

Keeping Romance Alive

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As a parent it's hard enough to find time for sleep, not to mention time for romantic dinners, or sex with your partner. Although it's a challenge, taking care of adult relationships is a true gift for you and your child.

Parents, with approximately 50% of marriages ending in divorce, please step back and seriously think about how you can stay connected and in love. All too often people say that they just can't make time for romance when they're tired, stressed, or feel unattractive.

Question: A mother of two active young boys asked *"I'm exhausted and I'm beginning to worry that I'll never have the energy to bring romance back into my marriage. Do you have suggestions for my husband and me?"*

Answer: Here are some ideas that have worked for other couples:

- Make a date and put it in your planner like other appointments. If you don't do this, the responsibilities of daily living and the needs of your active boys will overshadow the importance of alone time with your partner.
- Arrange to have your children go to a friend's or relative's home so you can be at home alone with your husband. You can do this on the weekend during the day when you won't be too tired. One way to afford this is to find a friend who has children and trade off weekly watching each other's children for a few hours. You'll get free babysitting twice a month.
- Send your husband an e-mail message or leave a voice message and tell him how much you miss him, and that you're looking forward to your date.
- When together, spend some time listening and talking to each other. Don't spend all of your time talking about the kids or the need to get the car fixed.
- If you're not in the mood for sex, try giving each other a back rub or foot rub. Sometimes it's intimacy that you crave.
- Take care of yourself so you'll be in the mood for romance. Think about what makes you feel good, and prioritize time for sleep, exercise, or going shopping for a new outfit.
- Kiss your loved one hello when you've been apart, even after a hard day at work. Remember to also give your partner positive feedback and regard like, "Honey, thank you for such a delicious dinner."

The emotional health of your family depends in part on how you balance your needs with the needs of your children. Increasing the romantic times with your partner is good for all of you.

Valentine's day is one day of the year to say "I love you," but your partner will be grateful for your loving attention year round.

