

#LET'S TALK MEN

Every day is Wife Appreciation Day

Truth be told, I had no idea Wife Appreciation Day was an occasion to celebrate. Despite constant reminders on social media by media houses that it was "the day" to honour the significant other, and pretty much every married man on my friends list showering their love for their better halves on Facebook, I decided to let the occasion pass.

Do not get me wrong, I am considered quite the romantic; at least I used to be.

I was always the one to remember the days and the occasions that she holds dear to her heart. I was always the one to wish her first on birthdays even before she realised the clock had struck 12. I went the extra mile in thinking of suitable gifts befitting events; never forgot to bring flowers just to show that I cared.

However, having been married for a good many years, even anniversaries turn pale; in comparison, a day like the third Sunday of September, aka Wife Appreciation Day, becomes just another date in the calendar. My attempts to turn even the

simplest of occasions into grand affairs seem like a faded, distant memory now.

After several efforts to cook that perfect meal (and not burning the house down in the process), I now opt for taking her out to dinner. After all, what is there to do for a couple other than going for staycations or perhaps the latest trend of taking pottery classes together?

Limiting my love, affection, or appreciation for dear wife solely to a single

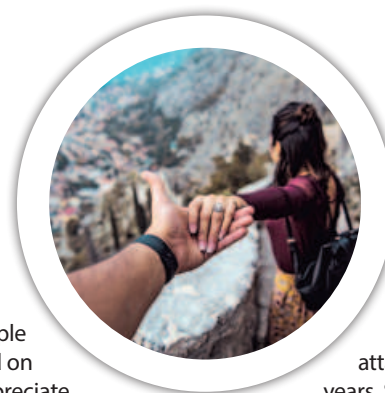


March or September day, never seemed like an appropriate thing to do. I truly understand that people who tend to go overboard on Women's Day perhaps appreciate their better halves on any other day as well. I simply never found myself walking that path!

And neither does my wife. Husband Appreciation Days (if there is indeed such a day) came and went by without her ever paying heed. Birthdays have passed without notice. And I am not the one to complain. Ever!

I understand that she appreciates me when she just sees my "Ki koro" messages on messenger without making it an obligation to reply even though she knows fully well that it is my way of saying that I miss her. And that occasional call from her after the lunch break to ask if I had eaten anything.

I appreciate it when she understands I had a bad day at work simply by looking at my face. And that she too appreciates when



I reciprocate on days that did not go too smoothly for her.

Marriage is a dance that attains perfection over the years. Showing appreciation for your wife can take the form of gifts or love-filled gestures, but what matters at the end of the day is the non-verbal, instantaneous understanding of what the other half is feeling.

It is the deep understanding of the partner's sorrows and happiness throughout the year that is the whole purpose of the institution we call marriage. True, it can take the form of showering appreciation on a particular day — does not need to be Wife Appreciation Day — but truly appreciating her, as clichéd as it may sound, will take celebrating WAD every single day of the year. And that feeling comes straight from the heart.

By Mannan Mashhur Zarif
Photo: Collected

#LIFEHACKS

How to cope with reader's block

Reading and writing goes hand in hand. And perhaps that's why, just like there's writer's block, there's also readers block. Only reader's block is probably worse because reading is easier than writing, yet you just can't do it. Flipping through the pages seem like torture. This dreadful feeling can last for days to months. But there are certain tricks you can try to deal with it.

Switch genres

There's nothing wrong with being a fan of one specific genre. There's also nothing wrong with reading books of only that genre either. Reading is for fun and one should read whatever makes them happy. But sticking to only one specific genre can get tedious. Sometimes it's a good idea to

switch genre and try new things. This can be exciting, illuminating and there's a good chance that you'll end up loving the new genre. Often, this excitement is enough to help you snap out of your reader's block.

Audiobooks

Audiobooks are the new favourites of the readers who are busy and still want to get some reading done. It's book without the pages and written words, but rather narrated by someone. So, one may listen to audiobooks while multitasking. This is not only useful but can be a blessing for those suffering from reader's block because these are books but in a different form. One may find audiobooks of most popular titles on the internet and some of them are narrated by the authors themselves which is always a bonus.



Switch to visuals

Graphic novels and even comics can be a refreshing change in your reading habits and the difference can be a mood changer. There are plenty of praise-worthy graphic novels that are rich in story as well as art. The arts can be captivating and can bring in new flavours to your reading. Even the most serious reader enjoys the arts between the pages; now imagine a book that relies on



the art to tell its story. It's as interesting as it sounds and you should definitely give it a try.

Persistence

This can be tricky and tedious for some people but it's a method that usually works. The idea is that you have to be persistent with your reading and read every day. The first day you decide to try this trick, you should start by reading only one page. No more, no less. One page a day and you continue this way for a few days. Then two pages a day for a few days and this way, you start increasing the number of pages you read in a day after a regular interval. Try this for a couple of weeks and hopefully, your reading mood will be back. The only difficulty in this method is that you have to be consistent. Regardless of how difficult and exhausting your day was, you have to finish that day's reading.

Cinematic experience

When the words on the pages aren't doing it for you, try branching out and

seek different experiences. Look up your favourite book or story and these days, most popular books have a cinematic adaptation. Whether it's a movie, or a TV show or animated depiction, all of them could be fun and uplifting if they are executed right. For example, *Pride and Prejudice* alone has more than ten different adaptations and at least one of them involves a zombie twist. Surprisingly, it's an oddly fun adaptation. Look up such different adaptations of different books and they can have a positive impact on your reading mood.

Write

Writing is more challenging that it sounds but it's also very satisfying. To be able to imagine a story in your head and then put them into words on paper is a peaceful sensation. When you can't put your mind to read, try writing. The feeling of creating something new is so powerful that it will surely drive you to read more. Even if it's not something as creative as writing a story, try keeping a journal and write in it regularly. Words are powerful and they will lift your mood quicker than you'd expect.

Of course, there can be many causes for reader's block. While it is possible that reader's block can be just a phase, it is also possible that it is induced by an underlying issue such as depression, stress or exhaustion. If that is the case, one should always address those issues first and the block will fade away itself.

Find out what's influencing your mood and you'll be able to snap out of reader's block in no time. Happy Reading.

By Ashif Ahmed Rudro
Photo: Collected