



Make sure her eyes stay fixated on you.

Why She'll Cheat on You

Want to keep her from straying? Use these five secrets from the guys trying to seduce your wife

BY LAURA ROBERSON

JASON GILMORE* HAS SLEPT with six married women. The first was Abbey, a 25-year-old Nascar fanatic. The affair began innocently enough—they met at work, where he was in ad sales, and connected over a shared sense of humor. Then came Shannon, a department head at his office. She was a petite woman with a giant libido. There was also Linda, a fiery 50ish woman with fake-red hair. That on-again, off-again fling lasted for years.

You may call Gilmore a sleazy opportunist. Nevertheless, we can potentially learn something from guys like him. So what did he have that the husbands of half a dozen women didn't? "I cared enough to listen," he says. "These women were alone. They may have been married, but if a woman is alone emotionally, she's alone."

He's right. Research shows that the average woman's cheating is sparked by marital unhappiness, not lust. In a 2011 Indiana University study, women who reported low relationship happiness were nearly three times as likely to cheat as contented women were. "Guys are more apt to seek purely physical, one-night-stand gratification," says Kristina Gordon, Ph.D., an associate professor of psychology at the University of Tennessee. "But women are more likely to cheat if they're not satisfied with their marriage." The differences don't end there; the outcome of a woman's straying can be more dramatic as well. "Often, the affair partner treats her well, and she may realize what she's missing in her marriage," Gordon says. "In those cases, she might *not* regret it."

With these revelations in mind, we checked in with Gilmore and other lotharios so we could gauge our own marital blind spots. Then we filtered their insights, however tawdry, through our experts to find out how you can keep your gal out of their hands—and in your bed.

She wants a confidant

With intimacy comes comfort; knowing the intricacies of her personality bonds you. But there's a bad kind of comfort too. "One of the biggest complaints I hear is, 'He comes home from work and plops down in front of the TV,'" says Alex Lombardi, 46, who says he's slept with more than a dozen married women. When their husbands did talk, he adds, they shifted into fix-it mode. "I just listen, without trying to solve anything," he says. This seems counterintuitive: Playing Dr. Phil shows you're interested, right? Not to her. "It shuts down the conversation. You're fixing rather than engaging," says Gordon. "She wants you to show interest, explore, let her talk."

YOUR MOVE Add "us time" to "you time."

It's okay if you need to decompress after work with exercise or video games. Just explain that to her, and suggest another time to connect.

Diana Schumann/Oakley Stock

"I know a couple who have a bowl of cereal every night and just chat," says Gordon. This should be a reconnecting time, so don't talk about playdates or the electric bill. As Jake Housman, 35, who's been involved with three married women, notes, "I reached into the areas their husbands reached into during courtship. Dig deeper, instead of the old nod and 'Yeah, yeah, that's great.'" Your ultimate goal is to figure out *why* she's talking. "People tell stories to convey an emotion," says Gary Lewandowski Jr., Ph.D., a Monmouth University psychology professor and cocreator of ScienceOfRelationships.com. When she finishes a story, say, "It sounds like you're [insert emotion here]." You give her permission to open up, and score points for being perceptive.

Excitement is key

It's easy to assume that an active sex life equals a happy mate. But that's not always the case: Gilmore reports that many of his married bedmates complained of "Amish sex"—plain and monotonous. In a recent University of Nevada at Las Vegas study, women partly blamed predictable sex on their husbands' familiarity with their bodies—which, ironically, was once a turn-on. But the scientists discovered that familiarity wasn't as much of a problem as lack of emotion was. "I call it his checklist. I can tell you the moves he's going to make. He can get me off, but it's sex. It's not making love," said one study participant.

YOUR MOVE Go dirty. Married women are less responsive to the more familiar emotional qualities of sex—security, feeling loved, sensing support—than single women are, a study

in the *Journal of Sexual Medicine* found. What they do respond to: explicit cues, such as sensing her wetness, sharing sexual fantasies, and talking dirty. Surprisingly, fulfilling sexual fantasies rates as one of the most emotional sexual acts, according to a 2008 California State University study. "It takes vulnerability to share fantasies," says Gordon. "If your partner is receptive, you feel closer." For women, it's often easier to share with someone new: She's not a wife or mother but a sex goddess. So be her porn star. Jack up the role-playing or bondage dabbling, try new positions, whatever. "When she's sharing—her fantasies, what feels good—take time to 'reflect' what she's saying," says Gordon. "Communicate her disclosures in your own words. That's incredibly validating."

She craves collaboration

When you pursue interests together, your partner gains a sense of "self-expansion"—a feeling that you're helping her grow, says Lewandowski. If your relationship doesn't broaden her horizons, she may "self-expand" with the office sales rep. So when was the last time you cooked together, or collaborated on a home project? If the answer is "back in '99," you two are in trouble. "Attraction is attraction, but once the hormones subside, you want camaraderie," says Gilmore.

YOUR MOVE Give her a future. Come up with shared projects for the here and now, of course, but also make sure you both have something to look forward to. In Lewandowski's research, the *potential* for self-expansion further shielded against infidelity. "Even when the relationship is in a lull, if she's optimistic that she'll grow

with you in the future, it can assuage her," he says. Book a vacation now for this fall. She'll have months to anticipate the trip—and to focus on you, not that sales rep.

Investment pays off

Bonds build over time. "Emotional involvement is about conveying a sense of investment—that she's a big part of your future," says Lewandowski. And if you invest in her, you become more important to her, says Helen Fisher, Ph.D., a relationships researcher at Rutgers University. "Mate poachers can promise anything to a married woman," she says. "He can tell her he loves her, and he isn't threatened by the fact that she'll suddenly want to marry him." As Lombardi puts it, "With a single woman, he's competing against a bunch of men. With a married woman, he's competing against just one." That's you.

YOUR MOVE Tell, don't show. You wash her car, take out the trash, fold the laundry. But your work isn't done. "Women are often more verbal in what they need," says Rebecca Brand, Ph.D., a Villanova University psychology professor. "Simply say, 'I noticed you were out of cereal, so I got you some.'" She'll overlook or underestimate the ways she depends on you—unless you remind her. But too much of that can backfire. So jot down your respective roles: food shopper, gutter cleaner, and so on. Then trade a few tasks—she takes over something you're tired of doing, and vice versa. The list reminds her why she needs you, and swapping chores creates a sense of mutual dependence.

She builds off you

Your wife may see you as one of two things: her biggest advocate or her biggest critic. When she cooks for you, she wants your approval. When her boss reprimands her, she wants your support. Here's what often happens instead: "One woman I saw felt she extended herself emotionally only to be rebuffed," Gilmore says. "He would just go about his day." Your affection deflects stress and insecurity, so if she feels rebuffed, her self-esteem takes a hit—and that, according to research from the University of Colorado at Boulder, can lead her to cheat.

YOUR MOVE Take the long view. People with low self-esteem benefit less from partner praise than confident folks do, a University of Waterloo study found. The reason: Insecure lovers hesitate to generalize—*He thinks I'm adorable. He loves me*—based on specific compliments. Saying, "Damn, your butt looks sexy," tells her she looks hot now. But saying, "When you wear that, it reminds me just how sexy you are" makes her feel perpetually admired, which can boost self-esteem and relationship security. And when she feels good, you feel good. ■

JEALOUSY GAMES

We asked 256 women which tactics they use to calm their green-eyed monster.

