

Has The Romance Disappeared From Your Relationship?

from the American Counseling Association

It can be fairly easy to start taking a relationship for granted. We all lead busy lives and can find it easy to get so wrapped up in our work, family issues, financial problems or other daily matters that we forget we have to put effort into keeping a romantic relationship fresh and interesting.

To fix that problem, you might try a more organized approach for keeping the romance in a relationship, not unlike the way you probably handle your busy day at the office or managing a household. It may sound more business-like than romantic, but relationship maintenance can actually be very enjoyable.

Start with your day planner, computer calendar, or a regular old calendar. Schedule events for your relationship, just like you do meetings or appointments. Note special days beyond the usual birthday and anniversary dates. Maybe the day you first met, or the anniversary of a special vacation. Include random prompts to do something romantic at other times for no special reason.

Similarly, keep an intelligence file on your partner. Make a list of favorite things, from wines to flowers to authors to movies. It's not only a way to stay more in tune with each other, but can make gift giving more special and meaningful.

You also want to create a regular schedule for time together. If that orthodontist or gym trainer deserves a set appointment time, why not your romantic partner? Your date night doesn't have to be a fancy night out, just a time when the two of you can reconnect and get beyond the daily minutia that fills up so much of our lives.

Also try setting a regular, daily meeting time. Maybe it's just fifteen minutes at the beginning or end of the day, but make it happen every day. Find out what your partner has been up to, what's gone right or wrong, and what's being planned. Stay connected with each other.

If your romantic relationship has started to feel stale and boring, realize it won't just fix itself. Put some thought and effort into doing things that will bring the romance back. If you need extra help, check the yellow pages for professional counselors who specialize in relationship or couples counseling.

Giving a relationship the work and attention it deserves can pay you back with a lifetime of companionship, happiness and love.

Counseling Corner is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to ACACorner@counseling.org or visit the ACA website at www.counseling.org

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