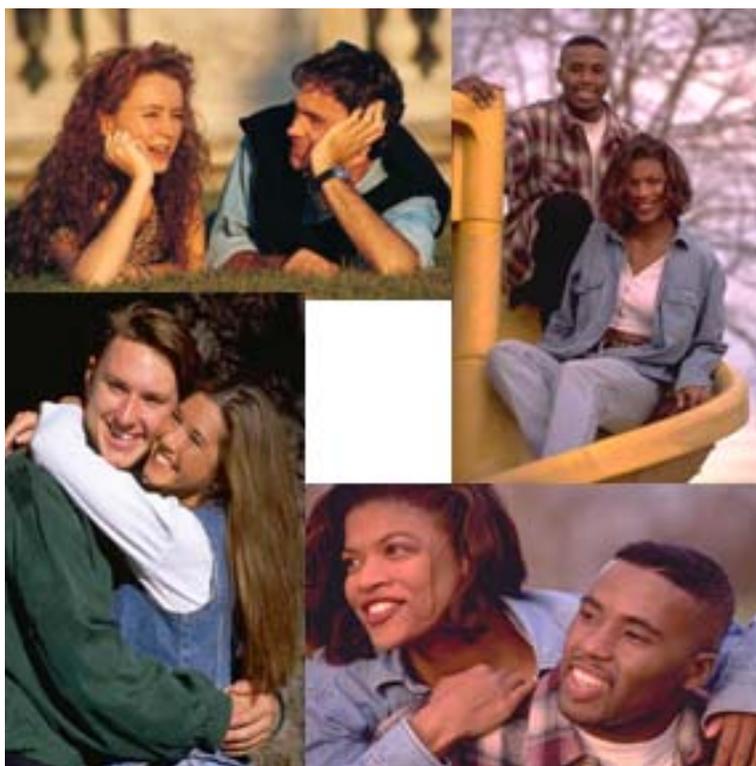


(Free download from Four Needs of a Wife Material: Need #1)

Four Needs of a Wife That Only Her Husband Can Meet



“Husbands love your wives just as Christ loved the church and have himself up for her.” Eph. 5:25

(This material is presented as a talk or a short seminar)

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To AGAPE love our wives means to make whatever sacrifice is necessary to see that our wife's needs are met. That is why knowing her needs is so important!!

Need # 1: Emotional Intimacy With You

A. Understanding this need:

1. This is the yearning of a wife for a soul mate.

"The word, "*intimacy*" comes from a Latin word that means "innermost." What this translates into for those of us in the marriage relationship is a vulnerable sharing of our inner thoughts, feelings, spirit, and true self. Both men and women need to feel secure in this sharing and confident of their spouse's support. This support is achieved through listening, empathy, prayer, or reassurance." Barbara Rosberg, The 5 Love Needs of Men and Women

2. It is feeling so thoroughly loved and accepted that she easily and constantly shares with her lover what is going on in her heart.

"No matter how many times I hear couples lament their differences in the counseling room, or at conferences, it is the same story. Men spell intimacy S-E-X, and women spell it T-A-L-K"
Dr. Gary Rosberg, The 5 Love Needs of Men and Women.

3. It is having her husband be her best friend, who loves to talk with her about everything—because that is what best friends do.

Dr. Gary Rosberg describes a wife's yearning for intimacy. "Melody's idea of intimacy is sitting on the love seat with Dan, a couple of cappuccinos beside them, a roaring fire in front of them, no kids around them, and plenty of time for a good, long, heart to heart talk."
The 5 Love Needs of Men and Women

4. It is having a constant feeling of closeness to her husband, feeling connected, feeling emotionally one with him.
 - The thesis of Every Woman's Desire: Every Man's Guide to Winning the Heart of a Woman, by Arterburn and Stoeker is that every wife longs for **oneness with her husband**.
 - This yearning makes it very difficult for her to live with **unresolved conflict** with her husband.

B. From a Biblical perspective, God designed marriage to meet the human need for INTIMACY!

- Eve is created with a spirit, heart, and body which correspond perfectly to Adam's. (She is made from Adam and is bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh.)
- Marriage is given as the one safe arena where husband and wife are naked, body, soul, and spirit--laid bare and vulnerable to each other. Such vulnerability exposes each other to the possibility of deep wounds through rejection, but within the covenant of marriage, God's design is for Christ-like love to cast out fear.
- Adam and Eve's like natures, combined with the experience of nakedness (baring their hearts and bodies to one another) enable them to experience INTIMACY, i.e. oneness of spirit, oneness of heart, oneness of body.
- The goal of marriage then, is to be able to be naked, body and soul, and be so loved and accepted that you never feel ashamed.

"The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame."
Gen. 2:25

- It is to be so fully one with each other that you think of your mate as part of yourself.

"In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself." Eph. 5:28

- An old fashioned way to express God's goal for our marriages is the word "intercourse." Intercourse means, literally, "connection between persons." It is both conversational interaction that connects 2 souls, and sexual interaction, which connects 2 bodies.
- In God's design, men are generally more driven towards sexual union and wives have a deeper need for emotional union. Christian couples who learn to love each other will unselfishly pursue the kind of intimacy their mate is designed to need.

C. The need for emotional intimacy is often unmet in wives.

1. After the honeymoon, busy schedules and long to-do lists replace the delightful hours of sharing during courtship.

Intimacy of heart and soul begins to fade.

- 84% of women feel that they don't have intimacy (oneness) in their marriages.
 - 83% of women feel their husbands don't even know the basic needs of a woman for intimacy (oneness.)
 - A large majority of female divorcees say that their married years were the loneliest years of their lives.
2. Most husbands don't commit themselves to meeting their wife's need for intimacy of heart and soul.
 - Very few husbands understand their wife's need for emotional intimacy.
 - Most men compartmentalize, drawing close to their wives emotionally when they want to make love. But most of the time, their wives are rarely in their thoughts.

"A man can be contented with a kind of business partnership in marriage, provided sexual privileges are part of the arrangement. As long as his wife prepares his dinner each evening, is reasonably amiable, and doesn't nag him too much during football season, he can be satisfied... However, this kind of surface relationship drives his wife utterly wild with frustration. She must have something more meaningful. This is why a housewife often thinks about her husband during the day and eagerly awaits his arrival at home. It explains why she is constantly "reaching" for him at home, trying to pull him away from the newspaper or television set."

James Dobson, What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women

3. Few husbands make the time and develop the skill they need to listen effectively to their wives' hearts.
4. These failures combined with a tendency to selfishness make it extremely easy for husbands to unintentionally rob their wives of the companionship and closeness their wives need to feel in love with their husband.

What husbands don't realize is that just as their wife's eagerness to make love to him makes him feel loved, HIS EAGERNESS TO LISTEN TO HOW HER DAY WENT makes her feel loved. And just as her lack of interest in sex makes him feel rejected, HIS LACK OF INTEREST IN HEARING WHAT IS GOING ON IN HER HEART makes her feel rejected.

5. Conflict with each other also erodes emotional intimacy.
 - Angry words and put downs force spouses to withdraw, put up barriers, and defend themselves.
 - Tension in the relationship hinders intimacy and creates a distance because some subjects are too explosive to be discussed.
 - Unresolved conflicts destroy the feelings of closeness that wives need to desire lovemaking which often creates more conflict. The solution is not for the husband to demand sex. It is to resolve the conflict.
6. To a woman, a marriage without emotional intimacy is empty and totally unfulfilling.
 - Her feelings for her husband start to die.
 - She becomes less interested in sex.

"Men, your sex drive is connected to your eyes; You become aroused visually. Your wife's sex drive is connected to her heart; she is aroused only after she feels emotional closeness and harmony...You feel less masculine if your wife resists your sexual advances. Your wife feels like a machine if she doesn't experience sexual intimacy flowing from emotional intimacy."
Barbara Rosberg, The 5 Love Needs of Men and Women

- She becomes lonely, depressed, unhappy—and she may not be able to put her finger on why.
- She may be tempted to look somewhere else to have her emotional needs met. Very few affairs start with sex. They begin by looking to someone who is not their mate for emotional intimacy.
- Eventually, she is likely to give up on the marriage. She may leave him, and he won't have a clue why.
- Nearly all divorced couples first drifted apart emotionally.
- Most divorces are initiated by unhappy, unfulfilled wives.

D. How to meet your wife's need for emotional intimacy w/ you.

1. Make a commitment to proactively seek emotional intimacy with her. This is what your vow to love her means to her.
2. Ask your wife when the best time is each day to emotionally connect with her—to hear how her day went.
3. Be disciplined in setting aside those times to talk. If you let busyness or interruptions crowd out this time, your message to your wife is, "You aren't all that important."
4. During those times, listen to her feelings. Ask, "How does that make you feel?" Use the wording "Tell me about" your day, your trip, etc. Develop skill in repeating back, "You are feeling _____ because _____"

"In order to really understand, we need to listen, not to reply. We need to listen long and attentively. In order to help anybody to open his heart, we have to give him time, asking only a few questions, as carefully as possible, in order to help him better explain his experience. Above all, we must not give the impression that we know, better than he does what he must do. Otherwise we force him to withdraw. Too much criticism will achieve the same result, so fragile are his sensitivities. Paul Tournier, To Understand Each Other

5. Don't hide in your emotional cave. You must let your wife in or you have no marriage as far as she is concerned. When you are ready, let her know what you are feeling.
6. Take initiative to resolve any distance or conflict that sets into your relationship with your wife.

This material is a free download from Forging Bonds of Brotherhood. To order the complete booklet, "Four Needs of a Wife That Only Her Husband Can Meet," visit www.forgingbonds.org/resources. See, also, the **FOCUS notebook**.