

Why You Need to Man Up and Show Her Some Affection

It's not uncommon to find couples that are dating to be holding hands, hugging or even just being close.

I can remember many times walking down the mall walkway and seeing young couples all over each other, or even being out at dinner with my wife and seeing couples that are just having a little too much fun. We've all seen those couples.

What I failed to recognize as I looked at these couples was my relationship with my wife. At that point, we had been married for about four years and we just didn't act that way anymore. The chase was over. The mystery was fading and I figured our relationship was fine with or without me trying to hold her hand or put my arm around her.

It was true that some of the mystery was gone, but it was wrong of me to think that our relationship didn't need some kind of affection anymore. Hear me out.

Practical Experiences

Think back with me for a few moments to when you were dating your wife. How often would you hold her hand while driving? How often would you move closer to her when you were at the movie theater? How often would you put your arm around her when sitting next to each other? I can honestly say I did all of these things while I was dating my wife. What about you?

But what about more recently?

As I mentioned above, it was about four years into our marriage that I stopped doing many of these affectionate things to my wife. Our marriage was already crumbling, so why would I want to do something nice for her? Why would I want to

hold her hand if she didn't do certain things for me? Why would I want to pull her in close?

I was looking at love in all the wrong ways. I was looking at myself and my needs rather than her and her needs. I decided to make some changes and here are a few reasons why:

1. She's waiting for you to make a move. I've learned from my wife that there is no limit on how much affection I can show her. In a sense, her cup is always going dry and needs filling up. Even after a few years of marriage, even if there has been some turmoil in the marriage, she still wants you to make a move. So make it!

2. Your hand is better in her hand than in your lap. When I realized her need for affection, I started to pay attention to it a lot more. A quick example is when we're driving in the car together. There were many times when I would think about holding her hand or resting my hand on her leg, but I wouldn't make the move. I've come to learn that my hand does much better in hers than just sitting on my own lap.

3. You may not have another chance. Just like I mentioned the issues of "time and routine" in a recent post, I'll bring up the point again here. Time can play funny games with us and make us think that we have plenty of it. But if we look at time in a more mature way, we'll come to realize that it's short and it's not always guaranteed. You may not have another chance to make the move and hold her hand or put your arm around her. So as I said, make your move.

What's Holding You Back?

It's a simple, yet necessary question to ask after stating some obvious points in the paragraphs above. What's holding you back? What's keeping you from "making moves" on your wife again? What's halting your desire to show affection again?

I once had a long discussion with a couple that was

experiencing this kind of issue. They had been married for 15-plus years and the relationship was bruised and battered at this point. But in all of that, the wife's request always stuck out to me. All she wanted was for him to show affection to her in public. She wanted him to embrace her around friends, to hold her hand when they walked into a crowded area or just put his arm around her when other friends were nearby. It might sound strange, but it was her cry and call for affection. It was the type of love that she needed from him, and he wouldn't do it. He just couldn't understand why he would need to do that type of action for her. We didn't accomplish a lot that night.

But now that you understand that mindset and idea, here are a few ideas I've come up with on what might be holding you back. Consider each point carefully and see if they are the things impacting your marriage.

- **Your peers around you.** I believe there is some confusion when it comes to what is manly these days. It doesn't consist of what you look like or how well you are dressed. Instead, I feel there is great manliness expressed in how well a man treats his woman. When men are around other men, it can be hard to embrace your wife in an affectionate way and still feel like a man. I think that's a lie our culture feeds us these days. I like to believe that embracing my wife around my friends is one of the strongest moves I can make in front of them. Don't be intimidated, but rather set that standard. Show off to everyone that you're proud of your wife and that no matter where you are, she deserves to be treated well.
- **Your selfishness.** It will blind your affectionate actions to your wife instantly. As soon as you feel the push to embrace her, you'll automatically think about your needs and at what level she is meeting them. If you can assess quickly and find her to be up to par, then

you might make a move. But if you find it to be the other way around, you clam up in selfishness and pull back on any type of move. Instead, try to behave in a way that once you make a move, you open the door for her to have a desire to make a similar move for you later. Set the standard men; don't wait for it.

- **Your fear.** There were many times I held back just out of useless fear. I'd know what she would want, but I wouldn't do it. What if she didn't like it? What if she pushed away from me? What if I do it this time and she expects it again? Right? I think I hit the nail on the head with that last one. Fear will keep you from showing affection that first time, but embracing or pushing past that fear will yield returned rewards that will make you *want* to do it again. Make a move and discover it for yourself!

Simple Ways to Take Action

With all of that said, or if you just scrolled down to this last section, my encouragement to you is to man up and show her some affection. Here are only a few examples for you to consider. Add some of your examples in the comments:

- The next time you go for a drive together, go for it and hold her hand.
- The next time you are at the movies or church, go for it and put your arm around her (pull her close).
- The next time you are in a crowded area, keep her close as you guide and protect her.
- The next time you are having a dispute, grab her hand and ask her to pray with you.

Now it's your turn. What are some simple ways that you show affection to your spouse?

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