

How to Recognize Signs of Insecurity in Your Wife

In my first year of marriage, I remember lying down on the couch and turning on the television, ready to unplug and relax. That's when my wife came in with a form she needed to fill out.

She started asking me questions about it. Slightly annoyed, I shot back one-word answers. That's when she got upset and told me she needed help. Escalating things, I shot back, "It's a simple form. Why would you need my help?" She ran out of the room, crying.

I was left there wondering what had just happened. I thought, *"It's not like I'm smarter or know that stuff more than you. You don't need me. You got it. I just want to relax."*

I couldn't understand why she was so adamant about my help or why she got so upset. Immediately, it came to my mind that when she was a kid she struggled with dyslexia. She overcame it, but the experience of not grasping things that seemed to come easily to her classmates left her with a deep insecurity.

The story she was telling herself was vastly different than what I was saying. She heard, "It's a simple form. You're *stupid* if you can't fill that *simple* form out. And your *stupidity* is *annoying* me."

The signs of insecurity were there, but I missed them. If I had taken a moment to stop and consider why she wanted my help, it would have changed the entire evening. Her childhood wound was looking for my reassurance.

I could have provided healing, empowerment and security. Instead, I produced the opposite. Understanding our wives' insecurities will help us build them up rather than validate

the untrue stories they tell themselves. Here are some common insecurities of our wives.

1. Measuring Up

The Enjoli perfume commercial from the 1980s says, “I can hang the wash on the line, feed the kids, get dressed, pass out the kisses and get to work by 9 to 5. I can bring home the bacon, fry it up in a pan and never let you forget you’re a man.”

Noted TED speaker Brene Brown while referencing that commercial said, “For women it’s ‘Do it all. Do it perfectly, and never let them see you sweat.’” She then went on to quip, “I don’t know how much perfume that commercial sold, but I guarantee you it moved a lot of antidepressant and anti-anxiety meds.” Women are mostly insecure about how they measure up, constantly comparing themselves with other women who they perceive as better. They feel as though they are never good enough. The following are different areas where this insecurity most prominently plays out.

“I’m not a good enough MOM.” Many suffer from mom guilt. They feel like their kids got the short end of the stick because they are not good enough. The birthday party that isn’t as good as their kid’s friends’, homemade Halloween costumes that aren’t perfect, not knowing exactly what to say to make things OK, preparing meals, helping at school, being there and available to every need at all times are some of the things their brains obsess over. Comments and questions from us can feel like severe judgment.

“I’m not a good enough WIFE.” The house is disorganized and messy. If they don’t fulfill their husbands sexual desires, he will go elsewhere. They may see themselves as exceedingly needy, overly emotional or too (fill in the blank) to be married. Or they may feel as though they don’t live up to your mother.

“I’m not beautiful enough.” This one should come as no

surprise. She feels like you fell in love with the way she looked when you met. When her looks or weight change, you will want to move on to someone else.

That story is deeply ingrained in many and may even cause them to dismiss compliments from their husbands to the contrary. That's why husbands even glancing at an attractive woman can set off fireworks. It's a subtle reinforcement in their minds that there is something better out there for their husband to chase.

"My opinion isn't valuable." Those who struggle with this one don't view themselves as smart as other people. It could stem from many sources, such as being shut down by people, particularly in childhood. They may have had controlling people around them in their life. Be mindful of cutting them off mid-sentence. Ask for their opinion and hear them out fully.

2. Worthiness of Love

Much of the insecurity I think is born out of this place. Many unfortunately think they are unworthy of love. They don't feel OK with who they are and live with the belief that when their husbands really come to know who they are, they won't want to be with them. This one creates an incredible amount of pain and brings with it a powerful defense mechanism. They may lash out and cut their husband off first to save themselves from rejection.

If your wife is being cold and distant, before assuming the worst, look for this one. She is probably protecting herself from some hurt. Maybe even from something that happened long before you even met.

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