husbands who report being happy with their marriages—and are less prone to divorce—do certain things to make their marriages work. Here are five things that America’s happiest husbands with children do, according to a recent study from the National Marriage Project*:

1. They have a satisfying sex life. This depends on her being sexually satisfied. Husbands who are good lovers prepare their wives for love-making by being generous, emotionally attentive, and by spending quality time with them. In other words: Do the dishes and go on a regular date night.

2. They are committed to their wives. Wives need to feel that they come first in his life. The successful husband gives his wife the sense that he is preoccupied with her, and that their “we” is more important than his “me.” He also steers clear of romantic opportunities in the wider world.

3. They show generosity to their wives. They are full of compliments and make their wives feel appreciated. They cheerfully perform small acts of service—like giving the baby a bath or making her a cup of coffee in the morning.

4. They want to have and raise children. Life has more meaning when there are children. A father who wants children and invests himself in their upbringing makes both himself and his wife happier.

5. They practice a religious faith with their wife. The sense that God is present in one’s marriage—that marriage has a transcendent meaning—turns out to be a strong indicator of marital success. Practicing a faith together helps to actualize all the traits that make for a happier marriage, starting with generosity.
