

Don't Let Little Annoyances Become Huge Problems

By Doug Fields - Thriving Marriages Email - March 13, 2023

It's obvious there are some marriage issues that are so big they cannot be ignored. Left unresolved, these large and painful issues can and will destroy a marriage. Also, there are little things in marriage, which if ignored, can lead to big issues. Today, I'm not writing about these issues; let's focus on the "*little annoyances*" every married couple experience. Work to minimize them.

Some of these little annoyances might be:

- Leaving the toilet seat up,
- Squeezing the tube of toothpaste in the "wrong" way,
- Leaving clothes on the floor,
- Returning empty or nearly empty containers to the refrigerator,
- Leaving an empty roll of toilet paper on the holder,
- Leaving the cap off the shampoo in the shower,
- Refusing to ask directions, or to use GPS in the car,
- Stealing the blankets in bed,

The first step in minimizing little annoyances in marriage is to identify them in your relationship. Doing so allows you to discipline yourself to let them go, and refuse to give them power over your attitude toward your spouse. Your energy and concern toward these little annoyances isn't worth the effort you invest into them.

If you'd be embarrassed to tell a marriage counselor about the behavior, it's likely a little annoyance. You can almost anticipate the counselor's response, "Really? That's what bothers you?"

When you come up against the kind of raw, everyday stuff your spouse does that bothers you, how do you respond? Do you yell? Withdraw? Get passive/aggressive? Do any of these actions help?

Here's the truth: the chances are very high that some of these "little annoyances" your spouse does, won't ever change. If they won't change, why maximize them? Who wins? It results in disappointment, arguing, & tension. No one wants to live that way.

The probability is very high that your spouse isn't performing these behaviors as acts of defiance to wound you. When I leave the toilet seat up in the middle of the night, I'm not thinking, "*Hmm, how can I make Cathy's life more miserable?*" No. I'm just half-asleep and not thinking.

Let it go. Do your marriage a favor. Minimize the little annoyances.