

Top Ten Helpful Phrases as a Helpmate

Sometimes the words at the tip of our tongues are better off not said—especially when our men feel emasculated, distrusted, or judged by our comments. Use these ten phrases to help start open and honest conversations with your husband as a helpmate, not as a mother or overseer.

1. I appreciate how you [*excel in this area*]. I feel like we could do a better job at [*this area could stand some improvement*].

For example: I appreciate how hard you work at your job. I feel like we could do better at prioritizing time for us to talk and connect at the end of the day.

2. I see [*this need in your life*]. I'd like to [*do this thing to help*]. How would you feel about that?

For example: I see how busy you are right now and how it's hard to keep track of taking your medications. I'd like to fill a weekly pill box for you. How would you feel about that?

3. I respect how you [*something you respect*].


For example: I respect how you make sure our bills are paid on time so I never have to worry about it.

4. I know [*this difficult thing/conversation/task*] is hard on you, so I appreciate how [*a commendable way he's handling it*].

For example: I know talking about our debt is hard on you, so I appreciate the efforts you're making to help us stick to a budget and to talk through our finances with me.

5. Did I understand that correctly?

Sometimes the most helpful thing you can do is to repeat back what you understood him to say. This gives him a chance to clarify things he *said* differently than you *heard* and helps him feel understood and respected through the conversation.



For example: So, you're saying that even though we both don't get home from work until 6PM, you want to sit and relax on the couch while I hustle in the kitchen to make dinner by myself? Did I understand that correctly? (You get the picture. 😊)

6. I feel like I'm strong in *[the area you're strong in]*. Would you agree? Given this strength, I'd like to help out by handling *[the area you're looking to help in]*. What are your thoughts about that?

For example: I feel I'm strong in research. Would you agree? Given this strength, I'd like to help out by handling the research for our vacation. What are your thoughts about that?

7. My heart behind *[this action]* is *[motivation]*. How does it come across to you?


For example: My heart behind reminding you to take your vitamins is that I want you to stay healthy, and I know you have a lot on your mind so it's not at the top of your to-do list. How does it come across to you?

8. I'm grateful to partner with you in our life together. I feel like our partnership could be stronger/better/more effective/more enjoyable in *[the area that needs work and why]*.

For example: I'm grateful to partner with you in our life together. I feel like our partnership could be more enjoyable in how we manage our calendars, because I often feel out of the loop about what time you'll be home or what things you have going on.

9. When this *[event happens or statement is made]*, I feel *[how you feel]*. Can we talk about why this happens and brainstorm a different way to handle things?

For example: When you spend time at the golf course every weekend but don't have time for family outings, I feel like you'd rather not spend time with me, and like our family isn't a priority. Can we talk about why this happens and brainstorm a different way to handle things?

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10. I know we've *[talk about the difficulties you've faced as a couple]* but *[these difficulties]* don't change my commitment to our marriage or diminish my love for you. We will get through this.

For example: I know we've had a lot of heated arguments lately, but none of these conversations change my commitment to our marriage or my love for you. We will get through this.

By using these phrases to practice uplifting and respectful dialogue, you'll find the quality and effectiveness of your communication grow by leaps and bounds—leaving both you and your husband feeling better understood and cared for.