

Nurturing

YOURSELF FOR HIM

Did you know when you invest in yourself as your husband's helpmeet, you are investing in him and in your marriage? There are four areas that are key in your life: spiritual vitality, sleep, exercise, and nutrition. Might you sometimes ignore these four because you feel your time might be better utilized in other ways? It could be wise to reevaluate those decisions.

Spiritual

“Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: *but* a woman *that* feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates” (Proverbs 31:29-31). Do you desire to be a virtuous woman?

One of the greatest gifts you could give your husband is to spend daily time with the Lord Jesus in Bible reading and prayer. That

time in fellowship with the Lord is foundational to learning and growing through His Word. Then you will be better able to love your husband, respond to him with the fruit of the Spirit, serve him, and deny yourself. This also allows you dedicated time to pray for your husband, yourself, and your marriage.

“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue” (2 Peter 1:2-3). How do we attain not just grace and peace, but grace and peace *multiplied*? It is through the knowledge of God. How will we gain that knowledge? Through time in His Word. We are easier to live with when we have peaceful hearts rather than ones that are stressed, worried, angry, or bitter. Peace is wonderful to have multiplied in your heart for you and for your husband!

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). In the morning, you can either sleep until the last minute before having to begin the day, or you can get up early enough to spend time with God reading your Bible and praying. “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2). If mornings are impossible for you to have Bible reading and prayer, can you find a time that will consistently work for you? Perhaps if you have young children, it would be during their afternoon nap.

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” (Romans 15:13). Your time in the Word opens your heart for being filled with joy and peace and abounding in hope.

You have plenty of opportunities to be discouraged, bitter, or angry in general and in your marriage in particular. There are always things that the other person should have done or not done. Our negative emotions come when we focus on circumstances and ourselves. The way around that is to think on Jesus. He tells us, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30). Do you want to learn of Him and enjoy His easy yoke and light burden? He also tells us, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13).

We need daily, spiritual nourishment from His Word for everything in our lives, including delighting in our husbands. Don't we need physical food? Then even more so, consider spiritual food a non-optional part of your day and of your commitment to valuing your husband and your marriage. If you need help with this, *Sweet Journey* is a book that gives practical suggestions for enjoying personal time with God.

Sleep

Are you exhausted? What time do you go to bed? What time do you get up? Usually the exhausted wife is getting less than eight hours of sleep and frequently has babies and children interrupting that sleep. HopkinsMedicine.org¹ tells us that sleep deprivation impacts mood, memory, and health. It even affects your judgment so that you don't notice its effects.

1: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/healthy-sleep/health-risks/the-effects-of-sleep-deprivation>

How do you respond when you are tired? What happens to your emotions? What about your energy? Are you sweet, cheerful, loving, and energetic when you aren't getting enough sleep? Please make sure you are getting the sleep you need. If you can't get it at night, then set aside time in the afternoon for a nap. Sleep deprivation has real consequences, and your whole family will suffer if you aren't getting enough sleep.

Exercise

If you want to delight in your husband now and be around to do so when you are 80, medical science tells us that you *must* exercise. It is foundational for good health. One of the best ways to exercise is to do it with your husband, and walking avails itself nicely to this. If your children are older and can be left alone, just the two of you can walk together. If you have little ones, then you will have to work out a schedule to take them with you.

On holidays and some Saturdays, one of our married sons with five children ages six and under walks with his wife. Another son with two young children walks most evenings with his family. Yes, it takes effort, and yes, it is a bit of an ordeal, but it is worth it. Not only are they both getting exercise, but they are communicating, another key ingredient in delighting in each other.

If there is no possibility of walking together, or your husband isn't interested, find a high-intensity workout program that you can do alone at home. Most of those involve 20-30 minutes a day three or four times a week. That is not a big time investment, and the benefits are huge.

When you are exercising regularly, it helps you maintain or lose weight, makes you feel happier, is good for your muscles and bones,