

Let's Talk About It

Barrington H. Brennen, MA, NCP
Marriage & Family Therapist

Revised October 31, 2002

Mom Ruins Son's Life

Question: Dear Sir: My husband seems to love his mother more than he loves me, his wife. She caters to all his needs. Up to our wedding day she washed his clothes, cleaned his dishes and his room. Now he is expecting me to do the same. Is there help for me? Signed, Tired Wife

Answer: Dear Tired Wife: Your mother is doing great harm to your marriage. Many moms and dads, but especially moms, forget that their parenting responsibility ends when their children become adults whether they are married or not. Your husband is just as wrong to use his mother or depend on his mother to fulfill his everyday needs.

BOYS MUST CLEAN UP ALSO

A major reason many of our Bahamian men are messing up their marriages or romantic relationships is because their mothers made them believe that the best way to build men's character is to serve them as servants serve their masters. Instead of building responsibility and self-discipline in their sons by allowing them to enjoy the privilege of doing things for themselves, mothers spoil their sons by picking up their underwear on the floor, washing their dishes, and ironing their clothes for them. According to these mothers, boys are just to play ball, rake the yard, and clean cars. The girls are to wash the dishes, cook, sew, and clean the house. This is a great disservice a mother can do to her son. In fact, she is not only hurting her son but her son's marriage and her son's sons.

MEN WHO WANT TO BE SERVED

There are too many Bahamian men who come home after work, many times before their wives do so, and just sit and wait until they are served the evening meal. They have no concern whether their hard-working wives are also tired after the day on the job. These men are careless about their wives' headaches, tired feet, stretched nerves, and sleepy eyes. Why are they doing this? Because it was the way their mothers taught them. Unfortunately, their mothers had a false notion that true leaders are to be served and not serve themselves. Thus, many men who are taught that they are the lion king boss in the home expect their wives to serve them. This is pathetic.

Where did we get the idea that every male homo sapien with testicles is born to be a leader? Where did we get the idea that women were born to serve men's needs, desires, and wishes? Where did we get the idea that a real woman is one who can cook and a real man is one who eats what is cooked? It is my belief that God intended for couples a in relationship should focus on being partners and serving each other totally and equally. True partners do not expect one partner to do something that the other refuses to do. Husband and wife are to serve each other.

A TRUE STORY

The story I am about to share is true. The one-week honeymoon was over. As the happy couple settled in their new home, the nightmare was about to begin. Each night John, the husband, took off his underwear and just placed them on the floor at the foot of the bed and went to sleep. After a few days he discovered that he was running out of clean underwear because his wife was not washing them. So he went to the store and bought some more underwear. Whenever he wanted clean underwear, he bought new ones. After a few weeks of new and unwashed underwear, a large pile stood at the foot of the bed. The ground rules were that his wife will only wash what was placed in the laundry basket and she will not pick up his clothing left around the house. John's mother had done all this for him, why shouldn't his wife? After more than eight weeks of building a mountain of smelly underwear, John got the message and humbly placed all of the underwear in the laundry basket. Of course, from that day onward he had a great surplus of fresh clean underwear from which to choose. As the story ended, within a few months he was also doing the laundry and other chores as well. Dear husbands, whenever you wash the dishes or fold the clean clothes, please remember that you are not doing it to help your wives, you are actually doing for yourselves. This is the true concept of partnership in marriage. Dear Tired Wife, you are not required to be a maid to the husband. You chose to be his lover and partner. Perhaps you can begin by not washing his dinner plates anymore until he cooperates. When you run out of clean plates, use sanitary plates and leave the unwashed ones stacked on the kitchen counter until they are clean.

LAST WORDS TO THE MOMS

Mom, when you die and you are no longer there to serve your teenage or adult sons, you will leave behind spineless, dependent, gutless, and maybe worthless men. These spineless men will produce other spineless sons and the vicious cycle will continue. Let your sons go. You are no longer first in their lives. Keep out of their marriages. Do not call to find out if they need help. Do not give your service unless asked for. Mothers, you are helping to create angry men who are at risk of becoming belligerent and violent. When these gutless boys cannot have what they want, they seek violent ways to get their point across. Mothers, help build responsible and disciplined men by allowing them to be fully responsible for their own lives. Stop serving them. Send your questions to P.O. Box N - 896 or call 393 2818, or email encouragement@coralwave.com, or visit the web site for this article and more at www.soencouragement.org