

Marriage Rule #1

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My #1 marriage rule:

? *For women:*

Don't expect your husband to read your mind. He's not a mind reader. He will **not** magically just know that you're mad, or what you're mad about, or how to fix it.

Tell him upfront when something he's said or done bothered you. He won't know until you tell him.

Most likely, you'll get mad at him for doing or saying something that you've interpreted as insulting or disappointing or unloving, when sometimes that's only your perception. But you'll want him to realize ***on his own*** what happened and come talk to you without prompting. But when he doesn't...you get even madder! You may start to stew in your anger and hurt, fuming silently that he hurt you and then has the sheer AUDACITY to act oblivious! How dare he not come to you unbidden and apologize (like perhaps another woman might have).

But in order to get along well with your husband, you need to change your mentality here. Don't always expect him to realize that he has done something wrong. Be okay with having to approach him yourself and volunteer the information.

Be honest and straightforward WITHOUT being contemptuous or attacking. Men HATE receiving contempt from others. They interpret that as disrespect. Their walls will come up immediately. They tend to get defensive as soon as they feel like they're being attacked. Who wouldn't try to defend themselves against attack, right?

So when you talk to him, start your sentence with something like: "I feel hurt because you said..." or "I felt disappointed when you..."

Start with "I" and describe your honest emotion, instead of starting with "You" then launching into attack mode.

Remember, ladies: men need, above all, to feel respected.

? *For men:*

When your wife comes to you and shares her feelings

with you, she's being vulnerable. She's being brave by opening herself up to you with her real emotions and needs. She's trying to level with you, trying to be authentic.

If you **mock** or minimize or laugh at her **in this moment of vulnerability** and need, it will increase the rift between you even further. You'd be adding insult to injury.

Take her statement seriously and try your best to address her concerns. Often, it's just a little misunderstanding that you can easily explain to her, no hurt feelings. Share with her your perspective of what happened; let her see the events from your vantage point.

But if it's a big thing and you are indeed at fault, simply apologize. Women appreciate sincere apologies and can usually easily move past the incident afterwards.

If what she's saying seems like a small thing and that she's making a big deal out of nothing, try to see it from her perspective for just a second. To her, from where she's standing, it *is* a big deal, so don't hand-wave or dismiss it or tell her that her concerns are silly. This will make her feel unheard, unloved. She will retreat farther away if her sincere attempt to talk to you falls on deaf ears. Women HATE having their emotions trivialized or dismissed.

If she's sharing her feelings openly and not silently sulking or glaring mysteriously at you from a distance, then do your best to meet her halfway by being receptive, sensitive to her feelings, and responsive to her needs.

Show her that she's loved by giving her eye contact, a gentle touch, a reassuring hug.

Remember, gentlemen: women need, above all, to feel loved.

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Men and women work very **differently** in certain areas, and have divergent needs.

So in order to get past what seems like an inevitable clash of opposites, we absolutely need to talk. To communicate clearly and effectively. Without this, everything can fall apart.

Allah taught us, human beings, clear speech. He says in the iconic ayat at the beginning of Surat Ar-Rahman,

الرحمن علم القرآن، خلق الإنسان علمه البيان.

"The Most Merciful.

Taught the Quran.

He created the human being,

Taught him clear speech/ good communication."

InshaAllah through this type of direct, honest, sensitive communication, your marriage will be smoother, happier, and drama-free.

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