

# “Can You Give Examples of Subtle Invalidation?”

**In Kerby Anderson’s article *Why Marriages Fail* he writes, “Invalidation is a pattern in which one partner subtly or directly puts down the thoughts, feelings, or character of the other.”**

**What other examples can you give of subtle invalidation?**

I decided to answer your question because it’s helpful to have a woman’s perspective in addition to a man’s (as what you read in Kerby’s excellent essay). Here’s what I came up with:

- Rolling the eyes at something a spouse says
- Ignoring the spouse when they’re talking
- A dismissing or contemptuous tone of voice in saying things like “I don’t think so” or “You’re wrong” or “Like you would know anything about that!” (Note: those very words can be used in affectionate banter when said with a smile and in the context of a spouse’s strengths.)
- Any form of sarcasm
- Making plans without consulting the spouse (which would affect the spouse)
- Ridiculing a spouse’s dreams and hopes, even in jest
- Continually rejecting a spouse’s romantic or sexual overtures
- Choosing to spend time chatting with internet friends (especially of the opposite sex) over being with one’s spouse
- Not acknowledging the heart issues behind the words that a spouse shares
- Not looking at a spouse when they’re talking
- Being critical of or ridiculing a spouse in public, even in jest
- In a dispute or disagreement that involves the children, ganging up with them against the spouse
- Saying things to one’s kids like “Oh, your mother is just being wierd (stupid, illogical, emotional, etc.) again” or “Don’t listen to your father, he doesn’t know what he’s talking about”

I hope this helps.

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