

Make Hush the of Yo Hear

BY TRACEY RUSSELL

Go Team! Learn how to be your husband's biggest fan as you cheer him on during the game of life.

My mother was cleaning out her attic the other day and decided to return the wealth of junk I had lovingly stored in her home for 20 or so years. She and my father could not wait to deliver the dusty boxes to my garage. Wondering what I would do with more stuff, I lifted the lid off the first box and found many marvelous treasures!

There were my high school pompoms, my cheerleading trophy, and my somewhat outdated uniform. Okay, so the uniform didn't make it over my hips, but I found I could still shake those pompoms and recite my old cheers. As I had fun remembering those experiences, I noticed the glowing little faces behind me. Being the mother of three boys, I often find them giggling at me when I do girlie stuff. But this time, they stood mesmerized by my cheers!

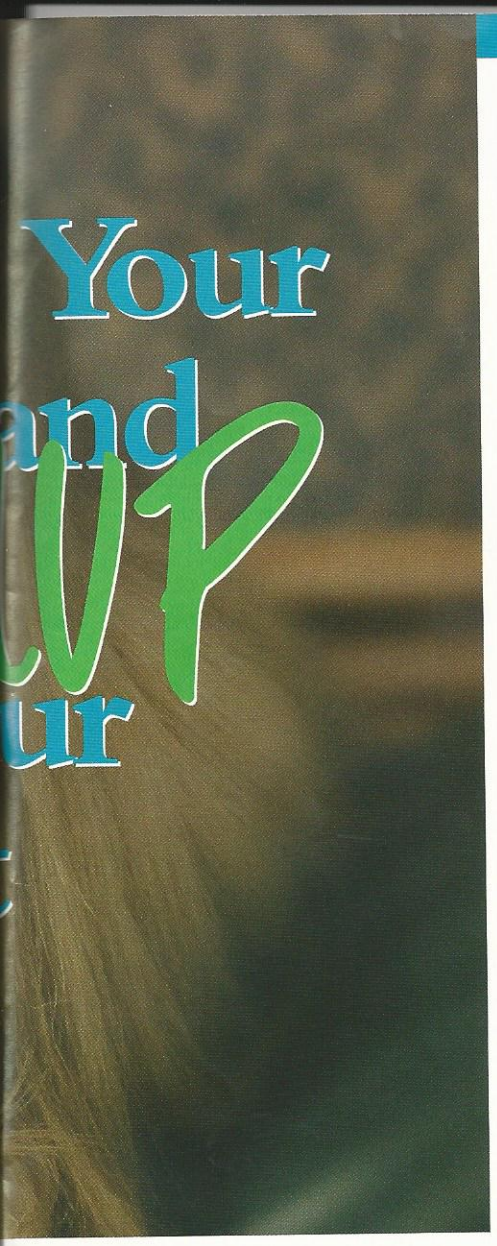
"Mommy, do that for me and say my name!"

"I want you to come my next t-ball game and bring those fluffy things!"

Suddenly my littlest grabbed a ball and shot a basket for me and said, "Now will you do that basket cheer for me?"

Oh, the influence a cheerleader has on even little men! Something inside them longs to be respected as the most valuable player in our lives. In the same way, Scripture reminds us to keep our husbands as MVP. Paul puts it this way, *"Wives respect your husbands..."* (Ephesians 5:33).

As women, we can sometimes lose the joy of respecting our husbands. Respect can come to sound like something cold and regimented. A closer look at the word in Webster's dictionary gives us a little more insight. Respect is defined as the act of



noticing with attention, giving particular consideration, and to consider worthy of esteem. These definitions make the Scripture come alive with possible applications for a former cheerleader.

There is great wisdom in my memories of cheerleading. Men love cheerleaders because they give individual encouragement and attention on and off the field. The act of noticing our husbands with attention, giving them special consideration and considering them worthy of our esteem is a powerful force in a marriage. As women we often want to wait until our husbands do something to make us cheer, but we need to cheer for them regardless of their performance. Here are four cheerleading techniques to help you in the process of respecting your husband.

1. Boldly identify the most valuable player of your heart. In high school, the cheerleaders made locker tags to let everyone know who our important players were. Those boys lived to get a tag marking them as our favorite player on the team. Think of the applications!
   - *Send an e-mail to your husband telling him how proud you are of his work.*
   - *Surprise him at the office with a picture of yourself, autographed with the words, "You are so valuable to me."*
   - *Put a note on his car signed by you and the kids. "We love you Dad. You are the best ever!"*
   - *Put a romantic card in his briefcase. Or, stick a note in his underwear that says, "I love you from the bottom of my heart!"*

2. In competitions, when one of our team players scored a point, we always shouted his name the loudest. Your husband may not play sports, but if he hits the laundry basket with his dirty socks, make sure you cheer, "Honey, you just scored a point with me!" If he offers to drive the kids to school, pick up the dry-cleaning, or help in any other way, consider it a slam dunk and make sure to tell him, "Honey, you're the best! Thanks for being such a great team player with the kids!"

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3. Take time to look cute in your uniform! I remember the hours I spent doing my hair before a game. I wouldn't dare show up for an event as haggard as I sometimes look to greet my husband at my doorstep. When your husband comes home from work, take time to wipe the applesauce off your face or change the shirt with the spit up on it.

   Go crazy and put on a shot of perfume. Try some lipstick; brush your hair, (take out that chip clip). Do something that tells your MVP, "You are worth looking cute for!" Even sweatpants and a comfy shirt can look sexy with a little touch up!

4. Post game affection: win or lose. At the end of every game, whether our high school team won or lost, we were still there to say, "Great job, guys!" Whether your husband just lost his job or largest account, or received a promotion, be there with a hug, a kiss, or a hand to hold. Look him straight in the eyes and say with all your heart, "You're always number one to me." There is nothing as rewarding and respectful to a man as a woman who shows she's glad to stand by her man and be affectionate too!

Just remember, the day you got married, you were voted to the head cheerleader position. You will never have to dust the dirt off a 1980s cheerleader trophy because when we respect our husbands, our Heavenly Father promises us eternal awards. So come on ladies, have some fun and respect your husband! I promise you will not only have his full attention; you will also have a newly-charged MVP.

Tracey Russell is a writer and speaker committed to supporting women in their unique roles as a wives and mothers. The transformation of her own marriage from divorce to remarriage motivates Tracey to tell other women about the remarkable power of Christ to restore our hearts and homes in marriage.