

# 10 DUMB MISTAKES VERY SMART COUPLES MAKE – MISTAKE #4

*by Rabbi Ben Tzion Shafier*

<https://vimeo.com/77545605>

## FORGETTING THAT YOU GUYS ARE FRIENDS

It's six thirty at night. A young man comes home from work, enters his apartment, plops himself down on the couch, pulls out the newspaper, and buries himself in the news. Meanwhile, his wife over in the kitchen can't believe her eyes.

"Here I am slaving away making dinner. The kids are wild, destroying the apartment, and that guy is going to just sit there?"

She doesn't say a thing. But she does start steaming. A few minutes pass, then a few more, and she is getting more and more heated.

"Unbelievable! He's just going to sit there while the kids pull down the books, knock over the furniture, and ..."

Now, she's finally had it. She comes flying out of the kitchen, lands all but in his face, and with a finger pointed, barks, "ALL RIGHT, MISTER. UP OFF THAT COUCH! You aren't sitting there any longer. You are either cooking dinner or taking care of the kids, but lounging around is over."

Most people would say that she was right. Many women would applaud her moxie. Some would call her a hero. And it is correct to say that he's acting like a creep; to sit there on the couch while your wife is struggling is a lack of basic decency. Nevertheless, what she did was damaging to her marriage.

To better understand this, let's play out the scene.

After being read the riot act, the young man gets it. He immediately stands up and takes care of kids while she finishes dinner. Then together they feed the children, bathe them, and finally put them to bed. It's now nine o'clock, everything is quiet, and she settles down to spend some bonding time with her husband. So she sits down next to him on the couch. And for some reason (that she can't fathom) he sort of moves away. She moves closer. And he moves further away. She tries again, and he still moves away. For the life of her, she can't figure it out.

What she isn't aware of is that for the past two hours his brain has been replaying her words like a tape recording, "ALL RIGHT, MISTER. UP OFF THAT COUCH! You aren't sitting there any longer. You are either cooking dinner or taking care of the kids, but lounging around is over."

And it's been playing again and again and again. "ALL RIGHT, MISTER. UP OFF THAT COUCH! You aren't sitting there any longer. "ALL RIGHT, MISTER. UP OFF THAT COUCH!" "ALL RIGHT, MISTER. UP OFF THAT COUCH!" "ALL RIGHT, MISTER..."

Until finally he reached a chilling observation and said to himself, "I don't believe it. I married a DRILL SERGEANT!"

And as correct as she might be in theory, she made the fourth really dumb mistake that very smart couples make: she stopped acting like they were friends. Friends are forgiving, even when a friend acts dumb. Friends don't boss each other around. Friends don't demand, even when they are correct. Friends communicate when their needs aren't met. And you can be a hundred percent correct, and your spouse completely wrong, but if you act like a boss or a tyrant or anything but a friend, your marriage will suffer.

***And, this is the The 4<sup>th</sup> Really Dumb Mistake: Forgetting that you guys are friends, best friends who love each other.***

**The Marriage Seminar**, a 12 part comprehensive guide to a successful marriage is now available at **the Shmuz.com**. You can download it, listen on line, or access it on the **Shmuz APP** - for Iphone and Android. CDs of the **Marriage Seminar** can be obtained by calling **the Shmuz** office at 866-613-TORAH (8672).