

5 More Ways to Really Love a Woman

On Thursday, I shared five of the most practical marriage ideas I've picked up over four decades of working with men. (These are straight out of my book *Man Alive*). Here are five more that are crucial for keeping your marriage alive and well:

1. Accept her unconditionally. Happy wives don't feel like they have to perform to be loved. They don't feel like they will be rejected if they don't meet a set of standards. For Pete's sake, if your wife has fat ankles, don't say something stupid like, "Why don't you do ankle exercises?" Jesus accepts each of us "just as I am," as the old hymn says, and smart mates accept each other as is too. Intimacy means that I know who you are at the deepest level and I accept you.

2. Encourage her with words. Your mate has an emotional bank account into which you make deposits and from which you make withdrawals. If you're grumpy when you get home from work, you are making a withdrawal from her account. When you encourage your spouse when she feels down, you are making a deposit. (Make sure to keep track of the account balance!)

We all need to be lifted up when we feel blue, but the most successful couples go one step further—they create a positive environment. They verbally affirm each other at every opportunity. They try to catch each other doing things right. They pass along compliments others make about their mate. They never pass up an opportunity to express appreciation: "I love the way you fix your hair." "That was a great dinner." "I love having you for my wife." "Thank you for running such a smooth home."

Encouragement is the food of the heart, and every heart is a

hungry heart.

3. Take care of her financially. Money problems create more stress on a marriage than any other outside threat. Here is the money issue in a nutshell: is it right to spend so much on a lifestyle today that your wife would be forced into panic mode if you were not around anymore? Successful couples have resolved to live within their means. They do not live so high today that they fail to provide for retirement and premature death.

4. Laugh with her. The antidote to boredom in marriage is lively humor. If your partner says something even remotely funny, laugh! Keep track of what brings a smile to her face and what makes her laugh till her sides hurt. If neither one of you is funny, watch funny movies and make some funny friends.

5. After God but before all others, make your wife your top priority. Once I called three friends to pray for a difficult challenge I faced the next day. One week later I called each of them to let them know how it turned out. "Oh yeah," every one of them said, "I've been meaning to call you."

Sure.

Men, you and your wife are the only two people who are really in this thing together. Everyone else will phase in and out of your lives—even your children. One day soon the party will be over and all your golfing buddies will have moved to Florida to live in little condominium pods and drive around on streets made for golf carts.

And, there will be only two rocking chairs sitting side by side—one for you, and one for her.

Doesn't it make sense to invest today in the person who will be sitting next to you then? Be your wife's best friend.

Patrick Morley is the founder of Man in the Mirror Ministries.
For the original article, visit .