



The Basics of Romance

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How Do I Keep The Spark And Spontaneity In A Relationship?

The answer to this question is romance! After you find that special someone, the way to keep the relationship exciting is to make romance a priority. Romance can make it easy for two people to fall in love with each other over and over again no matter how many years they are together.

What is Romance?

Romance is a passionate, spiritual connection between two people who care about each other. Romantic gestures validate the desire to be close by communicating love in terms the other party appreciates and understands.

What are the basic tenants of Romance?

- *A romantic gesture is only as romantic as the receiver perceives it to be.*

Expressions of love that appeal to you may not seem romantic to your partner. Listen and observe verbal and nonverbal messages your partner gives you every day about personal preferences. Your Partner's Favorites on page 156 can help you orchestrate romantic expressions with your partner's preferences in mind.

- *The relationship must have top priority.*

Actions speak louder than words. If you tell your partner how important he or she is but your behavior indicates that job, family members or hobbies come first, a romantic relationship will be tough to maintain.

- *The time and effort involved in a romantic gesture is more important than the cost.*

Some of the best romantic gifts are very inexpensive. They represent an investment of time and thoughtfulness.

- *The most delightful expressions of romance are those that are unexpected.*

Remembering anniversaries, birthdays and holidays are important, but surprises are most romantic because they represent extra effort and thoughtfulness.

- *Romantic gestures should be sincere.*

If you do something romantic so that you'll get something in return, you're missing the point. If you approach romance as a chore or a job to do, you and your partner both lose.

- *Romance is intimate play.*

Many adults make work out of romance because they've forgotten how to play. Give yourself permission to be enthusiastic, playful and creative. Nothing is too silly if it is enjoyable to both you and your partner.

- *Stay in the present.*

Live in the here and now and enjoy each moment to the fullest rather ruminating about the past or fixating on the future. True romantics enjoy the present and are totally emotionally available for their partners.

- *Establishing special romantic rituals between you and your partner is very important.*

Rituals are behaviors having special meaning for loving couples. Kissing, cuddling or calling each other pet names are examples of romantic rituals. Rituals can be fun or serious as long as it has romantic meaning for both partners.

How Do Men and Women Differ When It Comes To Romance?

Men and women often have different ideas about what they consider to be romantic. Males tend to prefer romantic actions, whereas females usually like love talk supported by romantic gestures. With this in mind, it's easy to understand why men often express romance by doing things for and with their partners while women seek verbal expressions of love. Acknowledging the different orientation of men and women and communicating about what each partner needs are the best ways to deal with these differences.

Will Romance Save a Dying Relationship?

Being romantic won't save a toxic or dying relationship. Romantic love reflects a couple's mutual regard for one another when matched by other consistent acts of respect and caring. Romance is an expression of love that includes verbal messages and actions congruent and consistent with the status of the relationship. In other words, if your relationship is abusive or troubled, romantic gestures give mixed messages that are confusing and meaningless. Avoid using romantic actions to manipulate your partner into feeling obligated to return sexual advances. This will only make him or her feel used and resentful.