

7 Ways You Might Drive Your Wife Crazy—and How You Can Avoid Them

In my first year of marriage, I turned on the TV and started to watch a marathon of a show my wife didn't like. After three episodes, I turned to say something to her and noticed for the first time that she was no longer in the room.

I went to our bedroom where I found her fuming. Apparently, four different times she tried to say something to me but could not get my attention. I was too engrossed in the show to even realize she was in the room let alone hear her say something. This incident happened several times that first year, and it drove her crazy. She felt like the show was more important than she was.

After several arguments, I realized I needed to make a change. Now if I am watching a show, my ears are heightened to her voice and just to be safe, I look over at her occasionally. It's made all the difference.

As I talk to couples, I hear a list of common things husbands do that drive their wives crazy. Many of these can be avoided by small pieces of intentional action.

1. Inability to multitask. Marriage author Mark Gungor talks humorously about the difference between men's and women's brains. He says women's brains are like a big ball of wires, while men's brains are like a collection of boxes. Inside each of those boxes is a subject and only one box can be dealt with at a time. Women have the ability to think of everything at the same time. They see every subject as interconnected. The amount of details running around their brains is overwhelming. The trouble I run into is when my wife is trying to transfer some of those details to me. If you give me more than one

detail in one sitting we're in trouble.

2. Zone out. Gungor goes on to say that men have a box in our brains with nothing in it. He says the Nothing Box is our favorite box. We have the ability to actually think about nothing, while women's brains never stop. We love to sit and not have to think. This drives women crazy because they can't fathom it. In fact, they kind of envy it. However, it becomes a problem when we zone out or our minds wander when our wives are talking or needing us to engage. I've had too many experiences like this clip from *Lego Movie* where I've had to ask my wife to tell me things multiple times.

3. Don't respond. The easiest response for us when our wives have a problem is to jump into action and try to fix it. However, they have told us over and over they don't want us to do that. We are told they want us to just listen. When they are finished pouring out their problems and emotions, we sometimes sit there not knowing how to respond. They are looking for us to say something, but we know we're not supposed to say something that attempts to fix it. So we say nothing because we haven't done the next point.

4. Don't connect emotionally. I believe, more than anything, our wives are looking to connect with their husbands. However, that's certainly not the easiest task for us. Watching a group of women empathize over one another is fascinating. They all gather around the hurting person in tears and console her. When our wives talk about their struggles and joys they want us to tap into our own similar experience and connect our emotions with theirs. When it doesn't happen, they feel frustrated and alone.

5. Expect sex without trying to connect. When we go to bed, we hope to have sex to connect with our wives, but she needs to emotionally connect first, and if that didn't start earlier in the night it's not going to happen. Wives need a warm up and when we haven't reached out to them until bedtime, their first

thought is, “Now you want me? Where were you earlier when I wanted to talk?” If sex with your wife is going to be a possibility, you need to start making your move the moment the kids go to bed.

6. Show no initiative. After a long day, it’s easy to come home and disengage. This is especially true when our wives are running crazy with details. It’s tempting to think, *She’s got it*. They want us to enter into all of their chaos, help them think ahead and move.

7. Don’t plan. When my wife takes the kids to the park, she plans for everything. She thinks through inviting friends, the weather, extra clothes, snacks, drinks, toys and sporting equipment, and how long we are going to be there. I think through whether they are dressed and have shoes on, and we’re on our way. Imagine what vacations are like. Our wives are constantly planning to meet the needs of our kids and want our help, whether it is our natural tendency or not. {eo}

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