

Selling Out Israel: The Obama-Kerry Plan

Israel is being urged to give up major portions of the West Bank of the Jordan River to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). That outfit is now known in Western media as the Palestinian Authority (PA), but it comprises the major terrorist group Fatah. That's the Arabic word for *conquest*.

And conquest of all of the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea has been the goal of the PLO since its inception. Its founding charter calls for the destruction of Israel. And its logo shows a map of the region with no Israel indicated.

The goals of Fatah could not be clearer. And yet successive U.S. administrations have heeded the siren song of peace in our time in a futile attempt to persuade a terrorist group to mend its ways. It's as if our own State Department thinks a tiger can be turned into a tabby cat if only we feed it enough American cream. U.S. taxpayers have been forced to spoon out billions in aid to the PLO since 1989—with no discernible move toward freedom or democracy by this rejectionist group. (A rejectionist is one who rejects any role in the Mideast for the Jewish state.)

Now the Obama administration is fully engaged in applying pressure to the Israelis to give in and give way. President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry are committed to a so-called "two-state solution" to the Arab-Israeli conflict. (This is a conflict, by the way, that has been raging since at least the 1920s, when Arab riots against Jewish settlers in what was then called the Palestine Mandate, supervised by Great Britain, claimed hundreds of lives.)

At issue today is an emerging Obama-Kerry technical fix that

would presumably use drones and electronic sensors to monitor Israel's border security. Thus, this administration will pledge to "have Israel's back."

Other countries have relied on such guarantees in the past. In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson promised French Premier Georges Clemenceau U.S. military intervention if Germany—defeated in World War I—ever arose to threaten exhausted France again. The French Guaranty Treaty, signed by Wilson and Britain's prime minister, David Lloyd George, pledged the Western democracies to defend France if Germany ever violated the 35-mile demilitarized zone in the Rhineland. Wilson cared little or nothing about the French Guaranty Treaty, instead concentrating all his energies on the Versailles Treaty, which established his beloved League of Nations. When Wilson refused any compromise—even compromises that France and Britain fully backed—the Senate rejected that treaty. The French Guaranty Treaty was a casualty of the executive-legislative clash over the Versailles Treaty.

Seventeen years later, in 1936, Adolf Hitler ordered Nazi troops into the Rhineland, and Britain and France did nothing. Within four short years, Nazi troops were marching down the Champs-Élysées in Paris. France lost her independence trusting the word of a discredited U.S. administration.

Sixty years later, in the 1970s, South Vietnam was pressured by the Nixon administration into signing peace accords in Paris with the Communist regime in North Vietnam. President Nixon hailed the peace agreement, under which the U.S. would guarantee South Vietnam's independence and freedom. Nixon never abandoned South Vietnam, but when he faced mounting demands for his resignation over the Watergate scandal, he lost any clout he had on Capitol Hill. Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass., and Rep. Don Fraser, D-Minn., led a successful push in Congress to repudiate Nixon and cut off all aid to South Vietnam. That unfortunate nation soon fell under the tank tracks of a North Vietnamese invasion. Communists laughed at

U.S. weakness as they overran Saigon in April 1975. They consigned millions of South Vietnamese to enslavement and thousands to death.

What in the record of President Obama's administration should give the Israelis confidence that he will truly "have their back"? As Moshe Ya'alon, a leading Israeli defense spokesman in Israel's parliament, the Knesset, noted, "Sensors and drones are no substitute for the physical presence of Israel Defense Force soldiers. The Jordan Valley is vital to the security of Israel, and we cannot assent to third parties being there in our stead."

President Obama's habit of grand pronouncements—followed up by less-than-grand actions—is catching up with him. He announced with great fanfare the closure of the U.S. detention facility at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. He flaunted his now-famous executive-order-signing pen and affixed his left-handed signature. It would be closed in just one year. That closure would be accomplished by presidential order by January 2010. Gitmo remains open.

Last summer, President Obama announced to the world that any use of chemical weapons by Syria's embattled ruler, Bashar Assad, constituted a "red line" that would demand U.S. action. But when reports stated that Assad had used such weapons—and when the Obama administration loudly endorsed those reports—no action was forthcoming. Today, the administration blames Assad's forces for "foot-dragging" on its agreements to dismantle chemical weapons. Barely 1 percent of these have been destroyed.

Is the Obama administration, like those of Woodrow Wilson and Richard Nixon, a discredited administration that cannot keep its pledges even if it wants to? That is not clear. President Obama was rather handily re-elected in 2012, even after taking a "shellacking" in the 2010 mid-term elections. Whether the voters will be paying strict attention to the Obama-Kerry

attempts to arm-twist Israelis is also not clear.

Israelis have long memories. Back in 1967, they trusted to U.N. observers to “have their back”—literally their back door—with a peacekeeping force in the Sinai desert. Egypt’s dictator, Gamal Abdel Nasser, ordered those peacekeepers out of the Sinai and proceeded to blockade Israel’s only port on the critical Gulf of Aqaba. That act of war precipitated the Six-Day War of June 1967.

Israel has learned that when the fate of the Jewish people is at stake—as it is now, with Iran racing toward nuclear weapons—the Israelis cannot outsource their vital security. The U.S. should not be trying to force Israel to make dangerous concessions to the PLO—or any others among their homicidal neighbors.

For the original article, visit .

Ken Blackwell is senior fellow of family empowerment and **Bob Morrison** is senior fellow for policy studies at Family Research Council. This article appeared in *The American Thinker* on Feb. 3, 2014.

Is Food Your God?

Is food occupying your mind where God should be? “Food is not the fix for everything” was a hard lesson I had to learn when I struggled with emotional eating.

You see, if I was mad, I ate; if I was sad, I ate; if I was bored, I ate; if I was tired, I ate. Eventually, I ate my way up to 240 pounds!

But God showed me that He is the fix for everything! He could

give me the daily answers I needed to glorify Him in every situation, including my eating habits.

I once counted how many times I thought about food in a single day. I counted 77 times! No wonder I wanted to eat all the time back then.

In Matthew 22:37, Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." I had a problem loving the Lord with all my mind when food occupied so much of it. Because I did not know or practice Biblical wisdom to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (see 2 Corinthians 10:5), food grew into an obsession.

In fact, my food obsession became idol worship for me. Idol worship is simply investing a person, inanimate object, or activity with powers it does not have.

To see what I mean, imagine how some oft-quoted bible verses would sound if you replaced God/Lord with food:

- "The joy of *food* is my strength."
- "*Food* heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."
- "Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in *food*."
- "Trust in *food* with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding."
- "The righteous man will be glad in *food* and will take refuge in it; and all the upright in heart will glory."

I used to live as if I believed that. It is estimated that 10 million people in the United States suffer from binge-eating disorder. So clearly, this is not a small problem. From my experience, Christians are vulnerable to this issue as much as anyone else. Perhaps even more. Here is why:

We have a real enemy who hates us because of the God we love. Ephesians 6:12 says, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

What better way can the enemy destroy us than through food obsession and food abuse? He exploits our need for food to survive. So rather than suggesting we grab a Bible (whose Words can Spiritually defeat him), he suggests that we instead grab a bag, box, plate, knife, or a fork!

The apostle Paul wrote about people who elevated filling their stomachs above God in Philippians 3:18-19: "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things."

It's time, Christian brothers and sisters, to flip the script. In Luke 4:18, Jesus said what He came to do:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;"

If you are suffering from emotional hurts (brokenhearted), captive to food obsession, blind to the destruction this habit is causing you, and oppressed by food abuse, then you qualify for Jesus' help!

Invite Jesus into this issue through prayer and then start renewing your mind to His Living Word daily. The book of John is a great place to start to get to know how your Savior lived. As you study the Bible more, you will learn to recognize thoughts that exalt themselves above God.

Cast those lies down with the truth. Only by taking every thought captive will you be free from captivity to food obsession.

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify of God's healing power to end binge eating. She is the creator of the new online course 'How to Stop Binge Eating' (). Charisma readers can get a discount today with the coupon code: Charisma.*

A Bigger Game Than the Super Bowl

The players in the Super Bowl will be remembered for a long time for the way they come up big for their team. When you come up big for your kids, you will be remembered for a long time as well.

The players in the Super Bowl set a goal at the beginning of the season to reach this point. They took small, intentional steps throughout the year in order to put themselves in position. You can do the same so you can come up big for your kids. To that end, here are 10 ways to come up big for your kids.

1. **Listen to them.** Don't immediately "solve" every one of your children's problems, and don't dismiss their concerns. Really

listen to them and seek to understand what they are feeling and going through.

2. Learn from your mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes. Especially dads. Seeing you make mistakes, yet learn and get better from the lessons, will be huge for your kids.

3. Get involved in their education. When a dad is involved with his kid's education, the kids become more interested in school, get better grades, and develop better social skills.

4. Realize they need your time more than things. Love is spelled T-I-M-E. We spend time with who, or what, we love. Show your kids you love them by spending time with them.

5. Work hard and teach them to work hard. One of my favorite quotes is, "Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard." No matter how good your kids are at something, their hard work will always make them better.

6. Pray for them. Teach them the power and privilege of prayer by regularly praying with them. Not just at meals and bedtime, but show them what it means to pray without ceasing.

10 Ways to Teach Your Child to Pray

7. Discipline them in love. Boundaries are important, so you must establish them. But make sure your discipline is out of love, not anger, frustration, or any other negative emotion. Use discipline to teach them there are consequences to all their actions.

8. Have a healthy relationship with their mother. No matter your relationship status with your kids' mother, make sure it is healthy. Treat her with love and respect, as it is foundational to your relationship with your kids.

9. Be a servant leader. Leading by example, and by serving, will show your kids the most effective way to lead. It will help them in life when they are in roles of leadership or

roles where they are following someone else's leadership.

10. **Support their dreams.** Get behind the things your kids' want to achieve and do all you can to help them. Encourage them and be there for them when it gets tough. Letting them know that dad is always in their corner will be big for your kids.

*All Pro Dad is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a byproduct, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include daily emails, blogs, Top 10 lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From , fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **Instagram**.*

Study: Probiotics Could Help Women Lose Weight and Keep It Off

Specific probiotics could help women lose weight and keep it off, according to a recent study published in the *British Journal of Nutrition* by a team of researchers headed by Université Laval professor Angelo Tremblay.

Studies have already demonstrated that the intestinal flora of obese individuals differs from that of thin people. That difference may be due to the fact that a diet high in fat and low in fiber promotes certain bacteria at the expense of others. Professor Tremblay and his team of researchers at

Canada's Laval University tried to determine if the consumption of probiotics could help reset the balance of the intestinal microbiota in favor of bacteria that promote a healthy weight.

To test their hypothesis, researchers recruited 125 overweight men and women. The subjects underwent a 12-week weight-loss diet, followed by a 12-week period aimed at maintaining body weight. Throughout the entire study, half of the participants swallowed two pills daily containing probiotics from the *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* family, while the other half received a placebo.

After the 12-week diet period, researchers observed an average weight loss of 9.7 pounds in women in the probiotic group and 5.7 pounds in the placebo group. However, no differences in weight loss were observed among males in the two groups.

"We don't know why the probiotics didn't have any effect on men. It may be a question of dosage, or the study period may have been too short," says Tremblay, who is also the Canada research chair in environment and energy balance.

After the 12-week maintenance period, the weight of the women in the placebo group had remained stable, but the probiotic group had continued to lose weight, for a total of 11.5 pounds per person. In short, women consuming probiotics lost twice as much weight over the 24-week period of the study. Researchers also noted a drop in the appetite-regulating hormone leptin in this group, as well as a lower overall concentration of the intestinal bacteria related to obesity.

According to Tremblay, probiotics may act by altering the permeability of the intestinal wall. By keeping certain pro-inflammatory molecules from entering the bloodstream, they might help prevent the chain reaction that leads to glucose intolerance, Type 2 diabetes and obesity.

The *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* strain used in this study belongs

to Nestlé, which uses it in certain yogurts it makes for the European market, but Tremblay believes that the probiotics found in dairy products in North America could have a similar effect to the Nestlé strain. He stresses, however, that the benefits of these bacteria are more likely to be observed in a favorable nutritional context that promotes low fat and adequate fiber intake.

For the original article, visit .

5 Ways to Turn Up the Heat in Your Marriage

It is bad enough that the temperatures are below freezing outside, but when your marriage is cold, you have a much bigger problem. Don't let your marriage grow cold; turn up the heat and bring back the romance.

Below are five ways to make your marriage hot:

- 1. Check the thermostat.** Recognize the temperature of your marriage, but don't focus only on the bad parts. Think about the good things in your marriage, and make that your focus.
- 2. Slow down.** During the cold seasons, things seem to slow down. Do the same thing with your marriage. Slow down and look for ways to spend more time together.
- 3. Light a fire.** There is nothing that changes the dynamic of your relationship like prayer. When prayer is absent, you don't love as well. When prayer is present, you love one another well. Light a fire with the power of prayer in your marriage. If you don't know what to pray, here are "10 Things to Pray for Your Marriage."

4. Speak your wife's (love) language. Communication is important in your marriage. But sometimes you are communicating in different languages. Find out what your wife's love language is, and speak it regularly.

5. Cozy up with one another. Once you start speaking love to her in the form of her love language, it is time to heat it up. Get as close to one another as you possibly can. Spend quiet and intimate time together, without the kids.

For the original article, visit .

3 Serious Questions for the Overeater

According to a 2012 Gallup poll, 27.2 percent of Americans are obese and 35.5 percent overweight. These figures probably come as no surprise to you, considering the pleasure-crazed, five-senses-satisfying society in which we live.

A short drive down the street will take you past (or straight to) fast-food restaurants whose aim it is to tempt your taste buds with mouth-watering burgers and crispy super-sized fries. A night at the movies often makes buckets of popcorn and liters of soda the main attraction. Birthday parties and holiday feasts boast platters and platefuls of casseroles, cookies, chips and dips to make merrier the celebration.

We often find ourselves eating not because we are hungry but because we experience fleeting moments of pleasure bursting from the flavors of our favorite foods. When those moments vanish, we're on to the next bite, and the next bite ...

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, *gluttony* is defined as “excess in eating or drinking.” Having a slice of cake on our birthdays or enjoying a box of candy at the theater isn’t gluttony. It’s when the act of eating becomes excessive and all-consuming that it becomes gluttonous.

Unfortunately, we live in a culture that makes it all too easy, all too acceptable, to nibble to our hearts’ content. We’re encouraged by family members to go back for seconds and urged by advertisements to get the combo meal and super-size it. Rarely do people call our overeating to our attention, and so the notion that it is sinful and selfish tends to elude us.

If you struggle with gluttony, here are three questions that, when honestly answered and positively addressed, will not only kill cravings, but also replace them with a hunger for more of God and a thirst to pursue His will for your physical health.

1. Is this meal needful or sinful? Sins can be readily identified with a simple question: Will doing this eventually harm me or someone else? From cigarette smoking to lusting, from cheating on a test to cheating on your spouse, every sin carries with it a harmful repercussion if we don’t repent and turn back onto the narrow road. Smoking may lead to larynx or lung cancer, lusting to a pornography addiction and damaged relationships, and so forth. Gluttony sows seeds of obesity, which, when watered, consistently grow into fearsome, health-choking blossoms of diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

Don’t be a slave to your appetite. Instead, strive to be a steward of the marvelous, masterfully designed body God’s given you. You honor Him when you honor your temple with moderation and discipline and serve as a beneficial, even life-saving, example to others.

2. Why am I eating? People often eat when they feel bored, stressed, sad or celebratory. During moments of idleness, snacking seems a harmless “time out,” an opportunity to pass

the time and provide some pleasure before moving on to the next activity or appointment on our schedule. When stressful situations arise, many find comfort in a handful of candy. When people feel disappointed or rejected, they often turn to their favorite junk food to numb the sting of sadness. Others, after a fantastic day that couldn't have gone better, also overindulge in unhealthy foods and quantities out of sheer happiness.

First Corinthians 10:31 tells us to glorify God in everything we do, even eating and drinking. When you eat, do so to fill your stomach, not an emotional void you sense down in your soul. Of course, humans have been gathering around food to celebrate for thousands of years; there is nothing sinful about this! It is when the celebration turns into our own worship of food and feasting that we need to remind ourselves of our calling to honor God with our bodies (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

3. Have you been in God's Word? Jesus said that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4, NIV). Often our physical hunger is a sign of spiritual malnutrition. When we neglect to spend time in the Scriptures, we deprive ourselves of the life-giving power contained in its living, active" words (Heb. 4:12)! We find solutions for our boredom, relief for our stress, remedies for our sadness and poetic expressions for our happiness when we dive into the pages of the Bible and let our spirits soak up its all-satisfying sustenance.

The next time your body tells you that you need a "food fix," listen for what your spirit is asking for. It could very well be craving time with its Creator.

Diana Anderson-Tyler is the author of *Creation House's Fit for Faith: A Christian Woman's Guide to Total Fitness* and her latest book, *Perfect Fit: Weekly Wisdom and Workouts for Women of Faith and Fitness*. Her popular website can be found at [www.dianataylor.com](#), and she is the owner and a coach at *CrossFit 925*. Diana

can be reached on Twitter.

Ya'alon: 'No Chance' for Peace With Palestinians

"Some people fear Tehran more than Washington now," Defense Minister Moshe (Bogie) Ya'alon said on Tuesday, in apparent criticism of U.S. policy in the Middle East.

Speaking at an annual conference held by the Institute for National Security Studies in Tel Aviv, Ya'alon spoke about what he believes to be the waning U.S. influence in the region. "The U.S. has decided to lower its profile, to be less active and less involved in the region, and now some fear Tehran more than Washington," he said.

Ya'alon said Russia had taken advantage of the U.S. absence to "buy itself a better footing and show everyone they do not abandon their allies, and in doing so they have been allowed to lead [diplomatic] negotiations."

"The U.S. has decided to be less involved, to stop being the world's policeman and distance itself from areas of conflict. Look at what is happening in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria," he said.

Ya'alon said there was no chance of a real peace accord with the Palestinians and suggested going for "an arrangement, but not a permanent agreement."

The defense minister cited the Palestinians' refusal to give up the right of return, their inability to function as an

independent entity and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' lack of interest in the negotiations.

"Only two weeks ago Abbas said no to recognizing Israel as the Jewish nation, so what are we even talking about? Abbas did not want negotiations then and does not want them now. He has come to the table to release [Palestinian] prisoners. We want to negotiate with the Palestinian Authority because we live side by side, and there are things we need to do together. But it looks like my generation will not see peace and quiet with the Palestinians," he said.

According to Ya'alon, the importance of the negotiations with the Palestinians pales in comparison to that of Iran's nuclear program.

"The Palestinian subject is a non-issue. Behind closed doors, the Palestinian issue does not even come up. In public one has to pay lip service," Ya'alon said.

Ya'alon poured scorn on the commitment of the PA, which exercises limited self-rule in the West Bank under interim peace deals, to bring Palestinian terrorists to justice.

"We counted 1,040 cases that were handled by the Palestinian security services in 2013. How many of them went to trial? Zero," Ya'alon said.

In the same period, Ya'alon said, Israel had arrested some 3,000 Palestinians, many of whom were later imprisoned.

A U.S. official briefed on the West Bank situation was hard put to explain the discrepancy highlighted by Ya'alon.

"It's true that we haven't seen trials [of Palestinian suspects held by Abbas' administration]," the official told Reuters on condition of anonymity. But, the official said, that did not mean there was no Palestinian security enforcement.

Asked if that meant Abbas' forces might be dealing with suspects out of public view, the U.S. official said yes.

Meanwhile, two surveys released on Tuesday, by the INSS and the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR), found that 67 percent of Israelis and 70 percent of Palestinians do not believe a permanent peace accord can be reached.

The INSS poll surveyed 1,200 Jewish Israelis, while the PSR interviewed 1,270 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Both polls have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

For the original article, visit .

Comparing Your Health and Your Spiritual Walk

Did you know that the 'walk' for better health and fitness is somewhat similar to your spiritual walk? They both encompass choices and our free will.

Do you eat healthy? Do you exercise? Do you stay away from the bad foods?

What about your spiritual walk, how is your pride? Do you stay away from envy, lust, greed? Do you choose love, patience, kindness, etc?

I ask those questions, because when I read Romans 7 I see a similar parallel between our spiritual and physical walk. It was Paul who wrote how he wants to do good, but evil overtakes him. I know what I should do, but evil still wins out, he

says.

Are those regretful thoughts similar to the person snacking on a bag of cookies, candy, or sugary treats wondering why he or she can't stay on a good clean diet? They want to eat right, they want to exercise ... but somehow, somehow they get tempted away from making the right choices.

Choices are just that—an opportunity to express your own free will. It's not always easy to make the right choice. Although I do believe it is easier to make the right choice when you have the Holy Spirit inside you as Paul talks about in Romans 8.

When you talk about making the right choices for your physical walk, and I am not talking about actually walking ... I'm referring to your overall level of health and fitness. It's more than simple will power and determination. You need to take into consideration those little hormones and neurotransmitters (brain messengers) that have a huge influence on your behavior.

I know the evil one is the great tempter in your spiritual walk and has had a long history of tempting us with lust, pride, money and power ... the usual suspects. Whether he is the one responsible for our cravings I don't know, I'm a doctor—not a theologian, but those little hormones and brain messengers definitely have an influence on your behavior when your blood sugar falls.

Think about it, do you get irritable and moody if you skip a meal or wait too long to eat? Do you find yourself wanting to strangle your spouse or co-worker ... I'm kidding.

The simple fact is that your brain chemistry changes when you allow your blood sugar to drop because you skipped a meal or eat the wrong foods. It becomes harder to concentrate, focus and stay attentive. Your brain can't function properly (process information) when its main fuel source,

glucose/carbohydrates are declining. This is what leads to cravings and what makes it so hard to make the right choices with regards to your diet and exercise plans.

Don't forget that when your blood sugar drops, it pretty much turns off your 'fat burning' mode, which makes it harder to drop those unwanted pounds and inches.

So as you keep on moving forward in both your spiritual and physical walk, I hope you realize that some of your choices will be challenging. But I hope you can take comfort in knowing there are some things you can do to hedge your bets, sort of speak, that will help you make better choices in both areas of your life.

***Dr. Len Lopez** is a nutrition and fitness expert and creator of *The Work Horse Trainer*. He speaks extensively on diet, exercise, and how stress can affect your overall health and wellness.*

For the original article, visit .

10 Questions Husbands Should Ask Their Wives Every Year

The best remedy for marriage conflict is marriage communication. Disagreements, fights, impasses, separations and divorce can be traced back to poor communication more than any other factor. Likewise, listening amounts to some of the best relationship medicine around.

Listening works best when we ask good questions. Good questions indicate bona fide concern. The man who asks good

questions is already well on the way to communication excellence.

The best questions also serve as conversation starters. Remember, you are interested in her. But, once you start talking, she's going to ask stuff too. The more you know each other on a deep level, the easier it is to fall in love all over again.

Here are 10 good questions you should ask your wife, at least every year:

1. What do you think is going right in our relationship? It's been a while since you took the marriage vows. But it's still true that positive affirmation leads to more productive change than negative evaluation. It's helpful to identify our strengths. Once we know them we can play to them. Building each other up is always a win-win.

2. Where would you like our relationship to be this time next year? It doesn't matter where we are, there's always room to be better. She might say, "I'd like to see more spontaneous affection." Or, "I want us to be moving forward together in our faith." She could say, "I want our relationship to involve more fun!"

3. Will you please marry me, all over again? Say it with flowers. Say it like you mean it. Make sure your wife knows how much you cherish her.

4. I'd love to hear about your dreams for the future. A wise Hebrew writer once wrote, "Without a vision, the people perish." Listen to your wife, imagine great things together, and then step into the possibilities.

5. Is there anywhere you'd like to visit this coming year? Indulge a little whimsy. Listen, laugh together, fantasize about fabulous vacations, and then tuck the information away somewhere, so you can possibly plan a trip. A good husband

listens to his wife's dreams. A great husband weaves them into their plans for the future.

6. Do you think we're doing OK financially? This needs to be an ongoing conversation. However, like any small business (and a family is like a business in many ways), the directors need to have a comprehensive annual meeting to evaluate the finances and the plan for the coming year.

7. How are you doing health-wise? Encouraging one another involves accountability. Partners should never remain ignorant when it comes to health concerns. And it shouldn't be only physical health. It's also important to take inventory of each other's emotional wellbeing.

8. If you could change one thing about our priorities as a family, what would it be? Notice this isn't an invitation to criticize, but more an opportunity to grow together.

Possible answers might include:

- I'd like to see less TV time and more family time with one another at home.
- We're not eating together enough. I'd like to see dinnertime valued a little more.
- We say can't afford a family vacation, but then we eat out 2-3 times a week. Maybe we should shift that one around!

9. Is there anything I devote regular time to that you see as a possible threat to our family or our relationship? Patterns take time to emerge. When we look back—or from another person's point of view—sometimes we can see more clearly. Ask your wife if there are any adjustments you can make (Consistently late for dinner? Too much golf? Too many evenings with “the boys”?) That would help her to feel more secure.

10. Are you happy? It's a good question even if she says she's

happy already. “What can I do to make you more happy?” is a great discussion. Again, this is where good, active listening is very important. And your wife’s greatest happiness will always be found in God, so encourage her to grow in her faith.

***All Pro Dad** is Family First’s innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a byproduct, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include daily emails, blogs, Top 10 lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From , fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **Instagram**.*

5 Natural Products as Good as Prescription Drugs

We’re a medicated nation. American doctors write more than 4 billion prescriptions for drugs every year to the tune of about \$320 billion.

Almost 70 percent of us take at least one drug regularly, and according to the Centers for Disease Control, the majority of Americans aged 60 and older take two or more prescription drugs, and 37 percent used at least five.

A study published in the journal *ACS Chemical Neuroscience* found that in 2011, antidepressants were the most prescribed class of drugs. The No. 1 selling brand-name prescription overall was the cholesterol-lowering drug Lipitor.

In addition to being costly, many drugs come with a wide range

of serious, even possibly lethal, side effects. But there are natural substances that rigorously conducted scientific studies have shown work as well as pharmaceuticals for common ailments, including depression and high blood cholesterol, with few or no side effects.

Check out these products that are available on store shelves:

- **Red yeast rice.** The Chinese have used red yeast rice for years to lower cholesterol. Made from fermenting a variety of yeast called *Monascus purpureus* over red rice, it has the same chemical composition as the prescription drug lovastatin, according to the University of Maryland. A 2008 study compared people who took fish oil and red yeast rice with those who took simvastatin (Zocor), and cholesterol levels were reduced in both groups. Numerous studies have shown that using red yeast rice results in a reduction of cholesterol – up to 34 percent – over placebo.
- **St. John's wort.** The ancient Greeks used the herb St. John's wort to treat a variety of medical conditions, including depression, and today it's one of the most commonly used supplements in the United States. The Cochrane Collaboration, which reviewed the effectiveness of health treatments, studied the results of 29 trials that compared St. John's wort to prescription antidepressants. They found that the herb treated mild-to-moderate depression as effectively as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), which include Prozac, Celexa, and Zoloft. In addition, St. John's wort doesn't appear to depress sex drive, a common side effect of prescription antidepressants.
- **Ginkgo biloba.** One of the oldest trees on Earth – it goes back more than 200 million years – Ginkgo biloba was used in Chinese medicine as early as 2800 B.C. The supplement, which uses the herb's leaves, boosts mental functioning by increasing blood circulation to the

brain. Ginkgo is sold in Europe as an approved drug in both over-the-counter and prescription versions. "A couple of meta-analyses and systematic reviews show that ginkgo biloba is helpful for dementia in about the same range as drugs being pushed very heavily to treat Alzheimer's," Adriane Fugh-Berman, MD, told WebMD. Fugh-Berman is an associate professor in the complementary and alternative medicine master's program of the department of physiology and biophysics at Georgetown University School of Medicine.

- **Curcumin.** A study at Baylor University found that curcumin, the main compound in the spice turmeric, worked as well as the popular antidepressant Prozac. Study participants were divided into three groups: one took 500 milligrams of curcumin twice a day; the second took a standard dose of Prozac, and the third group took a combination of both. After six weeks, curcumin relieved symptoms of depression as effectively as Prozac. "It was a surprise to us to see that curcumin actually worked as good as the antidepressant," said researcher Ajay Goel, M.D. "So this is amazing news."
- **SAMe.** S-Adenosylmethionine (SAMe) is a naturally occurring compound in the body, and many well-designed scientific studies have shown that SAMe supplements ease the pain of osteoarthritis. Several studies found it was just as effective as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen and naproxen, to relieve the pain and swelling of joints. At the end of a two-month period, a randomized trial found that a daily dose of 1,200 mg of SAMe was as effective as Celebrex, a COX-2 inhibitor, in relieving pain. In addition, studies have shown that SAMe relieves depression. A meta-analysis of studies found that it was as effective as standard prescription tricyclic antidepressants, such as Elavil, in reducing the symptoms of depression.

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