

Common Ground

4. Studying Your Wife

Rationale

We all want to be loved, but especially our wives and especially by us. Our wives love it when we get interested in the same stuff they are. But many of us know little about our wives. If you've been married for a while...if you work a lot and she "does the kids thing," you may be surprised by how little you know about your wife. Change that. Become a student of this person you're spending the rest of your life with.

Challenge Assignment

Take the true-false self-test provided below. Be honest in your answers...this isn't a competition.

"Knowing Your Wife" Test

Do you really know your wife? Mark each of the following true or false. Don't fudge here...you do or you don't...

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|--|---|---|
| 1. I can name my wife's best friends. | T | F |
| 2. I can tell you what stresses my wife is currently facing | T | F |
| 3. I know the names of some of the people who have been irritating my wife lately. | T | F |
| 4. I can tell you some of my wife's dreams. | T | F |
| 5. I am very familiar with my wife's religious beliefs and ideas. | T | F |
| 6. I can tell you about my wife's basic philosophy of life. | T | F |
| 7. I can list the relatives my wife likes the least. | T | F |
| 8. I know my wife's favorite music. | T | F |
| 9. I can list my wife's three favorite movies. | T | F |
| 10. My wife is familiar with my current stresses. | T | F |
| 11. I know the three most special times in my wife's life. | T | F |
| 12. I can tell you the most stressful thing that happened to my wife as a child. | T | F |
| 13. I can list my wife's major aspirations and hopes in life. | T | F |
| 14. I know my wife's major current worries. | T | F |

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| 15. My wife knows who my friends are. | T | F |
| 16. I know what my wife would want to do if she suddenly won the lottery. | T | F |
| 17. I can tell you in detail my first impressions of my wife. | T | F |
| 18. Periodically I ask my wife about her world right now. | T | F |
| 19. I feel that my wife knows me pretty well. | T | F |
| 20. My wife is familiar with my hopes and aspirations. | T | F |

Now add up the “T’s” and “F’s”. While this isn’t perfect, it’s a “blink” into the quality of your marriage.

10 or more “T’s” = You know your wife pretty well.

Less than 10 “T’s” = You need to make some changes. You need to draw closer to your wife, get to know her better, and take time to continually “study” her. We all want to be known and understood.

Over the next thirty days, spend time learning the answers to the questions you missed on the quiz. In addition, make it a point to learn at least one new thing about your wife every day...something you didn’t know or didn’t pay attention to before. Goes without saying these are to be **positive**, not negative things you’re looking for and learning. Attempt to come to the group with the 30 things you learned.

Debrief

Share with the group your results from the 20 question quiz as well as the three most surprising things you learned in ‘studying your wife’ this month. Each man will follow suit. Set the ground rules so no one ‘crosses the line’ of impropriety or disrespect for privacy. Have a conversation about the value of continually studying your wife.

Adapted from The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work, John Gottman and Nan Silver, Random House, Inc. (02-04-02) Kindle Edition