

Valentine's Day – Tips to Rekindle Your Romance

INTRODUCTION

After you've been married for awhile, you might think that the romance is fading. You still love them but things aren't as hot as they once were. The spark seems to be all but gone. For Valentine's Day this year, here are some tips to rekindle your romance.

The word romance conjures up different images for men and women. Where women think of hand-in-hand moonlight strolls with the one they love. Men, on the other hand, may think of romance in more practical terms.

The key to improving the romance in your relationship may mean a little compromise where necessary.

Many people look up the word love in a dictionary and are convinced they know what it is. Did you know there are at least nine types of romantic love? Which one do you and your partner exhibit most often? How can you incorporate other types of romance in your life? Will knowing the other types of romantic love make a difference in how you view love and romance? Let's look at the types and see what can be learned.

Romantic Love is comprised of nine different aspects. People who claim to be in love can experience one, two or all nine aspects. Knowing how each aspect differs can help you understand romantic love.

* Most people think of a love relationship based on mutual trust, recognition and support. This characteristic of love acknowledges the individuality of both partners but each one

does whatever they can to make their partner's life better. They have mutual trust with the other knowing that they are completely safe with their partner. They also see the potential in their partner and will do everything they can to support and encourage them. Those with this type of romantic love see their relationship as more than 50/50; they see it as 100/100.

* You've probably seen movies where Cupid shoots an arrow and people fall madly in love. This type of love is intense and passionate. It is based purely on physical attraction. When people experience this type of love they often lose control of who they are and what they need out of a real relationship. Love of this nature is visceral and can be great to experience. After you're in a long-term relationship, however, couples may find this type of love is lacking.

* The love most people want more than anything else is one based on ultimate connection and profound feeling. It is seen as the epitome or definitive type of love because it connects people on the deepest possible level. This is the type of love people desire and one that sought after at all costs.

* Have you seen the unrealistic love portrayed in television and movies? People fall in love in moments and live fairytale lives. There's no patience required in this relationship. Compromise isn't necessary and you can forget about the struggles of learning to communicate effectively. Everything is perfect. Unfortunately this type of love is a myth but real, demythologized love is based on reality and not myth.

* You might expect to experience this type of love in a new relationship which is called transformative love. There are new opportunities abounding. Your life may take you in a new direction as you follow your new partner. While this love can bring extreme pleasure it can also end quickly because it is unfulfilling to one or both partners.

*** Transitional love moves you from passion to specific, traditional roles. This is the type of love you want in your life.** You start out with extreme passion toward your partner which then blooms and changes. Over time the relationship strengthens and deepens which leads you to familiar husband/wife or father/mother roles. Many people find themselves in this type of love which is good but the goal is to bring back some of the passion from the beginning of your relationship.

* Some relationships begin in the passion stage but something happens which suppresses the passion. You maintain the relationship on a friendship basis. It is based on feeling secure in your relationship but not necessarily about achieving personal growth. You know you can share anything with this person and realize the friendship is more important than the passion you once shared.

* The dyadic-partnership love is similar to the love based on mutual trust, recognition and support. The biggest difference, however is that instead of being two individual, the partners begin to function as a single unit. The needs of the relationship outweigh the needs of each person. This type of love isn't easy to achieve but it is attainable through solid communication, deep respect and complete honesty.

Look through the list above to determine where your relationship stands. Most people in long-term relationships aren't sure or they wish their relationship were different. People may have high expectations for their partner which places the partner in the unenviable position of having to make their lives better. It's important to realize that the only person who can impact your life for the better is you.

Now that you know more about the different types of romance, you'll have a better understanding of what it is you desire from your relationship. Think about where your relationship is and then learn how to rekindle your romance based upon where you want

your relationship to be. Take a look at the following suggestions to help you rekindle your romance and bring back the sizzle.

Romance begins in the mind

People often think a great, loving relationship is based on sexual chemistry. Actually romance begins in the mind particularly for people who are in committed, long-term relationships such as marriage. Often romance begins with a simple thought or fantasy about your partner and can move into a deeply intimate connection with them. Rekindling the romance in your relationship can be exciting, fulfilling and rewarding for both of you.

Romance begins first thing in the morning rather than when the sun goes down. Start your day thinking about your partner and what you can do for them. Think about what they like or may want most. Then do what you can to meet those desires. Perhaps you can make their favorite breakfast for them while they shower. Doing little things for your partner shows you are listening to what they say and you want to please them.

Drop little hints throughout the day that you're thinking about them. Leave a love note written in lipstick on the mirror. Put a sexy photo of yourself in his briefcase. Send a short and sweet note via voice mail or text message. Your goal is to build expectancy throughout the day and let them know you find them desirable. It also builds up their receptiveness for affection when you are together again.

Develop certain rituals which are special for the two of you. Find something the two of you enjoy doing together. Perhaps you enjoy cooking together and you both look forward to doing that each evening. Another ritual might be drawing the bath for your partner after a long day and staying in the bathroom to chat while they soak. Whatever you enjoy and can look forward to doing with your partner make that a special ritual for just the two of

you. Then guard that special time like you would an appointment with the president of your company.

Romance that begins in the mind is also well-planned out in such a way it seems spontaneous. Take the time to make plans around what you both like to do but don't get in a tizzy if plans have to change. For instance, when the babysitter calls up with the flu and you can't find a replacement quickly, cancel your reservations and have a candlelight dinner at home after the child is asleep.

The point is to start with a planned date and time but if something happens which causes your plans to change you can still enjoy a romantic evening because you're together.

Romance isn't impossible with children

Most people think that romance and children are diametrically opposite. There's no way you can rekindle the romance in your relationship if there are children at home. Fortunately most people would be wrong. You can keep romance alive or rekindle it even when there are children in the picture. Here are some ideas how to do just that.

What's in the box? Find a box from chocolates you've been given in the past or buy a new box. If the box is empty you can continue with the next step. Otherwise, the first step is to empty the box of chocolates. You can eat them or store them in another container because you will use the box. Cut out 25 to 100 hearts from construction paper, wrapping paper, lace doilies or fabric. Write something you love about them on each heart. Take your time and be specific. You may write something like "The way you hold me when it storms," "The way your nose wrinkles before you sneeze" or "How you adore the children." Fold each heart and place it in the box then tie it up with a wide satin bow.

Thinking about the things you love about your partner can do wonders for your own romantic feelings toward them. This will be a gift he will enjoy much more than a box of chocolates. You can continue to add more things you love about them throughout the year. Think about things you can write for their birthday, your anniversary, Valentine's Day or any other holiday. You may even want to sneak a couple of naughty things you love about him to pique his interest.

Recreate your first date. It may not be possible to do this exactly but you can give it a try. Think about what you were wearing. Do you have something similar? Where did you go? If it's still open you might be able to go back. Take time during the evening to remember and reminisce about how nervous you were. Was your stomach in knots before they picked you up? Were you afraid your sweaty hands would ruin the evening? Play the music you listened to or rent the movie you saw on your first date. Do whatever you can to recreate your date to help bring back the excitement all over again.

Kidnap your partner. Enlist the help of co-workers, family and friends to surprise your partner. Ask your partner's boss to let them off of work a little early one Friday afternoon. Ask a friend or family member to keep the kids. Pack two overnight bags. One will have a change of clothes for the next day. The other will have little more in it than new negligee and whatever you think you'll need for the night. Meet them at work, blindfold them and tell them you have a surprise in store for them. Head over to a bed and breakfast in a nearby town.

If you plan well enough in advance you may be able to get the bed and breakfast staff to help set the mood. They can have specific music you've chosen playing in the room. They can also set out champagne and strawberries dipped in chocolate or something else which will be a surprise for your partner. Think of other things you can do to make the night or weekend memorable for both of you.

Other ways to rekindle romance

No matter how much you want to keep romance alive with your partner there will be circumstances which will pull you apart. There are the stresses of everyday living – work, children and extended families, buying a house or any number of other things – which pull you in different directions. It's no wonder passion and romance can seem to suffer.

Determine to make your relationship with your partner your priority from now on. Choose to give preference to your partner. Make him feel like royalty similar to the way you treated him before you were married or became an exclusive couple.

Use any excuse you can think of to touch your partner. Every touch doesn't have to be sexual but every touch can mean something. Hold your kisses for five seconds longer than normal when they come home after a long day. Pretend you're having an affair with them and sneak kisses or cuddles when no one is looking. You may even want to leave them a suggestive note in their sock drawer or in their briefcase.

Make it a point to greet them at the door each day. Smile at them, tell them you're glad they're home and give them a lingering kiss. Let them know you think they are important and you're glad that they're a part of your life.

If you haven't already done so, begin the habit of having a regular date night with your mate. A weekly date night would be best, but you wouldn't want to spread the evenings out more than two weeks apart. Determine not to talk about work, the children or anything else that's stressful. Concentrate on each other as you dream together and make plans for the future.

Keep communication lines open with your partner. Some marriage counselors, therapists and psychologists consider talking to be foreplay especially for women. Take time to listen to what your partner says and be genuinely interested in the things that matter to them.

Ask them if they feel loved and if the answer is no, find out what you can do to make them feel that way. Don't be afraid to be honest with your partner and let them know if you're feeling unloved, too. They'll want to do what they can to make you happy as you try to do the same for them.

Many women are also turned on when a partner helps them with housework. Men might want to help with the dishes, cook or vacuum to get their partner in the mood for love. Of course, the same goes with women, they may want to surprise their partner by taking out the trash so they don't have to. Everyone appreciates a little bit of help so do what you can and your partner may thank you in a special way.

It isn't uncommon for married couples or those in long-term relationships to stop talking about their feelings. Write your sweetie a love poem. Maybe you're not very good at talking about your feelings. That doesn't mean you can't let your partner know how important they are to you. If your own words are hard to express, you can also find a poem that says what you want to say and write it in a card or note.

Turn off your television. Plan to spend some time each day talking without the distraction of the television, music or computer. Stop what you're doing and pay attention to what they have to say. You may be surprised by what is on their mind.

Find the photo albums or video tapes from your wedding or early part of your relationship. Spend the evening looking through the pictures and reminiscing about each one. Watch

the wedding video and remember how in love you were and that you still love and are attracted to them like you were way back then.

Become interested in some of the things that interest your partner. This doesn't mean you have to become a huge football fan but you can learn about the sport and watch the game with him on occasion. You don't have to become an avid fisherperson but you may decide to go with them the next time they drop a line in the water. The point is when you take an interest in what they enjoy they'll realize how much you do care for them. Of course, there's always that chance you'll actually enjoy their favorite activity.

Take a day off of work and spend it with your partner. Go to the movie you've wanted to see but didn't go to because it wasn't appropriate for children. Spend the day at the beach or go horseback riding. Do something during your free day that you haven't done since you first started dating. The break will be good for you mentally as well as helping to reignite the flames which may be lying dormant.

Use secret words to let your partner know you're interested in making love that night. Try to find a word or phrase which can be used in normal conversation but change it slightly so no one knows it's a secret code. For instance, "I let the cat out" can indicate you're in the mood if you don't have one.

Don't forget about public displays of affection. Walk around the mall holding hands. Give your partner a peck on the cheek when they open the door for you. Snuggle up close to them as you're walking under an umbrella. Let others know that you're wild about your partner and aren't afraid to show it.

Physical displays are important in your home, too. Children need to see that their parents love each other; it gives them a sense of stability. Give your partner a long, lingering kiss in front of the children. Massage their shoulders after a long day at work.

Touching your partner doesn't have to lead to a sexual encounter, but there's nothing wrong with it if it does. If you have children you'll want to ship them off to friends or family or wait until they're in bed to act on your feelings. You can also let your partner know your feelings by winking and flirting with them like you did when you were younger.

While it doesn't seem to be related to rekindling your romance for Valentine's Day, you'll want to take good care of yourself. If you take better care of your own physical needs your partner may take notice. You may wear a number of hats – partner, parent, cook, housekeeper or more – don't neglect taking care of yourself. If you treat yourself with self-love it can have a large impact on how your partner sees you.

Conclusion

Valentine's Day is a great time to work at rekindling the romance you once shared with your partner. You don't have to wait until Valentine's Day, however. Any day is the perfect time to make simple changes which can bring you and your partner closer together.

Use these tips to rekindle your romance or adjust them to meet your relationship's needs. These ideas can help bring you back together if you've drifted apart. Look through them; try one or more of them as you rekindle the flames of love that may have grown cold. Your relationship is important and trying these tips may help you get it back to where you want it to be.