

As a divorce survivor and support group leader for separated husbands since 2010, Randy recognize the many "common mistakes" that he made back then. So, if he could go back in time, here are some things that he would tell himself "Randy to Randy"...

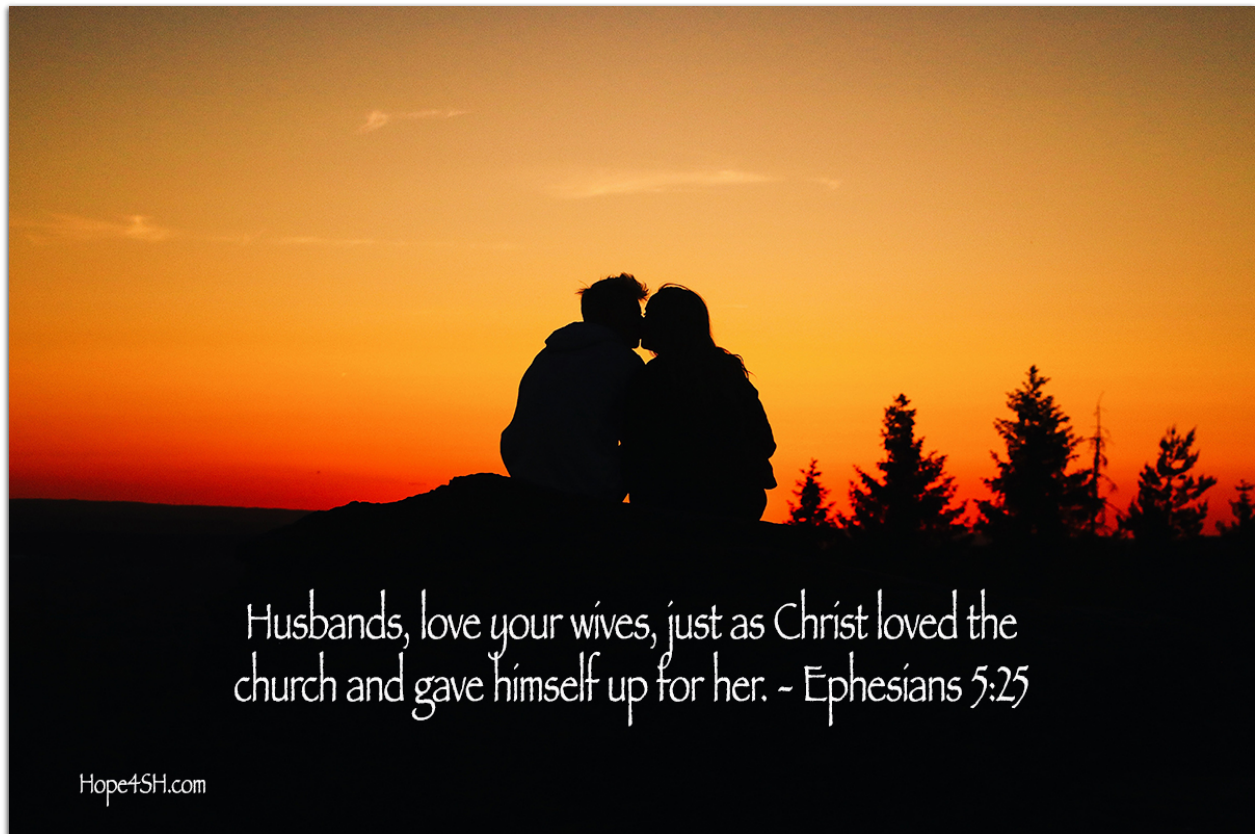
## Raise the Priority of Your Marriage

Randy, it really IS as bad as she says it is. Maybe worse. I know you were raised to think that "providing for your family" was everything you needed to be a good husband and father. And if you do that, your family will know that you love them.

Well, it turns out that they need more. They need YOU. Specifically, your time and your attention. Pastor Rick Warren teaches that "Love" is spelled T-I-M-E.

So, yes, work hard and provide for your family. But, also, invest time into your marriage. (Read books on it. Take classes on it. Go on weekend marriage retreats.) Do NOT assume that "everything is fine!" (It's not.)

Ask your wife to be honest with you and tell you how things really are. (And this time, really LISTEN to her.)



And don't forget, the best thing you can do for your **kids** is to show them what a happy, healthy marriage looks like.

*Relationship Tip:* A scientific study discovered that women with extra weight usually live longer than men who point it out.

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## Accept Their Perspective

Randy, do you remember the time when your wife asked you to mow the lawn on a hot summer afternoon? You said you would, once it cooled down... but, you kept working from home instead, and forgot? 2 days in a row?

Do you also remember that her account of the story was that "day after day," she asked you to mow the lawn - but you didn't - until finally, in her frustration, she just did it herself, and said that you "made her do it."

Remember how much you argued, and ARGUED about that?

In a few years, you'll look back on this and realize that you both had valid points.

You were working so hard to provide for your family that you barely even noticed that she had asked you to mow the lawn multiple times. Nor did you realize at the time how important that was to her. (Pay more attention, dude.)

She wanted the lawn mowed because someone in the neighborhood mentioned to her that your grass was too long, and that embarrassed her. She was very pregnant, so she asked you to do it - 3 days in a row.

But, Randy, the point is, in order to keep the peace, you must let go of your NEED to be right about something, and accept that oftentimes we simply have different perspectives. Realize and accept that other people are EQUALLY entitled to their own point of view -

even if it's different from yours - and "wrong" in your mind.



So, Randy, the next time you're arguing with someone, ask yourself, "Do you need to be right? Or do you want to be happy?"

*Tip:* Before you criticize someone, walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you do criticize them, you're a mile away. And you have their shoes.

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### **Don't Wait Till It's "Really Bad"**

Randy, Your wife has been very tolerant... for years. But your marriage is in BIG trouble. She's not *\*really\** happy, even though she puts on a happy face in public, and for family and friends.

She's mentioned things that she needs from you that she's not getting. Like romance, help around the house, and your undivided attention.

Randy, remember how, after some bad blow ups, you'd do whatever it took to improve your relationship, like give her attention, and whatever else she wanted?

And remember how it "worked" and lasted for up to... about three weeks?

Then you went right back to doing things the way you wanted to. (Working too many hours and not spending enough time with your wife & kids.)

I'm here, right now, to tell you that if you wait till things get "really bad," your wife is going to leave you.

Why?

Because by the time YOU realize that it's "really bad," it's been really bad for HER for years. And she just can't take it anymore. Seriously.

So, STOP WAITING. It IS really bad. Now. It IS worse than you think it is.

But, there are lots of great resources to get the help you need. So, put in the time, and work on your marriage - NOW.

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**Be devoted to one another  
in love. Honor one another  
above yourselves.  
- Romans 12:10**

Hope4SH.com

So, Randy, learn more about your wife, and spend more time with her. Immediately. Become her biggest fan - again. Put her needs and desires above yours.

Because thinking that things are fine, when she's really just putting on a happy face, will kill your marriage.

*Final thought:* I read that last year 4,153,237 people got married. I'm no mathematician, but shouldn't that be an even number?

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## **It's NOT Fair...**

Randy, stop looking for things to be FAIR.

YES, we grew up being taught to always BE fair. (Share your toys, etc.) And, of course, we should be fair to others.

The problem comes in when we EXPECT others to be fair to us. Unfortunately, that's often not the case.

In fact, here's the harsh reality...

It's never been FAIR, It's not FAIR now, And it will never be FAIR.

My point is this, Randy:

If you expect everything and everyone to be FAIR to you, you're gonna be majorly disappointed. Often.

So, DROP the expectation.

Don't be kind to someone IF or WHEN they're kind to you. Be kind because it's the right thing to do. ALWAYS.

You lead the way.

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In fact, if you really want to get healthy, and have the best chance of reconciling or nurturing relationships, start looking for ways to be kind to others all day long. And go do it.

Yes, it takes time out of your day.  
DO IT anyway.

*Final thought about fairness:* Dogs can't operate MRI machines. But catscan.

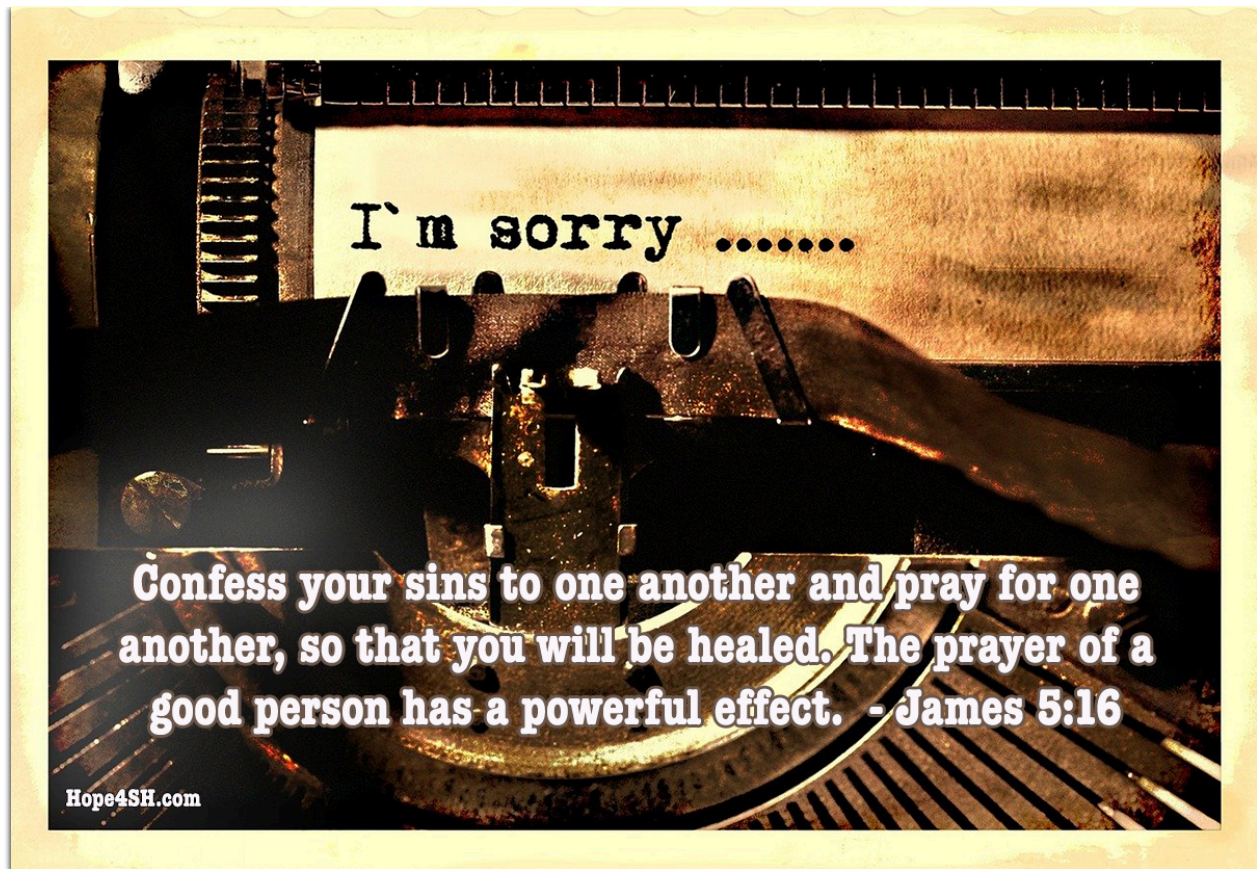
## Apologize

Randy, learn how to apologize.

When you've made a big mistake and you really want to restore your relationship, just saying "I'm sorry" is usually NOT enough. Here are the 5 recommended action steps...

- 1) Say "I'm sorry."
- 2) Make sure she knows that you understand the pain that you caused her. (Explain "When I did \_\_\_\_\_, I can see how/why it made you feel \_\_\_\_\_.")
- 3) Assure her that you'll never do it again. And that you've already begun to work on (the issue). And honor your word.
- 4) Offer to make restitution. ("How can I ever make it up to you?" Counseling, etc.)
- 5) Ask for her forgiveness.

(Don't underestimate this process. A sincere, heartfelt apology can do wonders for your relationship. Besides, it's the right thing to do.)



*Final apology tip:* "Sorry for the mean, hurtful, accurate things I said to you" is not a good apology.

## Languages Of Love

Randy, I know at this point in your life you've never heard of them, but there are actual "languages of love." (Yes, it's a thing.) According to author, Gary Chapman, who wrote the book on the subject, The 5 Love Languages are:

- **"Words of affirmation"** (Speak to her in a kind, loving manner.)
  
- **"Acts of service"** (Cheerfully do things for her like "honey-do's," household chores, etc.)
  
- **"Quality time"** (Do stuff together and give her your undivided attention.)
  
- **"Gifts"** (Buy her little presents.)
  
- **"Physical touch"** (Hugs, kisses, massages, etc.)

Also, according to the author, everyone has a primary love language, and almost everyone also has a secondary love language.

Put simply, they answer the question, "What makes you feel loved the most?"

Unfortunately, Randy, right now, without realizing it, you're both speaking to each other in your OWN love language - not each other's. And it's not helpful.

You hug & kiss your wife, and maybe rub her shoulders, thinking that because that's what makes YOU feel loved (physical touch), she'll feel loved too. She does the dishes and laundry (and almost everything else) hoping that because that's what would make HER feel loved (acts of service) you'll feel loved too.

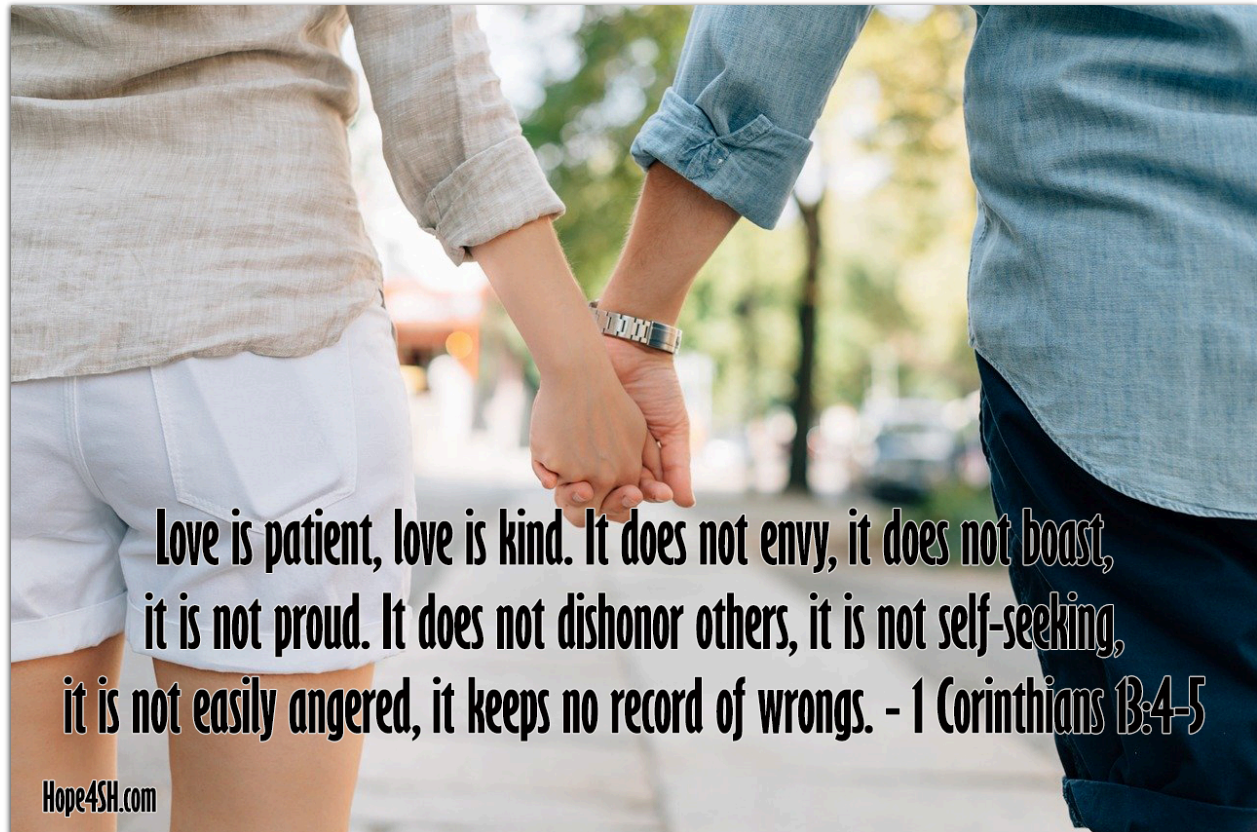
Again, Randy, it's NOT working.

Fortunately, there is a simple fix that will only take you about an hour:

1. LEARN your spouse's love language.
2. SPEAK IT to her often.

YES, it's just that easy. Yes, it WILL help your relationship.

[Click Here to check out The Five Love Languages](#)



*Example of speaking different languages: Wife says to her programmer husband, "Go to the store and buy a loaf of bread. If they have eggs, buy a dozen." Husband returns with 12 loaves of bread.*

## Listen and Connect

Randy, as men, we're born "fixers." We love to solve problems. And we love to help others by offering "the answer" to someone when they're struggling with something. (Logical, right?)

But, more often than not, when your wife is talking to you, she is actually just trying to connect with you. She doesn't really WANT you to "fix" the problem she's talking about. She just wants you to listen. Actively listen. And connect with her.

Randy, you and I both know that very often you try and "solve" the problem BEFORE your wife is even done explaining it!

(That's just stupid.)

So, here's what to do: Next time you talk with your wife, or anyone else, stop whatever else you're doing, look them in the eye, and actively LISTEN to them. Do NOT focus on "solving the problem" or "fixing the issue."

Instead, be present. Be in the moment. Make sure you really hear what they're saying. And, make sure they feel HEARD. Or, you won't have many moments left with them at all.



[Click Here for my absolute favorite 1-MINUTE VIDEO on the subject. \(Trust me.\)](#)

## Love & Respect (AKA "Security vs. Adequacy")

Randy, we all know that, generally speaking, women think and feel differently about life than men do, (duh) especially about safety and security.

For example, here's a story about what happened at a Tony Robbins event with 2000 people, about half men and women. One day, Tony asked this question to the men: "Men, raise your hand if you have felt unsafe at any point during the last week." Of 1000 men, maybe 10 hands went up.

Then he asked the women the same question: "Ladies, during the last week, how many of you have felt unsafe at any time?" About 1000 female hands went up, while the men looked around the auditorium shocked and dismayed.

So, Randy, safety and security are two of the MOST IMPORTANT things in a woman's life. That's how they're WIRED. It permeates into ALL aspects of their lives.

How does this difference affect YOUR relationship? A LOT!

For example, when your wife is not "in the loop," or not a part of important decisions, like your family finances, it makes her uneasy. (AKA "UNSAFE & insecure.")

Also, if she seems focused on your income, it's not necessarily because she's a "gold digger," it's because a steady income represents security.

### Love and Respect

Women simply want to feel that they are in control of their own lives. And when decisions are made FOR them, they can't help but feel INSECURE and UNSAFE.

When they feel in control of their own lives, they can feel loved.

BTW, it's OK for one of the spouses to be "in charge" of something (like finances, or vacation planning, etc.), but, the other spouse, especially if it's your wife, will feel more secure if she's a part of the decision-making process.

On the other hand, Randy, you know that deep down YOU just want to be respected and thought of as a good husband, provider, and father, AKA ADEQUATE.

And, when you feel respected, you feel adequate. It's just that simple for us guys.

So, Randy, ask yourself every day, "How can I make my wife feel more safe and more secure today?" And, when you figure out a way to make that happen, do it.

I promise, THAT will go a LONG way in your marriage.

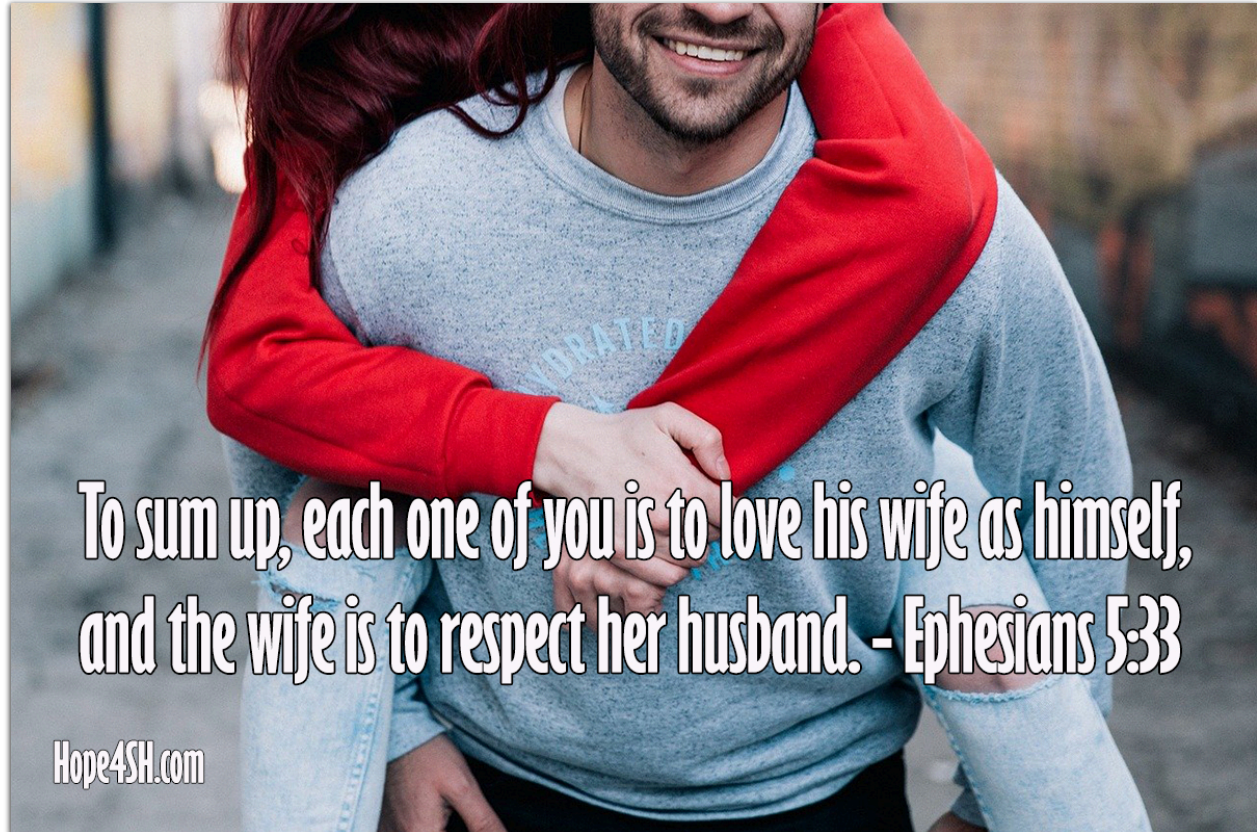
Bottom line - Both men and women need love AND respect. But, for this discussion...

Wives: Respect and love your husband.

Husbands: Give your wife something to respect and love. (Put her first, and make her feel safe and secure.)

Husbands: Love and respect your wife.

Wives: Give your husband something to love and respect. (Show him respect and appreciation.)



*Tip:* I've been told I'm condescending. (That means I talk down to people.)

## Costco Angel?

Randy, look at me.

You KNOW that I know that you've always been a nice guy. You've treated people fairly and have always been "on the straight and narrow" and a "goody-two-shoes." You've always been kind, rarely spoke ill of anyone, and would never hurt a fly. And, you've always had a good heart.

But... like so many others, you've been brought up to "look out for #1" and put yourself first. (Telling yourself that once you're "ahead" you'll be better able to help others.)

Unfortunately, in doing so, you've cheated yourself out of a BIG part of who you really ARE. Not until the pain of divorce do you surrender your life to your creator and discover the joy of putting others before you.

Yes, JOY.

See, Randy, we're all here on earth to learn some things. The most important is that life is about relationships. It's about putting other's needs ahead of your own. It's about helping others. Once you plug into this, your life will change dramatically, and forever. And, you're gonna LOVE IT!

But, since you're still "back there" (in our life), and you're only used to doing things YOUR way, here's an idea:

Start small. Like at your next trip to Costco.

See that great parking spot? Let someone else have it. (They may be in an even bigger hurry than you are.)

See that senior citizen struggling to load their heavy water bottles into their SUV? Stop what you're doing and help them.

Then, take their shopping cart back for them. Now, smile and give them a few kind words.

Yes, angels are real. And you've just been someone's angel here on earth.

Now, get in your car, breathe, and notice how THAT feels. YOU get to choose what kind of person you're going to be for the rest of your life. Right now.

Later, Randy, after your horrible divorce, you're gonna see how much BETTER it feels to live this way.

To serve others. (Honestly, it feels so good, it almost feels selfish!) So, here's a thought...

Do it now.

Don't wait for a painful, major event to happen to make these changes. Choose to "be someone's angel" daily. Or, as much as possible.

We Christians call it service. And, it's what we're supposed to be doing every day.

**LET US NOT BECOME WEARY IN DOING GOOD, FOR AT THE PROPER TIME  
WE WILL REAP A HARVEST IF WE DO NOT GIVE UP. - GALATIANS 6:9**



But no matter who you are, or what you believe, you can always help others. There are plenty of service organizations around. Even national ones. Google "National Service Organizations" and get involved. I PROMISE, your life will be better!

*Final thought:* Years ago, when someone thanked me for helping them, I'd say, "You're welcome. It's the least I could do." Because it usually was. ;-)

## **"PhD or ExH?"**

Randy, back in the day, you courted your wife. You went on dates, you talked on the phone, you hung on her every word, and you couldn't wait to be with her. You were her biggest fan. And she loved you.

Then, you got married.

And things were great! But, over the years, you did more and more of what YOU thought was right for the both of you.

And, even though your intentions were good, Randy, you became a selfish, controlling, workaholic.

So, listen up. This is repairable - IF you do something about this right now...

Every day, ask yourself, "What would make (your wife's) life a little better today, in some way?"

Start thinking more about HER and her wishes. Again.

When you were courting her, this "creative" stuff came pretty easily.

But creativity is a muscle. And when it comes to thinking about your wife and putting her first, that particular muscle is atrophying.

Here are a few ideas off the top of your head to get you started again...

Check her favorite can of hairspray. If it's nearly empty, go get her more. (Especially if it's a particular brand that she really likes.)

Obviously, this goes for anything that she especially likes: Coffee, Tea, Dove bars, crossword puzzles, frozen yogurt, etc. Whatever she prefers.

It could simply be a link to something that she's really into.

It should be specific and personal to her, and something she enjoys, NOT just "on sale" or because you both needed it (like groceries).

By the way, Randy, doing household chores, like dishes and laundry, ARE helpful, but since you're a member of the household, you should be doing those anyway. Right?

Still not sure?

Ok, pay attention. (Not just to me.) Pay attention to HER. Like you used to. LEARN about her, about who she is right now.

Go shopping together. (YES.) What are her favorite stores? Favorite brands? Favorite flavors? Favorite flowers? Favorite music? Favorite movies?

When she shares something about herself with you, really listen to her. Even if, and sometimes especially, if it's said "in passing." Then ask yourself, "Is there something I can do about it?" (Get it, buy it, arrange for it, make it happen.)

Become her biggest fan. You should have a PhD in your wife.

If YOU don't become her biggest fan, right now, someone else may.

And, unfortunately, Randy, if you take my suggestions, and your wife & your marriage, for granted, you'll soon be an ex-husband. And, trust me, you don't want THAT degree (ExH).

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

1 Peter 3:7



*Final thought:* The early bird might get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.

## Is it REALLY "All about communication?" (HINT: No.)

Hey Randy, here's Webster's definition...

Communication (**Noun**): a process by which information is exchanged between individuals.

So, why isn't clear communication enough?

A very popular misconception is: "If we could just communicate clearly, we'd be fine." Unfortunately, it's where a LOT of people, especially us "logical" men, get it wrong. Here's why...

It's not ALL about communicating clearly, or even understanding each other. It's about CONNECTING with each other on an emotional level.

Connecting with your spouse is the first step to loving her. And when your wife feels connected to you, she feels loved, safe and secure.

Think about it, you could communicate your perspective very clearly and even understand your wife's perspective completely, but, if you don't CONNECT with her, a huge part of your marriage will be missing.

I completely agree with Dr. Steven Covey when he says, "Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply."

Obviously, listening and understanding one another is vital!

But, Randy, I suggest that you take it a whole step further and "Listen and speak with the intent to connect."

One simple formula for a great conversation is this:

- Ask your wife an open-ended question. ("How was your day? Not "Did you have a good day?")
  
- Actively listen to her response.
  
- Follow up with an open-ended statement. (Like "That's interesting. What else happened?" Don't just say, "I see" and sit there with a blank stare.)

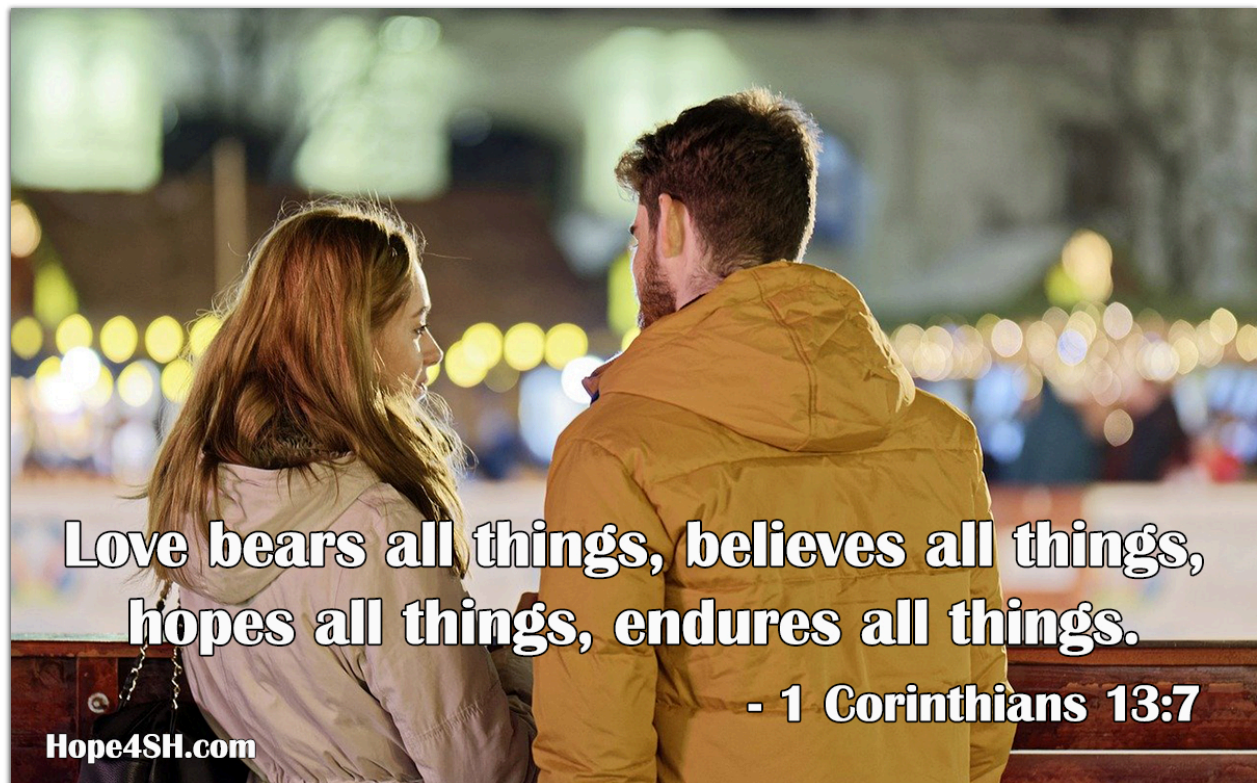
We men tend to "listen" on a logical level. It's oftentimes the safest way to converse. So, it's natural for us.

However, if you really want to connect with your wife, you'll have to listen to her on an EMOTIONAL level. Go beyond connecting concepts and thoughts, and dig into the feelings BEHIND those concepts and thoughts.

For example, if your wife runs a nursery and tells you about how she recently planted roses for a new client, you may never have planted anything before, but you can think back to when you felt a similar level of anxiety in an important situation.

When you listen to your wife emotionally, you show empathy. And, empathy encourages connection.

So, Randy, don't just communicate. Get in touch with your emotions, empathize, and CONNECT with your wife.



*Final thought:* "The problem isn't that obesity runs in your family. The problem is no one runs in your family."

**Wait! Tolerance is bad?**

In today's society, we hear a lot about "tolerance" and "acceptance." But, for you, Randy, there is a big difference between the two.

In your world, tolerance is about "putting up" with something, usually with (at least) some negative feelings towards it.

On the other hand, (and again, in your world) "acceptance" is more about acknowledging and respecting something without ANY negative feelings attached.

For you, tolerance starts out feeling negative and can eventually turn into resentment. (The worst emotion of all.)

When you fully accept a situation, or person, you feel more positive towards it/them.

Randy, it is simply a choice. It's YOUR choice.

For example: Remember when your in-laws came and stayed at your house with you and your wife for a while? You chose to tolerate them/the situation. (You and I both know that you felt inconvenienced by them being there, and found fault with many things that they did, and so you did not fully accept them.)

Of course, your wife FELT your negative attitude toward them, even though you denied having any such feelings.

Had you chosen to fully accept them, including their quirks and behavioral preferences, without ANY negative feelings on your end, your wife would have felt a lot more safe and secure with the entire situation, and she would have felt absolutely LOVED by you.

(Remember: "If it's important to her, it's important to you.")



So, Randy, next time, when something (or someone) isn't exactly what you'd prefer, or expect, whenever possible, choose to fully accept, not just tolerate.

This is IMPORTANT. And, it's a whole step toward becoming the man you were meant to be.

*Final thought:* I always knew I'd get old. How fast it happened was a bit of a surprise though.

Hang in there, brother, you're not alone.

- Randy Pryor

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