

Rekindling the Romance in Your Relationship

You meet. You date. You have a vivid sense that no other couple has ever experienced what the two of you have created together. You feel so alive, so on fire for each other.

Fast-forward a year or two or five or fifteen and the situation seems so different. Something appears to be missing. Now it's hard to imagine that you were once that couple who felt so in love. Where is that sense of romance that once enveloped you?

What's missing, of course is your RAW, your **R**omance **A**fter the **W**edding. One definition of "raw" is "powerfully impressive." You once had a relationship that was like that. Now that trait of your relationship seems to be sorely lacking.

Have you decided that you want that back? Would you like to have a marriage that's more RAW? If so, there are some things you can do to rekindle the romance in your relationship.

First, you have to make romance a priority. No more thinking about it. No longer just talking about it. It's time, immediately, to do something about it. Today. Right now. No more excuses, justifications or rationalizations. Make a decision to be romantic with your partner and act on that.

Second, start with the basics. Remember the things you used to do when you dated? Things like opening doors for your partner, writing notes, saying "I love you," having long, meaningful talks, holding hands, laughing with one another, giving a flower, and checking in during the day with one another were common then. Go back and do those small yet poignant things again. Think carefully about your dating behavior and reinstate those kinds of loving flourishes.

Next, once you've gotten back on track, it's time to take things up a notch. To help move you forward, ask your partner to make a list of ten things that when you say them or do them, he or she feels loved. Then use that list to do one loving thing a day, something so special to them that you have it right there on their list.

Fourth, choose items from the following list and do them regularly.

- Walk arm-in-arm when you enter a room. You'll have people wondering what you are up to.
- Compliment her to her mom or in front of her friends.
- Flirt with your spouse. You know what I mean.
- Never, ever switch over to an incoming call when you have him or her on the line. Who else do you know that can't wait at least a minute or two to talk to you?
- Write a love note. Put it inside of a balloon. Blow up the balloon. Tie on a string. Attach a pin to the string.
- Watch a sporting event together and kiss during the timeouts and commercials.
- Use candles. Remember candles?
- Commit random acts of romance during the day. And the evening. And at night.
- Put gas in her car.
- Serve breakfast in bed, but make it an elegant feast!
- Prepare his favorite meal.
- When you're out, buy him a small gift that says, "I was thinking of you."
- Buy her favorite treat because you know she hesitates to buy it for herself.

- Fill a bowl with small pieces of paper containing ideas from each of you about a romantic outing. Take turns picking one each week. After you take it out of the bowl, you have five days to make it happen.
- Experience again the power of music. Do you have a song that is yours? Or a favorite group to listen to or dance to? Whether your soundtrack for romance includes Frank Sinatra, Enya, Enigma, Barry White, or the music from your favorite movie, include those songs in your time together.

Fifth, rediscover the amazing romance-rekindling qualities of kissing. Do you recall your first kiss together? Can you remember the anticipation that used to consume you when you thought it was time for another kiss? The first few times you made love, I'll bet kissing was a big part of the foreplay. It's not uncommon for that to change over time. Experience again the enticing qualities of kissing. Someone has said that a kiss is a contraction of the lips due to an enlargement of the heart. Kisses can reveal your emotions, stir your soul, and bond your marriage.

Finally, graduate to some intense statements of your romantic reinvention.

- When you return from the ladies room, surreptitiously give him your panties to keep for the rest of the night. You'll have him going crazy. This works even better when you're out with other couples and he has to maintain conversation with the other people who are present while he imagines you without your knickers. And of course you'll want to smile at him knowingly as he struggles. Be sure to follow through with an evening of sexual wonder.
- Plan a weekend away for the two of you. Arrange for the sitter, keeping everything a secret. When you arrive at home, tell her to pack a few things for a night away and whisk her off to a bed and breakfast at the beach or in the mountains. For a night and a day she'll experience the joy of having no children pulling at her, no dishes to wash, no bed to make and no rooms to clean.
- Before he leaves on a business trip, cut small pieces of colored paper into different shapes. Write words of affection on each one. Hide them in his socks, his shaving kit, a shirt pocket, the novel he's reading—anywhere he'll find them while he's away.

Romance After the Wedding. It will make a tremendous difference in the way you feel about yourself and your marriage. Why not order up a big helping of marriage RAW today?

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