

Wives Warned:

You Could Lose Your Husband To A Midlife Crisis

Is your husband in the high risk group?

Larry Bilotta

By age 50, 34% of men report a turbulent midlife transition according to research by Elaine Wethington, a Cornell University associate professor, based on a subset of the 6,432-person MacArthur Foundation "Midlife in the United States" study of Americans' well-being at midlife. Middle age is defined as about 38 to 55 years old.

HIGHEST RISK MEN

- Has struggled with earning/managing money.
- Has made career his life.
- Makes less income than you.
- Had a troubled childhood .
- Never dealt with his childhood issues.

WHAT HE DOES

- No desire to reconcile.
- Wants a new life without you.
- Tired of being the provider.
- Tired of feeling less valuable than you.
- Stays out late without explanation.
- Blames you for everything.
- Defends what he used to be against.
- Appears that someone took over his body.
- Hides everything from you.
- Acts like he's a teenager.
- He's never wrong.
- Has no connection with the kids.
- Has an affair while married to you.

WHAT HE SAYS

- You were not sexually willing enough.
- You did not earn enough.
- You worked too much.
- You're lazy.
- You didn't hear him.
- You paid too much attention to the kids.
- He never loved you all these years.
- He married too young.
- He missed out on life.
- You did not support him the way he wanted.
- You cheated on him.



HOW IT STARTS

Death of a parent, being fired, a move, an illness, birthday milestone, affair, financial crisis.

HOW LONG IT TAKES

Two to five years.

HOW IT ENDS

He compares his old life with you, to the life he has created without you, then misses what he once had.

YOUR BIGGEST QUESTION

“What can I do now that it’s started?”

HOW IT HAPPENED

Take a look at your husband’s first ten years and you will see that he came from a troubled home. What's a troubled home? It comes down to two things

from his first ten years of life.

- 1-His mother and father did not like each other.
 - 2-His mother or father made him feel devalued and worthless.
 - 3-His parents divorced prior to his 15th birthday.
- If you see some version of this story in his childhood, you're looking at a man who was carrying what we could call the Midlife Crisis gene.

When a boy is raised in a home with parents who enjoyed each other and treated their son like he was valuable and important, he does NOT experience a midlife crisis between ages 30 and 50. But if he didn't get that great home, it's as if your chaos childhood husband is carrying a type of bomb in his brain that was set to explode when all the conditions were right. If your husband is in a midlife crisis now, the bomb went off.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO? Once the bomb goes off in his brain, he doesn't want you pursuing him. Any pursuit is an offense. Don't get this one wrong. After this, pursuing him will only turn him against you.

Since it's a crisis, he's driven by a force that wants what it cannot have. That's a MAJOR reason you must not pursue,

press, urge, beg, call, love, etc. That would show he CAN EASILY have you. No good!

What you want is to become a girl he CANNOT have. His chaos engine wants what it cannot have, so it must pursue what it cannot have. You must become a woman he cannot have so eventually, he ends up pursuing you.

HOW TO BECOME WHAT YOUR CHAOS KID CAN'T HAVE

1-Keep your conversations light and short. Serious talk ignites his chaos engine and drives him away. Short statements sound like, "Good seeing you again. Gotta run." and "Sorry, I can't. Got plans." This causes you to seem interesting and important. Other people want you and most of all, you have no time for your chaos kid. It's exactly what you must do now. Not only are you not pressuring him, you are moving his chaos engine to be convinced that what it cannot have is YOU!

2-Now is the time to be happy, independent, popular, likable, enjoyable, secure, friendly, encouraging and conversational with everyone but him. If you are an Environment Changer in my course, this is easy because I show you how to change your feelings in seconds but if you are not in my course, just do what every self-help book says to do...act happy.

3-Agree with anything he says and never disagree -no matter how crazy the statement.

4-Key Rule in communicating with him:

1. Ask no questions
2. Give no explanations

You are going to give two opposite messages at opposite times. By your actions you will be saying "I Don't Need You." But at other times you will be telling everyone else, especially your children, "He is such a great person."

These two messages are never spoken together in normal life. "I don't need you" and "you're a great person". Normally, people who say "I don't need you", also say "and I don't like you". People who say "you're a great person", also say "and I love you". But this is what you'll be doing. It makes no sense in a normal relationship, but as Dorothy says in the Wizard of Oz, "you're not in Kansas anymore". You're dealing with a man in his midlife crisis.

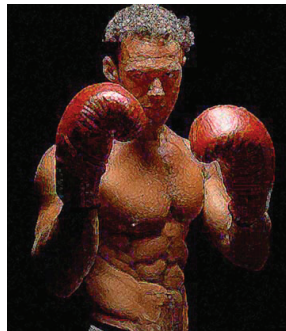
5-You will be doing what made you interesting to him in the beginning. Go after your individual interests, spend time with other people, play the piano, garden, ceramics, tennis club. Have an active social circle. You are not doing this for revenge.

BEING THE GREATEST MOM

Now is your time to become the greatest mom to your kids, especially if they are under 12. A midlife crisis rips the father instinct out of fathers and this is very hard on children. You'll need to become more involved in their lives, more caring of their emotional needs.

You'll also become tough but fair because losing dad as they knew him will throw some of your kids into a great deal of emotional turmoil. You must become the stable, steady mom your kids can come to for reassurance, direction and encouragement. That's why it's so important that you feel good about yourself. Kids can't get what they need from a mom who is also an emotional, self-centered wreck.

If your kids are teens, you'll need to up your level of tough but fair. Teens test parents anyway, but when their father becomes possessed by something else, teens with raging hormones lose any stability they had. As mom, you need to step in and be as fair as you can, but when it comes to your teen getting out of control with every evil in the world, you'll need to stand tough for them when they have no internal ability to do it.



Using my tool called The Flag Page can go a long way toward understanding your teen. You can get your sons or daughters to complete their own Flag Page online which produces a story of how they succeed. With the six pages of your teen's Flag Page completed, print them in color and set aside a time to read their strengths stories to them.

Since your teen completed their own Flag Page online, your teen will own the answers. This opens the possibility of an encouraging conversation between mom and teen. Your son or daughter will feel that you understand them during this difficult time. (www.flagpage.com)

BEING THE WOMAN

You need to become strong enough to stand up for yourself, but not in a combative way. You have self-respect and you are not dependent on your husband for happiness. In his current state, he cannot make you feel anything but bad anyway, so stick with this plan. It is a very different plan because your husband is in a very different situation.

Don't attempt to stop his manipulation like some angry and hurt wife, but more like a confident company president who is in a high level negotiation. She never loses her cool as she protects the business. That's how you'll be with your chaos kid in the middle of his midlife crisis should he attempt to take advantage of you or what the kids need for security.

Don't allow him to create a win/lose for you or your children. Create a win/win. The chaos engine that runs your husband will never respect a woman who is uncertain. Be certain by paying attention to "How To Become What Your Chaos Kid Can't Have".

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Pay attention to your personal appearance.

Update your clothing to current fashion for your age group.

Become a neat and attractive dresser.

Change your hair cut and get hair dresser attention

Keep your clothes and shoes clean.

Get a makeover, change your glasses, work out.

Exercise...run, swim, bike, lift weights, tennis, softball - something you like

Rent comedies; hang out with moral friends who make you laugh.

Listen to relaxing music, get a massage.

Stay in a good mood and start having gratitude for all that you have.

STOP ENERGY DRAINERS

Stop internet time of more than an hour- it sucks the life out of you.

Stop checking email constantly- limit it, get to the point with people.

Stop romance novels that drag you through an energy draining fantasy world and sets you up to cross other morality fences.

Stop TV-the worst of the energy drainers - you feel drugged and lazy the more you watch.

THREE KINDS OF AFFAIR MEN

If your husband is in an affair, you might find him in one of these three descriptions.

PERFECT /PEACE, Softhearted Man

These husbands have a high need to pursue the "right thing" and that means sensitivity to his feelings, and respect for who he is. Because he's always done everything for everyone else so he can feel better about himself, in an affair, this guy gets a strong attachment to the affair woman. She becomes emotional relief who will save him from his empty marriage.

If you're married to this guy, you definitely don't want to pursue or pressure him because he will attach himself to the affair even faster. Because this Perfect Peace guy longs for sensitivity and respect, he will cling to that woman till she dumps him. You

know the Perfect/ Peace guy is your husband because it took a long time for him to commit, but once he did, he was very loyal.

FUN /PERFECT, Softhearted Man

If your husband is outgoing, highly social, laughs easily, really affectionate, very impulsive, can be quite the perfectionist, then you have a Fun Perfect, softhearted man. He probably never controlled his feelings very well. He's looking for that love feeling again and believes that if he's not feeling love from you, then it must not be there. Pay attention to "How To Become What Your Chaos Kid Can't Have" because this is a man who will respond to that.

PEACE /PERFECT, Softhearted Man

If your husband has always been on the shy side, quite the deep thinker who would rather listen to people than talk, usually cautious and not a risk taker, then he is a Peace /Perfect man who needs respect for who he is and sensitively for his feelings, in that order.



This guy is not looking for a long term commitment from his affair, but instead he just wants someone to affirm him, respect him as one who can satisfy another woman's needs. He wants to be validated that he still is a valuable man because you never made him feel that way.

He just might struggle with guilt and feel unworthy of love, even though this affair is not the way to get it. Eventually, he'll put feelers out to find out if you're willing to forgive him for the affair and that's when you need to turn on the acceptance, forgiveness and patience in a big way. When he finally puts those feelers out, ask about his concerns and fears and let him voice them without judging. Give him a warm and accepting environment to come back to. Ease his guilt.

THE OTHER FAMILY

If you find out that your husband is having an affair with another woman, it is your obligation to your own family and his, to alert her husband. You do this calmly and firmly. Call the man up and let him know the proof you have and make sure you have proof. Leave it to him to pressure the wife. The majority of women will go back to their families when caught in an affair. That will leave your husband suddenly alone and that's a good thing. In the meantime, you are the "I don't need you", "You're a great person", wife. Not in any way are you that wife who was asleep at the marriage wheel.

MOST OF ALL Remember that there is nothing you did that can justify him having an affair. There are things you did to make him weak to the temptation, but you did not cause it. He will one day accept responsibility for his actions once he comes out of the midlife crisis.

When your cheating husband does come back, you must let him know that he is now in the position of healing and earning your trust. That means he will have to let you do spot checks of his financial records, phone, text and emails. If he is sincere, he will agree.

Ultimately, what got him here is his troubled childhood where he never received the self-esteem that would make him feel worthy. Because of that childhood all those years ago, for the rest of his adult life, he will question if he is an equal to others. Of all the people in his life, he wanted that validation stamp of approval from you. Eventually, as he works his way back home, he will get that from you. Once the affair has been dealt with, never, never bring it up again in any way, shape or form.

Should he bring up the topic of him moving back into the house, don't let him sense that you need him to be home. Act like you have all the time in the world to wait till he works out his need to feel he has found his value and independence. Wait until he becomes urgent about moving back home. Let him pester you about it, don't ever pester him.

Key Issue: No long conversations. Don't talk a lot. Keep your statements short and to the point. If you are face to face, on the phone, leaving a voice mail, writing him an email, sending him a text, everything will be short. "You bringing the kids?" "Are you home yet?" "Got milk?" Be sure you never use his first name in anything. That's part of the plan. It's so important that you remember this is NOT in any way, shape or form a normal marriage relationship. Remember...you're not in Kansas anymore. The biggest rule is NO LONG CONVERSATIONS. "Ok, no prob. Gotta go."

HELP HIM FEEL IN CONTROL Make him feel like he's in control of anything in his world he can possibly control. Let him control his finances, his personal decisions, who he associates with, how the children should be dealt with, what he wants to do next with his time. You should endorse him.

But when it comes to joint ownership of anything or to the use of your time and resources, remind him that your kids emotional and material needs come first. It's not about your or his convenience. It's about theirs. Say that kindly and then follow through with that action.

WHAT NOT TO SAY: Never say "I don't care." or "I no longer care." or "That's because I just don't care." It does not matter how you express it, this is a very bad phrase. Stay away from ever saying it. You DO care, but you are caring enough to take on a whole new plan for this man in crisis. That's how much you care. Wives say the "I don't care" phrase in an attempt to protect themselves from the mean stuff coming from their Chaos Kid husbands. This is NOT how you protect yourself. You live the plan I've laid out **BECAUSE YOU CARE.**



Why are you doing things so differently? It's because he's a different man now. He is possessed by his chaos engine. He's not the guy you married. You love the man he used to be, not the man he's become. That guy you married was kind, warm, or sensitive to your needs. This new man run by the chaos engine is cold, self-centered, nasty, distant, and competitive. That's why you want to agree with everything he says and does because agreement keeps the engine from getting out of hand. Your resistance just gives it more power.

NEVER LEAVE THE HOUSE: If your chaos kid husband demands you leave the house, make sure you never do. Your point is simple. "Since it was you who became unhappy, then you need to leave home where all our routine takes place. If you want new, then new is out there." Imagine your teen son demanding that he was not happy and that you must now move out of your own house. That would be nuts! Same with your chaos kid husband. If there's any moving to do, it needs to be him. You'll say "I want you to stay, and I'd rather you did, but I will not stop you from leaving if that's where you believe your happiness is." Give him the freedom to make his own choice, but be clear on this point...don't fight about it. Stay calm and stay home.

HIS OWN ROOM

If he decides to stay in the house, let him have his own room where he can feel safe. It should have a lock on the door that you have installed and give him all the keys. (remember, this is not your husband we are talking about). This man is a new stranger who is living in your house and you want to treat that stranger with respect and privacy. You would never expect

physical affection from a guest who was living in your house so don't expect it of your chaos husband. That's way too much pressure. You'll want to take over the house chores because this new man will be out searching for his new self and you'll allow him to do that.

TIME

Authorities on the subject of the midlife crisis estimate that it will take two to five years before this crisis runs its course. The more traumatic his childhood, the longer it could last. Get that time in your head because you don't want to be anxious. You need that time to become the wife you could have been. It's a great time to learn how to become a woman, who serves, cares and is happy with herself.

You will also need that time for your chaos kid to disconnect from the affair he was in. It might have been a fake fantasy, but it was still love to him. Give him time to disconnect from it. During this time, don't ask for assurances; don't talk about "us" because there is no "us".

If there's going to be affection between you during this time, make sure it's HIM that initiates it, even if it's just a hug. As far as you're concerned, this is a stranger living in your house.

ELIMINATE FEAR & LONELINESS

The reason a chaos kid husband does not recommit to his wife is fear. He's afraid that the changes in you will not be real changes, but only cosmetic. His fear is facing his nightmare all over again and that's what drives him away from you.

This plan requires you to put the focus on your children and your new social circle so you don't sit home at night alone. The last thing you ever want during this time is to feel lonely. Loneliness is a killer to women in this situation. Make plans with your kids, be with people, get things happening. Night + Internet + Alone = FAILURE

MISSING OUT

The burning need that set off your husband's chaos engine is not only the loss of that important and valuable feeling, but the feeling that your husband is missing out on something and life is too short. That's why you want to encourage his every chance to go after career dreams, new skills, talents, ideas.

A WAY TO SEE YOUR HUSBAND NOW

When I work with a woman who finds herself in the middle of her husband's midlife crisis, I ask her to imagine that a psychiatrist tells her "Mrs. Jones, I'm afraid that your husband is mentally ill and I want to admit him into a psych hospital for observation."

My question to the wife is "How would you treat him after hearing that?" His behavior would be exactly what it is now, but how would you treat him? So imagine you're visiting your husband in the mental ward where you don't say much, and you do a lot of listening and acknowledging.

You make no demands of him and you don't stay that long. This is in all respects exactly what you need to do to stay sane while your husband appears to have lost who he used to be.

This is not supposed to be easy so don't be discouraged because you wanted "easy". What you want is to come out of this a wiser woman, a better man and a wife your recovered husband will love like never before.

Larry Bilotta-