

4 Ways to Love Your Wife Even When You Don't Like Her

Over these 15 years of marriage, I've realized that loving my wife and liking my wife aren't necessarily a pair that always fit together.

This is especially the case when I feel my wife doesn't respect my simple requests. One such request is to dry clean my shirts rather than washing them. This topic has been discussed several times over the years. One time, she ruined one of my favorite shirts after I'd told her I prefer to dry clean this shirt versus wash it. Instead of listening, she decided to throw it in with our regular laundry. Unfortunately, my shirt did not survive the wash and came out with bleach spots.

With my ruined shirt in hand, I realized I really didn't like my wife in that moment. But I still must love her. Love is more than a feeling; it is a choice. We have the ability to choose love.

Here are four ways to choose to love your spouse when you don't even like her.

1. Treat her better than you treat yourself. Think about how you react when you mess up. You still do everything in your best interest. You don't say discouraging things about your mistakes; you don't feel guilty constantly. Instead, you try to move on. Do the same for your wife even when she's messed up or is not enjoyable.

2. Think of how life would be without her. My wife is going back to work after 12 years of working from home and being a stay-at-home homeschooling mom. To say the dynamics of our household will change is the understatement of the year. And this isn't death or sickness, just eight hours away from home

per day. I could only imagine if this were permanent, like death. I'd sleep alone each night, my kids couldn't get those hugs they love from her, I wouldn't have her perspective when dealing with teenage daughter things. Not to mention the logistics of having multiple kids and schedules that sometimes require two parents to pull off successfully. The list could go on and on.

3. Sacrifice through serving her. There is something great about giving up things for yourself to help, encourage or benefit someone else—it is fulfilling. Skip times with the fellas to cook dinner for her. Miss the game to watch Lifetime or Hallmark with her. Do the laundry so she doesn't have to. Miss your lunch break, so you can bring her food after she forgot her lunch. Allow your service in love to get past the parts or times when you don't like her.

4. Set her apart. When speaking of my wife to other people, I typically refer to her as "my wife." I rarely refer to her as Stephana. I do this because I'm the only one who can do that. Nobody else can call her "my wife." It sets her apart and shows her and everyone around that she is special. Additionally, even when I don't necessarily like her, I speak well of her to others.

So even when I'm frustrated, confused or hurt by her, she is still my wife, and my love and actions for her is to be different from everybody else. I hold her hand, touch her differently, introduce her first when speaking with someone she doesn't know and give her my jacket if she's cold. I challenge you to find ways you can set your wife apart from others and show everyone, especially her, how special she is.
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