



Don't Let Romance Take a Summer Break

Initiating Romance and Intimacy Back Into Your Life

Roses. Kisses. Candlelight dinners. Summer is here and romance is in the air but is it just giving flowers, candy and cards? I think so.

Romance does not have to be complicated, however. Simply doing special things for the one you care about most can add sparkle and spice. Just keep in mind, the way you interact, communicate, and show respect for your mate can greatly improve a relationship and increase intimacy and romance.

Below are seven suggestions to boost the romance in your relationship, and following are even more ideas to consider. While they don't necessarily come in a box, they are still gifts to give to one another and to the relationship. I recommend you choose one tip for each day of the week, or create some on your own and see where your relationship is in a week!

7 Tips to Enhance R-O-M-A-N-C-E:

Respect each other as individuals and adults. Keep mindful of your partner's needs, desires and boundaries. Respecting someone demonstrates you feel they are worthy and deserving of consideration and appreciation. Receiving respect compliments your self-esteem and adds to your confidence. Having mutual respect in a relationship is a core factor that invariably increases romance because you feel accepted for the person you are.

Offer something to improve his or her day. When you have respect for someone, you naturally want to offer something of yourself to make his or her day a little better. You can surprise your partner with a favorite meal or outing or do something as simple as running an errand from his or her list, but the best gifts are your support, time and attention. Ask yourself what you can do to be loving and helpful to your mate each day. You can also offer the temperaments of patience and understanding.

Make quality time for each other. Busyness can be a romance-buster. Just as you allot time to have your car maintained, your hair cut, or your poodle pampered, you must schedule uninterrupted quality time to share your life and love. Show you value the relationship and be willing to put some "to-do" items aside. This opens the door to a closer relationship where romance has the opportunity to bloom.

Appreciate your mate. It is important to show appreciation for the little and large ways your partner gives to the relationship. Notice the efforts, the strengths, and the sacrifices and let your partner

know how his or her behavior has positively impacted you. Take note of the contributions he or she makes, and find something each day for which you can say “thank you.” You’ll see that, not only attitude, but also romance will be improved.

Negotiate wants, desires, ideas and plans. Be willing to try something new and remain open for discussing different views and options. Any great long-term partnership is filled with continuous negotiation. Be willing to share opinions about what to do or how best to be together. Inflexibility and insisting on having things your own way will likely limit your partner’s expression of genuine love and romance.

Communicate openly. The healthiest relationships have open and honest communication. Show the other person that you want to really hear him or her. Listen for understanding. If one partner feels limited in speaking or sharing, true romance does not have a place to emerge.

Encourage each other. Life can be tough. How can you lift up and support each other? In his or her work, projects or plans? Let your partner know you believe in him or her. Also, ask for support and encouragement for what *you* need. A partnership is about being compassionate and helping one another. Encouraging each other is a boost to the relationship and the romance!

See additional tips on the following page.

For information about counseling and other wellness programs available in middle TN, you can call Susan Gillpatrick, M.Ed., LPC, CTS at 615-460-4445. Workshops and training programs are also available, for your group or organization. Or to make an appointment for an assessment regarding your needs or concerns, call the Centerstone appointment line at 615-460-4357.

Additional Tips To Enhance R-O-M-A-N-C-E

“R”

Read together
Rekindle the flame
Reassure each other
Real – being authentic and genuine
Remember the person you fell in love with
Renew your commitment toward each other
Recognize something special about each other
Relax together. Take a vacation.
Regularly give affection
Reminisce
Reconcile

“O”

Openly talk with one another
Offer support, time and attention
Overlook each other's shortcomings
Original – Show that you appreciate your partner's originality and don't compare to others.
Open your heart
Outings

“M”

Moonlight Walks
Manners should stay in tact
Make up a poem
Make memories
Make dates

“A”

Admire the other as a person
Always offer to help
Attend to your mate without keeping score
Alluring is something you always want to be to each other
Allow for couple time
Accept each other
Acknowledge each other's efforts
Agree to disagree sometimes
Affection and attention
Ask what he or she needs most from you

“N”

Nestle or snuggle together
Never forget what brought you together
Never talk about other relationships
Never give up
Notice needs

“C”

Cleverly place love notes around the house
Celebrate each day as if it is your first
Cherish quality time together
Celebrate each other's accomplishments
Cook together
Call each other
Compromise

“E”

Every chance you get, say “I Love You”
Enjoy quiet time together
Emotion and empathy for each other's feelings
Escape to a special place together
Experience life together
Eat together
Express your feelings