into an argument.
34. Correcting or punishing her in anger for something for which she's not guilty.
35. Not praising her for something she did well, even if she did it for you.
36. Treating her like a little child.
37. Being rude to her or to other people in public, like restaurant personnel or clerks.
38. Being unaware of her needs.
39. Being ungrateful.
40. Not trusting her.
41. Not approving of what she does or how she does it.
42. Not being interested in her personal growth.
43. Being inconsistent or having double standards (doing things you don't want her to do).
44. Not giving her advice when she really needs it and asks for it.
45. Not telling her that you love her.
46. Having prideful and arrogant attitudes in general.
47. Not giving daily encouragement.

48. Failing to include her in a conversation when you are with other people.
49. Failing to spend quantity or quality time with her when you're at a party.
50. "Talking her down" — continuing to discuss or argue a point just to prove you're right.
51. Ignoring her around the house as if she weren't a member of the family.
52. Not taking time to listen to what she believes is important as soon as you come home from work.
53. Ignoring her at social gatherings.
54. Not attending church as a family.
55. Failing to express honestly what you think her innermost feelings are.
56. Showing more excitement for work and other activities than for her.
57. Being impolite at mealtime.
58. Having sloppy manners around the house and in front of others.
59. Not inviting her out on special romantic dates from time to time.
60. Not helping her with the children.
61. Not helping with housework.
62. Making her feel stupid when she shares an idea about your work or decisions that need to be made.
63. Making her feel unworthy for desiring certain furniture or other material needs for herself and the family.
64. Not spending quality and quantity time with the children.
65. Not showing public affection for her, like holding her hand or putting your arm around her (you seem to be embarrassed to be with her).

66. Not sharing your life with her, like your ideas or your feelings (e.g., what's going on at work).
67. Not being the spiritual leader of the home.
68. Demanding that she submit to you.
69. Demanding that she have sex even when you are not in harmony.
70. Being unwilling to admit you were wrong.
71. Getting defensive whenever she shares one of your "blind spots."
72. Being too busy with work and activities.
73. Not showing compassion and understanding for her and the children when there is real need.
74. Not planning for the future, making her very insecure.
75. Being stingy with money, making her feel like she's being paid a salary—and not much at all.
76. Wanting to do things that embarrass her sexually.
77. Consuming porn privately or in front of her.
78. Forcing her to make many of the decisions regarding the budget.
79. Forcing her to handle bill collectors and overdue bills.
80. Not letting her lean on your gentleness and strength from time to time.
81. Not allowing her to fail—always feeling like you have to lecture her.
82. Refusing to let her be a woman.
83. Criticizing her womanly characteristics or sensitivity as being weak.
84. Spending too much money and getting the family too far into debt.

85. Not having a sense of humor and not joking about things together.
86. Not telling her how important she is to you.
87. Not sending her special love letters, emails, or texts from time to time.
88. Forgetting or not celebrating special dates like anniversaries and birthdays.
89. Not defending her when somebody else is tearing her down (especially if it's one of your relatives or friends).
90. Not putting your arm around her and hugging her when she's in need of comfort.
91. Not bragging to other people about her.
92. Being dishonest.
93. Discouraging her from trying to better herself, either through education or physical fitness.
94. Continuing distasteful or harmful habits, like coming home drunk.
95. Not treating her as if "Handle with Care" were stamped on her forehead.
96. Ignoring her relatives and the people who are important to her.
97. Taking her for granted.
98. Not including her in future plans until the last minute.
99. Never doing little unexpected things for her.
100. Not treating her like an intellectual equal.
101. Looking at her as a weaker individual in general.
102. Being preoccupied with your own goals and needs, making her feel like she and the children do not count.

103. Threatening never to let her do something again because she made some mistake in the past.
104. Criticizing her behind her back. (This is really painful for her if she hears about your criticism from someone else.)
105. Blaming her for things in your relationship that are clearly your fault.
106. Not being aware of her physical limitations, treating her like a man by roughhousing with her or making her carry heavy objects.
107. Losing patience or getting angry with her when she can't keep up with your schedule or physical stamina.
108. Acting like you're a martyr if you go along with her opinions.
109. Sulking when she challenges your comments.
110. Joining too many organizations that exclude her and the children.
111. Failing to repair items around the house.
112. Watching too much TV or spending too much time on the computer and therefore neglecting her and the children.
113. Demanding that she sit and listen to your point of view when she needs to be taking care of the children's needs.
114. Insisting on lecturing her in order to convey what you believe are important points.
115. Humiliating her with words and actions, saying things like "I can't stand living in a pigpen."
116. Not taking the time to prepare her to enjoy sexual intimacy.
117. Spending money extravagantly without helping those less fortunate.
118. Avoiding family activities that the children enjoy.
119. Taking vacations that are primarily for your pleasure, like

fishing or hunting, while preventing her from doing the things she enjoys doing.

120. Not letting her get away from the children just to be with friends, go shopping for special items, or have a weekend away with her friends.
121. Being unwilling to join her in the things she enjoys.
122. Not appreciating some of the more mundane chores she may handle, like picking up clothes and toys, wiping runny noses, washing and ironing, grocery shopping, and so forth.

How a Husband's Lack of Genuine Love Weakens a Marriage

HUSBAND'S ACTIONS		RESULT	WIFE'S RESPONSES
<i>Husband's Lack of Genuine Love</i>	<i>Amplified</i>	<i>Wife's Offensive Habits</i>	<i>Amplified</i>
UNRELIABLE	Less time slip by unnoticed.	NAGGING	Repeatedly reminds her husband about things that need attention, with illustrations of his past wrongs and forgetfulness.
UNTRUSTING AND CONDEMNING	Has an attitude of superiority in finances. Demands the control of all money. Won't let his wife know about their financial status. Falls certain his wife would bankrupt him if she were given the chance.	IMPULSIVE SPENDER	Spends money as though it were very easily obtained. Seems irresponsible with money when it comes into her possession. Uses credit cards without concern.
ANGRY AND DEMANDING	In anger, overreacts to children and others. Doesn't like to be inconvenienced by family. Sets standards too difficult for children to meet.	PERMISSIVE WITH CHILDREN	Makes excuses for children's disobedience to husband and keeps secrets from him about their conduct.
INSENSITIVE AND UNKIND	Uses hurtful words to others. Uses his wife or others as his source of humor.	TOO EMOTIONAL	Cries often and is easily hurt. Holds on to hurts for a long time. Able to recall past offenses in detail.

How a Husband's Lack of Genuine Love Weakens a Marriage

HUSBAND'S ACTIONS		RESULT	WIFE'S RESPONSES
<p><i>Husband's Lack of Genuine Love</i></p> <p>INATTENTIVE, THOUGHTLESS, AND UNTRUSTWORTHY</p>	<p><i>Amplified</i></p> <p>Preoccupied with personal concerns. Dismisses other's personal feeling as unrealistic or invalid—if he acknowledges them at all. Family's reputation has been damaged by his lack of consideration for others.</p>	<p><i>Wife's Offensive Habits</i></p> <p>DOMINATING</p>	<p><i>Amplified</i></p> <p>Answers all questions, even those directed to her husband. Makes the decisions in the home and assumes responsibility for disciplining the children.</p>
<p>UNCARING AND IRRESPONSIBLE</p>	<p>Doesn't seem to care about his family's needs. Seems to think the only obligation he has to the family is financial.</p>	<p>NAGGING</p>	<p>Repeatedly reminds her husband about things that need attention, with illustrations of his past wrongs and forgetfulness.</p>

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IF YOUR WIFE'S NOT PROTECTED, YOU GET NEGLECTED

Holmes-Rahe Stress Test

In the past twelve months, which of these events have happened to you?

Death of a spouse:	100	_____
Divorce:	73	_____
Marital separation:	65	_____
Jail term:	63	_____
Death of a close family member:	63	_____
Personal injury or illness:	53	_____
Marriage:	50	_____
Fired from work:	47	_____
Marital reconciliation:	45	_____
Retirement:	45	_____
Change in family member's health:	44	_____
Pregnancy:	40	_____
Sex difficulties:	39	_____
Addition to family:	39	_____
Business readjustment:	39	_____
Change in financial status:	38	_____

Death of a close friend:	37	_____
Change in number of marital arguments:	35	_____
Mortgage or loan over \$10,000:	31	_____
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan:	30	_____
Change in work responsibilities:	29	_____
Son or daughter leaving home:	29	_____
Trouble with in-laws:	29	_____
Outstanding personal achievement:	28	_____
Spouse begins or starts work:	26	_____
Starting or finishing school:	26	_____
Change in living conditions:	25	_____
Revision of personal habits:	24	_____
Trouble with boss:	23	_____
Change in work hours, conditions:	20	_____
Change in residence:	20	_____
Change in schools:	20	_____
Change in recreational habits:	19	_____
Change in church activities:	19	_____
Change in social activities:	18	_____
Mortgage or loan under \$10,000:	18	_____
Change in sleeping habits:	16	_____
Change in number of family gatherings:	15	_____
Change in eating habits:	15	_____
Christmas season:	13	_____
Vacation:	12	_____
Minor violation of the law:	11	_____
TOTAL:	<u> </u>	_____

If your score is 150 or less, there is a 33 percent chance that you will be in the hospital within two years. If it is 150–300, the chances are 51 percent; and 300 and above, 80 percent.

Vow to protect your wife in all areas where she feels fearful or vulnerable, offer help with daily stresses, and show special care during extremely stressful times. That’s the first way to show her how much you cherish her.

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9

ARGUMENTS . . . THERE'S A BETTER WAY

The chart below gives an example of how to eliminate trivial arguments before they snowball into major flare-ups.

<i>If she says . . .</i>	<i>Typical response from a husband</i>	<i>Try this instead . . .</i>
"You're putting pressure on me."	"I'm not pressuring you. I just wanted to do something so the two of us could be together. Don't accuse me of that."	"Honey, I can sure understand that you're pressured. If you feel what I'm saying is pressuring you, then I can sure accept that. That's not my intent, but I can understand that you feel that way. Can you share at this time any of the reasons why you feel that way?"

<p>“I hate going to the beach. I don’t want to go.”</p> <p><i>If she says ...</i></p>	<p>“You used to like the beach before we were married.”</p> <p><i>Typical response from a husband</i></p>	<p>“I know I should know why you don’t want to go to the beach, but could you tell me just once more some of the reasons why you don’t?”*</p> <p><i>Try this instead ...</i></p>
<p>“I don’t want to go to the game with you. They’re boring.”</p>	<p>“I try to do things with you. The least you could do is to go with me once in a while and support me in something that I enjoy doing.”</p>	<p>“Honey, is one of the reasons that you don’t like to go because I ignore you so much when I’m at a ball game?”**</p>

A Major Decision—Should I Change Jobs?

This job change would mean moving a thousand miles and would involve a cut in pay.

1. List all the reasons, pro and con, for changing jobs and moving my family a thousand miles. (I’ll only put down a few of the reasons we used, for purposes of illustration.)

If We Move

<i>What we will gain (pro)</i>	<i>What we will lose (con)</i>
1. We will be able to raise our family in a smaller town.	1. We will be taking a cut in pay. Could we adjust to that?

<i>What we will gain (pro)</i>	<i>What we will lose (con)</i>
2. We will gain a greater opportunity to help families in a concentrated way.	2. Do we really want to live in a small town and lose all the conveniences of a major city with nice shopping centers?
3. There are many more camping spots where we're moving, and the weather is warmer year-round.	3. We'll have to move away from our friends whom we love so much.
4. Two of our best friends live in that town.	4. Can we afford to buy our own home?
	5. There's not a major airport for convenient travel to my family workshops.

2. List all of the reasons, pro and con, for *not* moving my family to a new location and a new job.

If We Stay

<i>What we will gain (pro)</i>	<i>What we will lose (con)</i>
1. We will maintain our present salary.	1. We will lose our opportunity to help families on a personal and consistent basis.
2. Our children will be educated at a private school.	2. We will lose the opportunity for our children to live in a warmer climate with a greater opportunity for involvement in sports and activities.
3. We will continue to use all the shops and stores that we know so well.	3. We'll lose our chance to join a church that we as a family really enjoy attending together.

4. We will continue all the contacts we have for buying various items at discount.

4. We will lose our opportunity as husband and wife to work on our life goals together.

It's important to list reasons for *doing* something and *not doing* something. It forces us to think of different aspects of both viewpoints.

3. Evaluate each of the reasons given in both lists. Make your decision based on your evaluations of both lists.

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11

SO YOU WANT A PERFECT WIFE

Use “I Feel” Statements

Replacing “you” statements with “I feel” messages after you have both cooled down is a better way to share disagreements. Here are a few examples of what I mean:

<i>Areas Your Wife Needs to Improve</i>	<i>Typical “You” Statements to Avoid</i>	<i>Examples of “I Feel” Messages</i>
She doesn't respect you.	“You don't respect me like you should.”	“Honey, you probably don't realize how deeply I feel your words, but I really feel discouraged whenever I hear you say disrespectful things to me.” (Plug in the statement she uses that discourages you.)

<i>Areas Your Wife Needs to Improve</i>	<i>Typical “You” Statements to Avoid</i>	<i>Examples of “I Feel” Messages</i>
She doesn't accept you the way you are.	“You're always trying to make me into somebody I'm not.”	“Honey, I don't blame you for saying a lot of the things you say to me. Many times we're just not in the same world. But I honestly don't understand many of the ways I offend you. And I feel that you're not accepting me for who I am.”
She is impatient with you.	“You never give me a chance. Would you get off my back and give me a break? I'm not perfect. I'm not as bad as Sarah's husband.”	“Honey, I think you deserve a gold medal for putting up with me, and I wish our relationship were better for your sake. I wish I were more skilled in taking care of you, but it's probably going to take me a long time to learn these new habits. Many times I feel helpless or like a failure. I lose my desire to try when you're critical of me for not improving as fast as you wish I would.”

<i>Areas Your Wife Needs to Improve</i>	<i>Typical “You” Statements to Avoid</i>	<i>Examples of “I Feel” Messages</i>
She is critical of you in front of others.	“You make me sick when you criticize me like you did tonight. If you ever say that again I will never take you to another party. You sure made a fool of me tonight.”	“Honey, I know how much you enjoy being with our friends. Would there be some time in the near future when we could talk about how I feel when we’re at those parties? I hate to bring it up, but there’s something you do that dampens my desire to be with our friends together. I really feel embarrassed and low when you criticize me in front of them.”