

His Parents Driving You Nuts

According to a research project that followed 373 couples for twenty-six years, if a wife is close to her husband's parents, the couple's risk of divorce can increase by 20 percent!

(Finally, the reason you were looking for... :-)

I'm not sure I necessarily agree but here's a link to an article discussing the research project in question: [Wives and in-laws](#)

But let's play along for a minute and assume the research is valid, why would a wife being close to her husband's parents increase her risk of divorce?

Because it gives the in-laws, especially the mother-in-law, more leeway to meddle in their marriage. The in-laws will feel justified to comment on and interfere with various aspects of the couple's life. Another issue is that some wives get close to their in-laws to enlist their help in changing her husband's mind on certain issues. But all this does is create marital strife because the husband will feel as if his wife and parents are ganging up on him.

Setting boundaries with the In-laws

Just because a wife is close to her husband's parents doesn't mean they need to know everything that happens in the marriage.

A wife and her husband should discuss which areas of their life are off limits. These could include finances, holidays, parenting skills, domestic responsibilities and major life decisions. But for boundaries to be useful they must be communicated clearly to the in-laws, which is a most delicate conversation because they could very easily feel unwanted and rejected. Alternatively, the husband may communicate the boundaries to his parents on his own as long as he presents them as mutual decisions.

Daughter-in-law do's and don'ts

Don't take everything that your in-laws say personally. They probably just want to feel included in your lives because, after all, you did marry their precious son.

If your mother-in-law makes a suggestion or recommendation, ensure her you will give it some thought.

Also, it wouldn't hurt to ask for her input every once in a while. You don't have to do what she says, just listen to her advice and consider her ideas. She'll appreciate it.

Another way to be proactive and make your in-laws feel included in your lives is by calling and updating them regularly on what's happening in your family - share appropriate matters.

Also, remember their birthdays and anniversaries, and invite them over for dinner if they live nearby.

Lastly, never speak ill of your in-laws. Ever. Comments like "I hate my mother-in-law" should never leave your mouth.

And whatever you do, never gossip about your in-laws because they will find out, trust me. Something like that could destroy your relationship altogether.

While some in-laws will go to any lengths to prove that their daughter-in-law is not good enough for their son, most just want to feel included.

Most of the time, creating a healthy relationship with one's in-laws is simply a matter of setting appropriate boundaries. Doing this, along with the other things we've discussed, goes a long way in protecting your relationship with your spouse, and it will foster a happy and lasting marriage.

Until next time, this is Mike Tucker and I want YOU to be mad about marriage!