

5. Make sure your spouse knows that you think he or she is great.

Nothing is more romantic than knowing that someone really likes you. Every person wants to be highly thought of. Find one good thing about your spouse and mention your appreciation every day. Or find a special time, look your spouse in the eyes and mention three things about him or her that you think are wonderful.

6. Write a letter, by hand. Here's a corollary to the previous idea: Put down on paper some things you are grateful for about your spouse. Choose a special moment to present the letter to him or her; make sure your spouse has peace and quiet to enjoy your note.

7. Ask questions every day. Don't let the pace of life rob you of a chance to share your thoughts, ideas, and dreams ... and to hear your spouse's. Keeping communication and intimacy alive is a prerequisite for romance. Talk with your spouse about things they are interested in. Ask nonthreatening questions that show you care.

Every marriage needs romance. No one wants to go through life with a spouse who is more business partner or roommate; we all go into marriage looking for a lifelong lover and companion. Take steps this week to enhance or reignite romance in your marriage.

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GOING FURTHER – RESOURCES

Building Up Your Spouse (by Dennis Rainey)

Enjoying Your Marriage in the Second Half (by Mike & Linda Montgomery)

Staying Close (by Dennis Rainey)

Attend a Family Life ***Weekend To Remember*** (familylife.com)



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MARRIAGE MATTERS POINTERS

WHEN ROMANCE IS GONE

A FOCUS ON MARRIAGE AT FELLOWSHIP



WHEN ROMANCE IS GONE

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“There’s just no fire there.”

“He doesn’t love me anymore.”

“She acts like I’m her brother, not her lover.”

“It feels like we’re just living together as roommates.”

We hear comments like this from men and women all the time. In our busy world, it’s easy for the feeling of romance to fade away. What’s going on when this happens? There are at least two possibilities.

UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Every day won’t feel as electric as what you experienced in the movie theater as a twenty-year-old. The loss of jobs, sick in-laws, teenagers whose grades aren’t what they should be, the death of a friend, and intense projects at work—life is not a chick flick. Life is filled with all kinds of circumstances that simply cannot be romantic. That’s okay.

All disappointment is a result of unmet expectations. Make sure you and your spouse are on the same page about the stresses and realities of what’s happening in your life right now. Your life-stage and current circumstances profoundly affect the state of your romantic relationship.

FORGETTING WHAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE

Perhaps you’ve forgotten what your “love” actually looks like to your spouse. You aren’t actually cherishing your spouse the way God cherishes you. You don’t love God more than them and them more than anyone or anything else. When we “love” like this, romance withers and dies.

First Corinthians Chapter 13 is a great diagnostic to evaluate our daily love. It shows us how true love acts toward others. Perhaps you’ve read it many times, but what if we made this passage specific for you? How would your love measure up? Insert your name in the blanks below (where “love” appears in the original).

_____ is patient
_____ is kind
_____ does not envy
_____ does not boast

_____ is not proud
_____ is not rude
_____ is not self-seeking
_____ is not easily angered
_____ keeps no record of wrongs
_____ does not delight in evil
_____ rejoices with the truth
_____ always protects
_____ always trusts
_____ always hopes
_____ always perseveres

How did you do? Your score out of 15? _____

SEVEN IDEAS TO CREATE A ROMANTIC ATMOSPHERE

Need any help creating an atmosphere that promotes romance? Choose one of the ideas below and do it right away. Don’t tell your spouse which one you picked—yet. Begin to implement your choice, then come back in a week or so and talk about any changes you’ve noticed in your relationship:

- 1. Talk about special memories.** Reconnect by remembering your first date, the night you became engaged, or important moments in your early marriage. It’s too easy to forget all that God did to bring you together.
- 2. Have lots of little interactions with your spouse.** A whirlwind getaway to a New York luxury hotel won’t be romantic when disconnected from the hundreds of interactions from the previous weeks. Hold hands, ask an open-ended question, send a text to her cell phone, fold clothes together, call from the car on the way home, or fix your spouse a bowl of ice cream. Take advantage of the little opportunities life presents.
- 3. Spend time together.** Make a point to spend some time together each day for the next week or so—take a walk, play a game, or do the dishes. Before you go to bed, make sure you’ve done something together that included quality time.
- 4. Buy a gift for each other.** Set a dollar limit and both go shopping to buy a small gift for one another. Plan a quiet evening and give your gift and the reason you selected it.