

**Letting Valentine's Day Re-Ignite Your Romance**

from the American Counseling Association

Yes, Valentine's Day can seem like nothing but a massive push to sell romantic cards and gifts of flowers, candy or jewelry but, despite all the commercial hype, the reality is that Valentine's Day can be a good opportunity for putting the romance back in a relationship.

It's not uncommon that when someone has been in a relationship for a long time it can become easy to simply take the other person for granted and to let the romantic aspects just fall away. The sad fact is that most failed relationships don't explode; rather they fade over time as romance disappears and one or both partners end up feeling unimportant, neglected and unloved.

No box of candy on Valentine's Day will fix all the problems of a faded relationship, but it can be a start in showing the other person that you still care and are still paying attention.

With Valentine's Day as a starting point, you can then continue the effort. Make sure birthdays and anniversaries are remembered, and then also celebrate special days, like the anniversary of your first date or the vacation you both enjoyed. Make a surprise celebration out of non-special days, just because you want to.

It's also important to simply make time for each other. Romance in a relationship requires paying attention to the other person's feelings and thoughts, not just to the problems, issues and details of daily life.

If necessary, add your partner to your schedule in order to insure that there's time for each other. Maybe you need a weekly "date night," or a set 30 minutes each day to share thoughts, feelings, and future plans.

In our busy lives, it's too easy to just pass each other by. We let problems overwhelm us, and take for granted the love and positive emotions that bring us happiness.

Keeping love alive as a relationship matures takes time and effort, though the work can be enjoyable. Giving your partner a small gift for no reason other than love will bring a loving smile to his or her face, and a warm feeling to you as well. And isn't that what a strong, romantic relationship should be giving you?

Valentine's Day may be overly commercial, but the romance and positive emotions of the day can inspire us all to put in some effort to recharge and maintain a healthy relationship.

*Counseling Corner" is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to [ACAcornet@counseling.org](mailto:ACAcornet@counseling.org) or visit the ACA website at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)*

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