

## Is Your Son-in-Law or Daughter-in-Law the Cause of Your Estrangement?

**Of all of the different pathways to lead to estrangement, a difficult daughter-in-law or son-in-law is probably the most common. One who has subtle or overt forms of mental illness can make reconciliation especially challenging. A daughter-in-law, in particular may create more conflict for the following reasons:**

- **She may feel very threatened by your attachment to your son and by his attachment to you**
- **She may misinterpret the normal slings and arrows of family conflicts and communications**
- **She may force your son to choose as a way to cause her to feel more secure**
- **She may feel worried that you'll impose your ideas on how she should be as a wife or mother and not feel strong enough to assert herself in a healthy or collaborative way**
- **Your son may believe he has to support her no matter what as an expression of his masculinity**
- **For most men, their wives are their best friends if not their only friends. Therefore they pay a higher price if they lose their wife's support.**
- **He may have to support her in the desire for an estrangement because she'll make his life miserable if he doesn't.**
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