

Little Ways to Improve Your Marriage

Clearly, a few small actions won't fix deep relationship problems. But for most of us, a handful of simple day-to-day actions increase the likelihood our spouse feels we care deeply about them, instead of feeling we don't care.

Research has shown a few, gender-specific actions have a huge impact on a couple's level of happiness. These little actions take on even more power when they matter to your individual spouse.

In other words, you are very likely to communicate deep feelings for your spouse if you make a habit of doing the same five things consistently.

The Fantastic Five for Him

(What wives can do to have a big impact on her husband's happiness.)

1. The wife notices his effort and sincerely thanks him for it (for example, she says, "Thank you for mowing the lawn even though it was so hot outside." or, "Thanks for playing with the kids, even when you were so tired from work."). This deeply pleases 72% of all men.
2. The wife says "You did a great job at _____." This deeply pleases 69% of all men.
3. The wife mentions in front of others something he did well. This deeply pleases 72% of all men.
4. The wife shows she desires him sexually and that he pleases her sexually. This deeply pleases 85% of all men.
5. The wife makes it clear to him he makes her happy (for example, she expresses appreciation for something he did for her with a smile, words, a big hug, etc.). This deeply pleases 88% of all men.

The Fantastic Five for Her

(What husbands can do to have a big impact on his wife's happiness.)

1. The husband takes her hand. This deeply pleases 82% of all women.
2. The husband leaves her a message by voice mail, e-mail, or text during the day to say he loves her and is thinking about her. This deeply pleases 75% of all women.
3. The husband puts his arm around her or lays his hand on her knee when they are sitting next to each other in public. This deeply pleases 74% of all women.
4. The husband sincerely tells her, "You are beautiful." This deeply pleases 76% of all women.
5. Instead of withdrawing, the husband pulls himself out of a funk when he's morose, grumpy, or upset about something. (This doesn't mean he doesn't get angry or need space; it means he tries to pull himself out of it.) This deeply pleases 72% of all women.

We all know small, thoughtful acts are not a magic cure-all for every marriage problem. But all of us can build an all-important foundation that helps us believe our mate notices and cares. As it turns out, believing the other person cares is far more important to building a happy marriage than most of us ever realized.

Adapted from Feldhahn, 2013, [The Surprising Secrets of Highly Happy Marriages](#). Adapted by Apostolic Christian Counseling and Family Services

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