

Husband, This Is Why Your Wife Still Feels Alone

As a rabbi, I spend a lot of my time talking with people. Some call it counseling, but I simply call it talking. I don't call it counseling, because the word counseling implies that I have all the answers to provide and solutions for problems and crises. The truth is that for most situations, my answers are limited to my experiences and words of encouragement or correction from the Bible. So I sit down and talk and listen and share the experience with the person who came to me.

It is this sharing of experience that brings me to share this blog today. For those who know me personally, you know I am very transparent about both my victories and my failures. My humanity outshines my spirituality on some days, and I make no pretense that I am anything more than a man striving for perfection, and in doing so, many times it has exposed my imperfections. It is this exposure that I am sharing in hopes that it will shed some light to a reality and help people understand the duality that exists in some situations.

It has been almost 30 years since the events of this day took place. It was a day that should have been like every other day. Actually, it should have been better than the average day. My wife and I were young and in love. We had two beautiful sons, and she was pregnant with our first daughter. Our lives were filled with our family and our friends. We were poor as church mice but rich in faith and the things that really count.

Then suddenly, without warning, my wife started having cramps and abdominal pain, and she began bleeding. I was young, inexperienced and male. I went immediately into husband mode, got her into the car and took her to the hospital. When we arrived, they asked a million questions, which to me seemed

only to slow down the process of getting her into the room where they could find out what was wrong. While I was in the, "Get help! Do something!" mode, my wife, who knew what was happening, was in loss mode. She had enough friends who had this experience to know she was miscarrying our daughter. She had entered the stage of grieving and the pain of loss while I was still in the "How do we fix this?" do we fix this stage.

Once she had seen the doctors and confirmed the worst possible news, I began to format my plan for what to do next. I took her home from the hospital and made her comfortable. I immediately made arrangements to have a friend who was a nurse stay with my wife and take care of her for a few days because I had been previously scheduled to speak out of state (which was part of how I paid our bills) that weekend. I made sure there was food in the house, gas in the car, bills were current and emergency phone numbers were written clearly in case the nurse needed to reach someone in a hurry. All of my bases were covered. In my mind, I had been an exceptional husband and father. I had done everything a good man would do. From a male standpoint, I handled the tragedy that took place by checking off the list of responsibilities and making sure things were taken care of.

The problem was that on that day, my wife didn't need a man; she needed a husband. She didn't care if there was food in the house, if the clothes were cleaned or even if her medical needs were taken care of. She was not concerned if the car was filled with gas or the bills were paid; the only thing she needed a husband. I had done everything right as a man and everything wrong as a husband. She wanted me to grieve alongside her, to join her in experiencing the loss. To hold her tight through her pain.

Unfortunately, I was blind to all of this. Blind to what she needed because I was too busy providing things instead of providing myself. It was many years, after we experienced another great loss, before my wife told me how I had failed

her on that day. All those years since that day, and until she opened up to me, I thought I had done a great job.

It wasn't until she finally released her anger and disappointment by sharing her heart with me that I realized it was possible to have the best man day ever while having the worst husband day ever. {eoa}

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