

Senior Advice: 'Honey-do' list has some sticking points

by *Doug_Mayberry*

Q: I have a wonderful, loving husband, but I have to say, he is the world's greatest procrastinator. When I ask him to do something he pleasantly says, "Yes, Dear," but I know I will have to remind him before he gets it done. He usually gets it done the second or third time! I feel like a nag, but I don't like that about me.

How can I tell him how much his procrastination bothers me?

A: His acknowledgment of your request is a good thing. Focus on the timing.

Over the years, your habits have set the pattern. Knowing you will remind him of what you want done, he simply does not prioritize it, but waits for your reminder. Sometimes, husbands' intentions are good, but we have so many items on our to-do lists, we just don't get them all done quickly.

By nature, some of us thrive under deadlines and don't feel we can give a project our best shot unless we are under pressure. For example, as husbands, we know we will shove the income tax papers in the mail at midnight on the deadline, can mow the lawn and still get to church on time, and believe being a few minutes late to cocktail party is OK. This can drive our wives crazy. Don't just ask him to do something. In a loving way, tell him when and why your deadlines are so important and agree on a completion date. If he learns why you would like it done, he is more likely to do it. If your priority is paramount, he will adjust your request on his list. You might also agree on a consequence if he misses your deadline. This could be that if he misses, you can call a professional and pay to have it done.

To help change how you have been handling your request, the first time he does make it give him a special reward (only you know would be appropriate for him). This will encourage him to get your next request completed on the agreed dates.

Q: We are planning a holiday family reunion, which means getting 17 families together. Somehow, I have been unofficially named chairman.

Help! How can I get this organized without killing myself and not actually enjoying the party?

A: Planning the timing and making deadlines for what you require to pull it off are of the essence at this point. Book a location as soon as possible after talking with family members and determining the best location and facility available.

Then send out the "SAVE THE DATE" card. Firm up a list of responsible family members who you know will get their assignments done. Block out hotel reservations, event schedules and include a reservation deadline with no refundable fees.

Also consider attendees may link your reunion and a vacation by keeping an eye on school schedules, holidays and health issues. In selecting an event, chairmen make sure they know the territory so you won't be saddled with that additional responsibility close to crunch time.

Planning a theme can also add interest. Options could be: "This I remember about the family," or "Our plans for the future." Don't forget to ask each family to bring photos to share. Could it be an opportunity to salute and honor your family's matriarch or patriarch, or both?

Don't forget to videotape the event and offer "to-buy" copies if they desire.

Remember, don't overschedule activities because you will find certain family members have more in common and would like to spend more close-up time together. Hopefully some of these ideas will help create an unforgettable 2007 family reunion.

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