

A WIFE'S BASIC NEEDS

ESSENTIAL WISDOM ___ FROM YOUR
CLOSEST NEIGHBOR

stability and direction

YOU ARE the patriarchal leader she seeks and yearns to depend on for spiritual guidance and vision for your family. Should you fail to provide these, she will be attracted to stronger men who give evidence of spiritually mature leadership. This can manifest as an irksome comparison of you to other men if she does not see you seeking wisdom and God's will under the wings of someone wiser and smarter than you. She will mistrust your judgments and defer to wiser men by trying to push you under their wings.

Therefore, set yourself firmly in the study of scripture, wisdom, and knowledge suitable for your needs in the world; which means placing yourself in the fellowship of men who do the same. Wisdom is gained by experience, not just by reading, meditation, or prayer. The greatest wisdom comes from applying knowledge through hard work and the correction of errors. Thus, my advice to ladies in search of mature husbands is to find a man who does not just sit and talk, but one who

works. You can spot honest working wisemen by the size of their bellies, strength of hand, limits of speech, and the mess in office or workroom. No mess means *no real work is being done*; a modest belly means *discipline, balance and selflessness*; a strong steady hand and eye means *humility, conscientiousness and attentiveness*; and softness of speech means *wisdom given in measured words*, so that, if he has nothing of worth to say, he says little.

As a safeguard for you and your family, you, the husband, should clearly demonstrate submission to a man of virtue who is held in high esteem by the community; i.e., someone you turn to for guidance when perplexity comes knocking. Under a rightly guided patriarchal structure or, better said, divine order, she will feel safe and secure with your husbandry. The caveat is this: a man without a wise elder is dangerous because he lacks accountability. Women soon come to know this and remain unsettled or restless in their nests until divine order (governance) is established.

Therefore, when problems beyond your ability to solve occur, she needs to see you seeking counsel from someone wiser. This calls you to a humble life of companionship with wise and capable men rather than religious ritual or 'one-ups-man-ship' or competitive tribalism. Prayer is not cathartic obeisance but rather the conscious performance of God's Will (good deeds) after contemplation and meditation (*taffakur*) on divine precepts; which means applying *adab* to Islam's *deen*, which begins at home with your closest neighbor.

When your wife observes your efforts in this direction, it 10 ushers the peace of mind she needs to submit to your authority, even when you fail; and fail you will. Success stems from challenges presented by failure; hence, men who do not admit their failures and faults are guilty of pride, and no one besides Allah knows how proud or humble you are better than your wife if

she's the least bit astute. Hence, if you desire the perfect application of her charms as well as her willing submission without reservation—especially on occasions where you do not have time to explain directives or motives—this approach to Spiritual Leadership is absolutely required.

Despite different belief systems, principles that govern heterosexual marriage are inherent, universal, and absolute. This ethic requires that your wife observes your submission to a man she and others in your community consider wise above others. Such a person is, generally speaking, a man whom you respect as a leader of men; someone whose disapproval of your actions and/or decisions would make you, as well as your family and friends feel uneasy or embarrassed.

The short end of this deep-seated emotionally- and spiritually-centered principle is this: unless you submit to *i*) a man who is wiser than you; and/or *ii*) to a fellowship of trusted male peers, your wife will not be comfortable submitting to your authority, even if she obeys you in all things.

meet vital needs

SHE MUST KNOW that only she fulfills vital needs in your life. She is the means by which you draw others to right living. However, the inverse is also true. She does this by public demonstrations of free-willed submission to your leadership and manhood. A wife who does not submit publicly signifies that her husband is a weakling. There are women who take pleasure in this, as well as men who submit to them as masochists. But know this: if you are a blind follower of untruths, or if you are an innovator of the left-hand path, her submission to you helps you draw others

to Hell, both here and hereafter.

A wife's submission in marriage validates her's and her

husband's authority in the community. This unique grace is freely given and is representative of Divine Order. It explains why the Prophet taught that women should never marry against their will, and that single women should never be placed in positions of authority without supervision. You must, therefore, reciprocate by acknowledging her unique role in your life and do not allow just any woman to do for you whatever your wife does, especially sex, without her permission and knowledge. Should you do so, it is an act that undermines her self-confidence and authority in the community, especially among women. As your legal consort, it allows them to openly disrespect her. It is akin to hiring someone for an executive position and then delegating their duties to someone outside the firm.

If there is another woman in your life or work milieu, make certain she is known and accepted by your wife. Never, ever discuss marital problems with this other lady, and make certain you praise your wife to her. This lady and any others, including former wives, must make the purpose of your current marital responsibilities their priority, even to the point of admonishing you both should they or any other reliable witness see either of you neglect them.

As your consort and prime minister, she should, from time to time, observe you humbling yourself and confessing your failures. On seeing this, she will praise your successes even more. Her position as your co-regent is an intimate extension of your communal authority and influence. As your closest neighbor and companion in the community, it secures and strengthens her identity and meaningful purpose. Moreover, a wife with intact instincts is a natural alarm system who safeguards you against persons with wrong motivations. Her intuition protects you from making hasty decisions because she requires security, which calls for consistency in your behavior.

Thus, she is a significant aide to self-discipline (*taqua*). In addition, only she can discern the real needs of your children.

All things considered, you should frequently and gratefully praise her. Discover areas of your life in which she uniquely fulfills a need, and then tell her exactly how you depend upon her for these things. Her love for you will be sealed by a continuum of bliss and peace should you take the time and effort to do so.

cherish and delight

She needs to know that you cherish and delight in her. This key opens the suite of lasting romance and has everything to do with your conjoined destiny. She must know that you hold her with such high regard that you publicly praise her. She desires and needs to hear you say what it is that you see in her *beyond her physical charms*. Any number of women can meet your physical needs and she knows this, although she is too shy to admit it. Besides pheromones, something drew you to her that transcends the instinctive sexual union. This spiritual cum metaphysical component is the most significant element of your relationship, and has everything to do with mutual compatibility factors designed by Allah for mutual benefit. These qualities and specific gifts provide the necessary complementary fractals that help you both fulfill your conjoined destinies. Without this acknowledged actualization, the union remains mundane.

Opposites attract but all studies show that successful marriages depend on similarities as well as shared expectations and desires, whether or not partners are believers. Sympathies and antipathies held in common provide avenues for merciful tolerance. Therefore, define her qualities of soul and intellect so that she knows the ‘how’ and ‘why’ it is that Allah specifi-

cally prepared her and drew you to her. — But why do this? ... because it defines ‘why you will keep and cherish her as wife and companion’. This essence of romance has nothing of Hollywood in it.

Mohammad said a man has divine leave to marry for religion, wealth, beauty, or social position. A man of discernment knows his destiny and will be able to identify why a particular woman is placed in his life. For example, a comely lady of wealth must be made to realize that her generosity on your behalf is a providential opportunity purposely destined to aid the *cause-of-God* in your right hand. As wealthy as Khadijah was, all her wealth was gone in the end, having been spent in the *Cause of Allah*. This is the sunnah. A pious lady knows that her submission as wife is a key factor to her husband’s standing in the community. Without it, they both lose divine approval.

Hence, your wife desires that you rehearse, from time to time, all heavenly signs that led you to her life and bed, along with the qualities of her character (virtues) that keep you by her side. If she spends your money wisely, praise her. If she makes mistakes, teach her how they help her to grow in virtue and your admiration. If she has a limitation, teach her how it helps her to depend on Allah and increase her faith. The romance that follows in the wake of such husbandry and counsel is a delight that rivals Paradise.

1. See: *CONTRITION: Clear Waters for Troubled Souls*

need to be understood

A husband should protect his wife from failure. She needs to know that you understand her well enough to stop her from over-reaching her limitations. This means you must proactively set boundaries out of concern for her rather than react to errors

you should have helped her avoid. To do this, you must help her understand her strengths and weaknesses while giving firm but loving guidance. For example, prevent her from taking a position for which she is not qualified or would be detrimental to your household's peace and integrity. She may test you, so do not give or permit whatever she might ask without careful consideration. It is advisable to postpone judgment on a matter, even if it means feigning consideration of the request. If you grant her every desire, she will become insecure because you lack the courage to say 'no'. Know also that if you do not stand your ground, you will generate a petulant shrew who becomes a beautiful pebble in your shoe.

It is important to realize that if another man understands her more than you do, she will become susceptible to his advances. So, study your wife and learn to read her well enough to honor her strengths and protect her from sin and her limitations. This is a serious responsibility. Should you ignore it she will feel neglected, taken for granted, and not truly appreciated; all of which are open doors to adultery, for which she would no doubt be blamed, when, in fact, you invited the grievous default by failing to be her diligent leader.

intimate conversation

She needs you to enjoy intimate conversations with her. Intimate communication is a wife's most basic need and has everything to do with your covenant's conformation. The touching of tongue to ear is where hearts dance the tango. Intimate conversation mixes the mortar that joins the elements used to build your mosque. You mix the finishing mortars out of sincerity and guidance with the sand of her detailed concerns and observations. You must sift and remove her anxious rocks and stones with the filters of an attentive ear and

understanding heart. All this is done while holding her in the firm hand of patience.

This art of husbandry demands diligent craftwork; you must filter the grit to a smooth blend for precise joining with a fine finish. Women are chary by nature. They seek the solace of security provided by sober manhood, which, in this respect, denotes the fatherhood of an archetypal patriarch. She is more than willing to be sifted by the sincere eye of your manly soul and intelligence. Listening is also a vital component of sexual foreplay, which is a most solemn matter in her eyes—as if it were communications with heaven.

Without the admixture of your understanding, guidance, consolation, and at times, directives, her desire to be manhandled will diminish. Over time, your neglect of intimate conversation will cause the mosque of romance to either collapse or become dilapidated for want of maintenance by this crucial process. Eventually, she will fail to take you and your needs seriously in a positive and/or constructive context, all because you have not weighed her soul on the scale of this essential trial of equality. Her graceful devotion and delightful submission to you depends almost exclusively upon this intimate component because she measures your love for her, not by your wallet or sexual prowess, but by your heart's ability and desire to hear, appreciate, and at times, critique the song of her soul.

Sometimes this song is dissonant and incompatible with yours, which calls for patience and tolerance of a thing you do not like. Notwithstanding, when the soul-songs of each partner do not harmonize on a continuum, it signifies a poor match with irreconcilable differences for which pristine Islam makes divorce easy. There is no middle ground unless you both choose to ignore the *fitrah* Allah placed in your hearts. When such is the case, the pall of a conspiracy enters the bond and reigns unto death. Many marriages suffer this God-forsaken

malady, wherein potency surrenders to ritual. Hypocrisy then becomes king and/or queen.

aware of her presence

Your wife needs to know you are aware of her presence even when you are preoccupied. This won her heart to begin with, and also reassured her friends and family that you would be a considerate husband. A good wife is like a moon who revolves 'round the planet of her husband's destiny and constantly measures his awareness of her. She does this to **1**) assess her importance in your life; and **2**) measure effects of her gravitational pull on you. So, do not carelessly ignore or dismiss her.

This test measures manners (etiquette) and qualifies you as her gentleman champion. Why? Because loving kindness always has good manners; always defends and defers; and never insults a lady. Do you help her with the heavy work; do you refrain from bad language; do you introduce her properly; do you inform her of your activities in a timely fashion; do you keep yourself clean and well groomed? In all these things she is looking for consistent proof of the 'respect' that is implied by the phrase '*I love you*'. Acknowledgement of her in all these things and more sets her firmly in orbit around your life as appointed by Allah. Furthermore, your own sense of honor and your giving, taking, and receiving personal delights depend on your measured, well-mannered proportional responses to her in light of her probing gravitations.

She will often approach you while you are pre-occupied just to test her priority in the affairs of your life. Do not ignore her. Even if all you can afford is a loving glance or gentle touch, offer it in recognition of her status, then excuse yourself and return to your work. If her intrusion is important, she will somehow let you know. If so, you must cease working and

immediately attend to her concern(s) with patient sincerity, as if it was an emergency. A few such episodes are sufficient to pass the test and secure her sense of self-respect as she circumambulates as your equal and most intimate companion. You will not regret it.

More importantly, the protocol of impressive courtesy endorses the sacrality of marriage in the eyes of your peers and superiors. It sends a clear message that your union is not only your top priority but also Allah's. When she sees the Divine Underwriter of human destiny and fate confirming her status by a public display of recognition and honor on her behalf, her willingness to orbit your destiny blossoms with courage, devotion, and loyalty via the grace of your loving diplomacy. This, in turn, endorses your communal position as a man of genuine authority under guidance by the Right Hand of Allah. The endorsement of your authority in the community begins with her confirmation-of and willing submission-to your manhood in its