

## DEVORAH'S TOP 15 MARRIAGE POINTERS:

- 1) Make departures & arrivals cheerful. It's the last thing he'll remember...you want him to miss you! And when he comes home, greet him at the door. You're married to a great guy. Remember: no interaction is pareve (neutral)—you're either building or destroying.
- 2) Compliment him when he does something right, even if you have to fish a bit for something to praise (this raises his self-esteem). Focus on the positive—remind yourself of why you married him in the first place. People who feel accepted, loved and appreciated rise to our expectations of them and want to please us.
- 3) Refrain from too much criticism. Give him a break—he's trying his best in most cases. People who are constantly criticized give up trying to please us.
- 4) Spend quality time together, without the kids. Date night once a week, plus time at the end of the day to just chill and reconnect. Make it a priority. Don't make him feel second-fiddle to the kids. A marriage is like a garden-- it needs constant tending to, otherwise it will get overgrown with weeds.
- 5) Do little things for him that make him happy & show him that you're thinking about him—buy him his favorite foods, make a special dinner, wear his favorite outfit, leave him a note in his briefcase... etc.
- 6) When you NEED to criticize, do it with love. Sandwich (praise, request, thanks). Figure out how to give him feedback without attacking or putting him down (communication style). For example: “I know you want to make me happy, and I need...”
- 7) Be respectful of his dreams. Don't be a kill-joy.
- 8) Keep depositing in your “shalom bayit bank account” (more positive than negative interactions, more compliments than critiques.)

9) Children notice when you treat your husband with respect. The example that we show them of marriage is the model they will take into their own marriages!

10) Don't joke on your husband's behalf. Don't speak badly about him to others.

11) Don't keep score—focus on what G-d wants from YOU.

12) Big decisions should always involve him. Your first reaction should be “we’ll have to ask Daddy.” Ask his advice even on small matters—it is a sign of respect and you never know, he might have a great idea!

13) Have an “ayin tova” (look for the good). Don't ascribe negative motives to his behavior—it's almost never intentional. Life is not a competition & you're on the same team.

14) Say “thank you” when he does something for you or around the house, even if it's his “responsibility.” Who doesn't want to be thanked for their efforts? We thank the waiter even though it's his job to give us our food!

15) Let it pass if it's not really important. Think prior to making an issue of it: is this worth a fight? As it says in Mishlei: “The wisdom of a woman builds her home, her wickedness destroys it.” And the Chofetz Chaim said that when we are “mevater” (let things go), G-d forgives us for even our purposeful sins.