



Fatherly

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8 Things Happily Married Couples Do For One Another Without Being Asked

It's not the grand gestures but the little things that add up and build equity in the relationship.

By [Jeremy Brown](#) Mar 28 2018, 8:23 PM



No married couple expresses their love in exactly the same way. But the truly happy couples do share one thing in common: both members make little gestures throughout the day for the other without really thinking about it. Indeed, partners in healthy relationships and marriages make a habit of doing things that, quite simply, they think will please the other person.

“Happily married couples think of ways to make the other person happy without being asked,” says Raffi Bilek, a marriage counselor and the director of the Baltimore Therapy Center. “If one of them is out and about and sees a bake sale, he goes over and checks if they have any chocolate éclairs, because he knows his partner loves chocolate éclairs. If she hears about a woodworking show in town, she takes a picture of the flyer so she can tell him about later because he totally into woodworking.” No, we don’t have to be using woodworking and sweets as examples, but the truth remains: “Both partners have each others’ needs and interests top of mind, and they keep them there — without being asked.”

Terry Klee, a leading scholar of contemporary couples counseling in New York and Connecticut, agrees. She notes that it’s important to keep this awareness even when your spouse isn’t around. “One of the key traits in close to 80 percent of men and women was how often they are carrying their partner around in their mind. How much real estate they give to them,” she says. “You never want to be in that 20 percent. I always found that to be a very interesting statistic. You ask people, ‘How often do you think of Susan?’ or ‘How often do you think of Joe?’ and, if they say ‘Not much,’ track that friend’s marriage, because it’s probably not going to last.”

With this in mind, what can couples do to make sure their partners know their significant other is thinking of them? Here, per relationship experts, are eight simple gestures all strong couples make.

They Take On a Chore For The Other

After a long day of work and parenting, coming home to a full sink of dirty, caked-on dishes can be enough to defeat even the most stalwart mom or dad. The experts suggest taking it off your partner's shoulders and give him or her a break for the night. Even better, don't tell them you did it and let them come home to a wonderful surprise. "Taking something off each other's plate shows that you appreciate your partner's hard work and want to help them and allow them time to unwind after a hard day," says Vikki Ziegler, a renowned relationship expert, divorce attorney, author of *The Pre-Marital Planner*.

They Do Something That De-Stresses The Other

A simple, out of the blue gesture shows that you recognize how hard they work and that they need to do something to unwind. More than that, it lets them know that you see all that they contribute to the marriage, and that can work wonders for you both. "Set up a bubble bath, light some candles, and really show that their happiness and self-care is a priority to you," says Ziegler.

They Send Their Partner Out

Sometimes giving your partner some space and time to be with friends outside of the house can be a simple gesture that can reap huge dividends. "Surprising your spouse with an outing with friends is a great way to show support for their interests and friendships," says Ziegler, "and allows them to get out and unwind."

They Send Themselves Out

Just leaving the premises and giving one's partner a bit of time alone at home is a big gesture. Is it something to do all the time? No, but taking the kids to breakfast or out to the movies clears out the house for a few hours and can make a world of difference in a partner's state of mind — and one's relationship with them. “Sometimes just letting your partner get a break and some rest is the best way to contribute happiness to your marriage,” Ziegler says. “Give your partner some alone time to unwind, catch up on sleep, or do whatever it is they need to do to feel refreshed and appreciated.”