

Husbands, Please Do Not Help Your Wives Do Things in The House
By Barrington H. Brennen, March 30, 2025

The couple sat in my office, exhausted from years of emotional and verbal fighting. The wife was about to give up. She was sick and tired from doing everything in and around the house. This included cooking, washing clothes and dishes, cleaning all the rooms, the car and garage. Oh! I cannot forget raking the fallen leaves in front of the house, taking the dog to the vet, helping the children with homework, and putting them to sleep. It seemed to her all he wanted was sex, and it was her duty to give it to him, even when she was exhausted.

His complaint to her requests to help her do things in the house was that he was working very hard, bringing home the funds to pay all the bills and more. In the session, he said: “She is doing what she is supposed to do. She has it very easy. I am the one who is really working hard. A man needs some rest at the end of the day.” It was then I looked his wife straight into her eyes and said these words: “Do you know that your husband is not to help you do anything around the house?” Her face dropped in disappointment. With my face not reflecting any emotion, I remained silent for a while as I looked at her. It was as though I was trying to penetrate her mind with a message. But instead her lips seemed to want to mutter to me, “How dare you say such a thing?”

It was then I turned my stern face to the husband. He was smiling. But he did not realize that his smiles would soon turn to disgust. I turned to the wife again. This time, with a gentle smile on my mouth and a twinkle in my eyes. I kept motionless for a moment, letting the deafening silence permeate the room. Then I turned to him as I watched his sneaking smile turned into a frown when he heard his wife mutter the words: “I get it. He is supposed to do the work also and not just help me do it.” “That’s it!” I said to them both. “That’s it!” The husband’s view comes from an ancient and patriarchal teaching that the male is to be the undisputed financial provider for most, if not all of the needs in the home. This is the de facto role of the man. He alone is the breadwinner.

A male-only “breadwinner” ideology and practice has no place in a modern world where both male and female have professions. In the ancient world, it



appeared to work because women were, according to law and tradition, subjugated to men. Just a cursory study of history will reveal how women were treated as chattel and of little or no value to society. Sadly, far too many men still think of their wives this way. This must change.

The belief and practice of being partners and companions in the home is crucial to marital happiness. Too many adults, even in this post-modern world where artificial intelligence, electric cars, digital locks, and hand-held computers are a norm, are still remaining in an ancient world of male dominance, patriarchy, and traditionalism. They are still having difficulty understanding that there is more happiness and contentment where there is teamwork. Research tells us that the happiest couples are those whose roles are determined by talent and not by gender.

A University of Florida Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences 2024 article titled, “10 Things Happy Couples Do” states: “They (the couple) share household chores: Housework is more important in relationships than many people think. Couples who share household chores tend to be happier, but only if they have agreed on clearly defined responsibilities. Doing so can affect your well-being and the way you think about your partnership.”

Note carefully that the problem is not whether the wife cooks or the husband cleans the car. It is whether the wife cooks because it is her role as the woman, and he cleans the car because it is his role as the man. I am learning that some parents are still training their boys to believe that “washing dishes” is not manly. Daughters are still being taught that they must clean the dishes because they are females. This is an outdated notion that has no place in the modern world.

Here are a few tips to help couples become partners in the home:

1. Listen objectively and nonjudgmentally to your partner's complaint. Seek to understand.
2. Be willing to adjust. Avoid being stubborn and allowing the tradition of your family to impact the happiness of your own home.
3. Create a weekly chore chart of duties for the entire family, even when there are no children. When you do so, bear in mind one's skills and gifts. For example, a partner may really not have the skill to cook daily meals or iron properly. This chart should be created for an entire month of five weeks and recycled each month. Since there are four months with five weeks in them, it would be good to include the fifth week. Each chore is for a week. When there are only two individuals, each one will

have a few chores to do. The chart can include diaper changing, putting the children to sleep, feeding, helping with homework, etc.; not just cleaning and cooking.

4. Everyone in the home must be on the chore chart, even the very busy, hard-working parent with long work shifts and exhausting tasks. Compassionate planning should take this into consideration.
5. Avoid comparing the type of work or the amount of time at work. A study by The University of Texas states that one hour of public speaking is equivalent to eight hours of manual labor. Hence, someone sitting at a desk all day can be just as tired and exhausted as someone who lifts blocks or cement all day.
6. Remember you are a team, and teamwork makes the load lighter.

I encourage all couples to truly become partners and companions in everything they do. Husbands, remember, do not help her. Do it, because you are an integral part of the household and it is only fair to distribute the load to avoid overloading one person.

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