

A noted marriage authority sets down this thought-provoking guide, which all wives

ALTHOUGH AFFLICTED with cerebral palsy, Phyllis Taylor was determined to find a job. Her husband Bill was about to enter New York Medical College and someone had to support the family. Last July, Mrs. Taylor, a pert, 25-year-old brunette from Brooklyn, N.Y., finally got what she sought—a job as secretary at J.O.B. (Just One Break), a unique organization which finds productive work for the disabled.

Mrs. Taylor doesn't think she is doing anything extraordinary in putting her husband through medical school despite her handicap.

"I accept it as a matter of course," she says, "because I love my husband. I don't consider it either as my duty or responsibility. My husband's career is our future, and we have to make it together. My working is just one of my contributions."

While Phyllis Taylor doesn't expect any plaudits, there has been a trend recently to recognize the efforts of wives above and beyond the call of duty. Each year at the graduation exercises of the eve-

book, "Successful American Families." As part of their findings, the two social scientists reported:

"While we have more broken families, we also have many more good ones. These good families are increasing and getting better."

Clearly, a cornerstone of the successful family is the wife. Just what are the criteria for a "good" wife? Each family is unique and has its own pattern and problems. But by and large, the estimable wife often has some basic characteristics. In a cross-section survey of 20 leading marital-relations advisers among member agencies of the Family Service Association of America, we have gathered a consensus of their views on the subject. The following points, not necessarily in order of importance for every couple, may guide young wives just starting out in family life, and give other women a better perspective on their own role:

1. The good wife, grown-up enough to give as well as to receive, has the capacity to provide her husband with emotional support when needed.

changes and emotional cycles in their lives.

3. Her expectations of what her husband can do are realistic. Take the case of Joan and Paul Meadows, for example. As an orphaned child, Joan had been placed in one foster home after another. Instability marked her entire youth. When she married Paul, a truck driver, Joan realized he had far less education and intelligence than she, but he was steady and predictable, giving her the security she needed. Joan manages the finances, plans for the children, and makes the major decisions, yet she makes Paul feel he is the boss at home. She has never berated him for his inability to increase his income. Joan sees her husband in a true light.

4. The good wife shares her husband's goals, fitting them to her own. She is willing to wait patiently for the ultimate rewards. In attaining these objectives, she shares responsibilities as well as pleasures and problems. A fairly common case

who want to be better ones might well follow

able. She may compromise gracefully, however, by not seeing them too often.

7. While she enjoys her husband's companionship, the good wife doesn't become too dependent on it. Respecting his need for occasional privacy, she learns when to keep quiet if she's aware he is upset or uncommunicative. If he'd rather read or watch a ball game on television, she avoids disturbing him with idle chatter. While family unity is desirable, she doesn't force him into "togetherness." If her husband invites her to join him in golf, fishing, or bowling—and she's interested—she'll go along for the comradeship. But if he prefers some social time with other men, and she senses that she shouldn't intrude, the good wife doesn't consider this a personal affront. She knows she doesn't have to be in her husband's corner every moment of his free time.

8. Social scientists agree that emancipation from parental domination is essential to harmony in

her husband's, though they may differ. She tries to find out what's "eating" her mate, concedes that his viewpoint may be reasonable and opens the way to discussion and compromise. When she knows the "sore spots" in his personality, she avoids the temptation to strike at them. If she has a grievance herself, she tries to choose the right time and place to air it, limiting her arguments to relevant facts. Above all, she retains her sense of humor and sense of proportion.

What about her function as a mother? Having children is a joint goal, an expression of a couple's affection for each other. Generally, the American woman today takes a dominant role when the children are young, but the good wife doesn't shut out her husband or lessen her devotion to him. She divides her love between him and the children. From the



Could You Win This "Good Wife" Certificate?

By CLARK W. BLACKBURN

General Director, Family Service Association of America with Theodore Irwin

ning division of New York University's college of engineering, the student council presents "Good Wife Certificates" to worthy mates of graduates for their "encouragement, collaboration, and understanding." At the college, four out of five evening students are married. The average student takes six to eight years to complete his engineering course. Usually, he spends three-and-a-half nights a week in class and much of his weekend in preparation for it.

One "good wife" who received her certificate last June is Mrs. Mary K. Mooney, whose husband Terence attended evening classes for nine years. During that time, the couple had four children, and she had to keep them happily occupied while Terence studied.

"A lot of fellows dropped out," Mrs. Mooney observed, "because their wives couldn't stand the grind. I admit at times the going was rough, but I wanted my husband to achieve his ambition, and becoming an engineer offered a better life for all of us."

I think the Good Wife Certificate, as a tangible token of gratitude, is a wonderful tradition. I wish there were more like it outside the academic world. Of the 38,600,000 wives in this country, there are probably a vast number who deserve recognition for their superior performance as spouses. Far too much attention has been given to divorcees and the shortcomings of the female partner. It's time we accented her positive qualities.

Dr. Carle C. Zimmerman of Harvard University and the Rev. Lucius F. Cervantes of St. Louis University surveyed 60,000 families for their new

That is, she is sensitive to his feelings and moods. When he is preoccupied by tensions outside the home, she knows he is not rejecting her. If he needs praise, she's able to offer it. In crises, she stands by him; if he loses his job or fails in a venture, she doesn't blame him entirely, but puts on a good face and does all she can to see him through the ordeal.

She understands his impulses even though she may disapprove of his behavior. Let me illustrate with a case at one of our agencies. Barbara had married Fred, a widower with a grown daughter and two grandchildren. Fred tended to go overboard with financial help to his daughter. Last summer, he sent both grandchildren to an expensive camp, thus depriving Barbara and himself of a longer vacation. But Barbara realized that Fred's daughter resented his second marriage and perhaps this was his way of winning her over. Instead of expressing resentment, Barbara accepted his gesture as a wish to be a good father and grandfather—an emotional need that had to be satisfied.

2. To be able to give her husband emotional support, the good wife develops her own potentialities as a human being. Retaining her individuality and independence, she may take courses in adult education, cultivate her talents, or participate in community affairs. Thus, she fulfills herself as a person and still pulls her oar as a wife. At the same time, she grows along with her husband, expanding her horizons with his and broadening her interests as he moves ahead. She is able to keep pace with him, adjusting to the many and various

in point is a couple I'll call Ed and Betty Jackson. Ambitious to get ahead, Ed started as a salesman in a demanding business. He worked late hours and traveled a good deal. Although she was annoyed and lonely from time to time, Betty adapted herself to the situation. She learned to make casserole dishes that wouldn't spoil when he came home late, and made the most of their few hours together. Now that Ed has been made an executive, they have household help and more time to spend with each other. Recently, the Jacksons took a long-dreamed-of trip to Europe. As her husband's "partner," Betty had played her role well in his hard climb upward.

5. Through the warmth of her affection, the good wife helps keep their love alive. She sends him off with a kiss in the morning and greets him as fondly when he returns. To her, physical love is a symbol of devotion rather than an end in itself, and she is aware that such physical need is usually greater in the male. The considerate wife lets her mate know that she finds him desirable, and never makes him feel inadequate as a male.

6. The good wife has a deep, abiding, confident faith in the man she has married. She wants others to respect him as she does. In a group conversation, she permits him to take the lead and doesn't interrupt him constantly or spoil his jokes. She avoids criticizing him in public. Nor does she disparage associates and friends he admires; she follows an open-door policy for them in her home, even if she finds them dull or sometimes disagree-

marriage. The good wife doesn't run off to mother every time she's up against a situation she can't handle. While she maintains close ties with her parents, their wishes do not control her decisions. No longer their "little girl," she has assumed the full stature of a wife. Her mother's advice may be helpful, but the smart wife knows that it must not intrude on the young couple's privacy. Toward her husband's parents, she is accepting. Tactfully, she arranges to see them regularly (if that's what her husband wants), and takes their suggestions with grace. But she and her husband still hold the reins at home.

9. Considering homemaking her profession, she enjoys being a capable household manager, even if she has an outside job, too. Home should be more than a place for her husband to hang his hat—he should find pleasure in returning to it each day. She makes every effort to keep their home reasonably cheerful, a restful haven. Meals are enticing in variety. Unless he's willing to do such household chores as washing dishes or changing diapers, she does not insist on it. Although he can help around the house, her mate isn't converted into a "mother substitute." If she has a part-time career or full-time job, it doesn't take priority in her life, and her own work should not become more important to her than his.

10. Conflicts are normal in marriage, and the astute wife doesn't let tensions pile up; she works them out as they come along. Above all, she must be able to communicate her feelings and respect

beginning, she encourages him to share in their rearing and guidance. When they misbehave, she handles the problem as it comes up; she doesn't put him in the unfavorable position of a dreaded disciplinarian by threatening her children with: "Wait till Daddy comes home!" He does his part when he's at home, and she backs him up in his methods of punishment.

Naturally, no one wife is likely to fit all these criteria for the ever-loving spouse. Nor does anything less than these criteria necessarily make a woman a "defective" wife. Obviously, the characteristics of American families vary widely, and no outsider can say what is best for each couple. But these 10 yardsticks can serve as a guide to women who wish to evaluate their own role—and to husbands who may now awaken to the fact that their mates may well merit at the very least a symbolic "good wife" award.



PHOTOGRAPH BY VICTOR OBSATZ