

Understanding Her Negatives as Needs

A Biblical Counseling Worksheet for Husbands

Purpose:

To help you listen carefully to your wife's fears, frustrations, and words without defensiveness, and translate them into ways you can love, honor, and serve her. There is also a section below where the wife can encourage her husband with affirmations.

Key Scriptures for Reflection:

- 1 Peter 3:7 — Dwell with your wife in an understanding way, showing honor
- Ephesians 5:25–33 — Love her as Christ loved the church
- 1 Peter 1:7 — Trials reveal and refine what is genuine

Instructions

1. In your disagreements or arguments, listen carefully — Try not to interrupt, justify, or defend.
2. Write her words and thoughts down— Even if they feel negative, unfair or painful.
3. Discern the need underneath — Ask: What might she be longing for? What is her heart?
4. Respond with action — What would it look like to lay down your life here?

Guiding Questions

- What emotion is underneath her words (fear, hurt, loneliness, disappointment)?
- Where might she feel unsafe, unheard, or unloved?
- How have my actions (or inaction) contributed to this?
- What would Christ-like love look like in this situation?
- How can I honor her specifically in this moment?

Turning Negatives into Her Needs

What She Expresses (Fears, Frustrations, Words)	What She May Need (Understanding Needs)	What He Can Do (Loving Action by Husband)

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Wife's Affirmations

In this section, have your wife list her affirmation of her husband's loving actions. Here she will find ways in which she can encourage her husband. Consider the following example:

What She Expresses (Fears, Frustrations, Words)	What She May Need (Understanding Needs)	What He Can Do (Loving Action by Husband)
<i>Example</i> "You don't listen to me. I feel unseen and unheard."	<i>Example</i> My wife wants me to listen to her without defensiveness. I need to acknowledge what she is saying with compassion and humility.	<i>Example</i> I will, with a humble heart, listen to my wife and summarize what she is saying instead of getting defensive. I will ask her to pray for me so that I can truly see and hear her heart and value her as a person made in the image of God.

Affirmations

Area of Growth for Husband	Wife's Affirmation of Husband
<i>Listening and understanding my heart.</i>	<i>You really listened to me [name the time and situation] – and you were really humble. That meant a lot to me. You can be a good listener. I love it when you do that. I'm praying for you to experience God's grace so we can truly be one in our communication.</i>

Area of Growth for Husband	Wife's Affirmation of Husband

Practical Commitments from the Husband

One way I, the husband, will listen better this week:

One way I will show honor to her:

One way I will sacrifice for her good:

One way I will seek to understand her heart:

Husband's Prayer

Heavenly Father, help me to see my wife rightly.

Guard me from pride and defensiveness.

Teach me to listen with patience and humility.

Shape me into a husband who reflects Christ—

one who understands, honors, and lays down his life in love.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.