

Keeping Passion in your Marriage

Cold winter nights make a lot of people want to light a fire in the fireplace so they can feel the heat. When was the last time you looked forward to stoking the fire of your marriage?

Over time many people seem to be willing to let sexual intimacy fly right out the window, yet experts tell us that healthy intimacy is foundational to long lasting, loving relationships.

A woman wrote a letter to Ann Landers telling about how her parents could not afford a honeymoon so they made a promise to each other that every time they made love they would put a dollar in a box and on their 50th anniversary they would take a honeymoon trip to Hawaii. In spite of hard times they never took money out of the box. Some nights the husband would come home from work exclaiming he had a dollar in his pocket. His wife would tell him she knew just how to spend it! When each of their children married, they gave them a box and shared their secret. The couple took their 50th anniversary trip to Hawaii for 10 days, and paid for everything from the money they saved in the box. As they were leaving on the plane the husband turned and said, "Tonight we will start working on a trip to Cancun!"

There are many pieces of recent research citing how much humans crave intimacy. Many married couples experience a void in this area due to hectic schedules, children (young and old), jobs, stress, etc. Whether you have been married a few months or many years, sex can be exciting, adventurous, fun and creative. You may be asking yourself how that couple made and kept intimacy in their relationship a priority for 50 years. Here are some things many relationship experts encourage you to think about:

- Do you always make love in the same place, at the same time in the same way? If your answer is yes, consider doing something different to spice things up.
- Describe what a romantic time with your spouse would be like. What would be your spouse's description of a romantic time together? If you don't know the answer to this question do some detective work and find out.
- Does your spouse do romantic things that you really like? If yes, tell him/her so. If not, help him/her to know what you like.
- Consider sending love messages to your spouse during the day. Stick-it notes in the wallet, voice mail, e-mail, lip stick messages on the bathroom mirror, a special delivery, flowers with a message, a snail mail letter, or a note on the dashboard are all great ways to communicate "I love you," "Let's get together" or "Looking forward to this afternoon."
- People find all kinds of creative ways to flirt when they are dating. Think about some of the ways you used to flirt with your spouse. Consider resurrecting those that worked best. The outcome might pleasantly surprise you!

According to Dr. Paul Pearsall, author of **Super Marital Sex**, "The marriage comes first. All other people and events come after the marriage. Children, parents, work and

play all benefit most by marital priority instead of martial sacrifice, because the marriage is the central unit to all other processes. If it is true that we reap what we sow, then marriages are in big trouble....If we put as much time in our working as we allow for our loving, we would end up unemployed or bankrupt.”

You don't have to settle for looking at the hot, glowing embers in your fireplace and wishing that was the passion level in your marriage. Get creative, be adventurous and take it up a notch. If the passion in your marriage is nonexistent it can get good and if it is good it can get even better!