

Using a Road Trip To Strengthen Couple Communication: Using the Honey Jar Conversation Starter To Improve Your Relationship

By Peggy L. Ferguson, Ph.D.

One more excursion before the kids start back to school. Maybe you had planned to devote more of your time and energy to each other this summer, and as usual, time just got away from you. Perhaps you have decided that there is still time to get started on that goal and are planning one last road trip together--without the kids. A road trip with a couples communication exercise may be just the ticket to jump start the closeness in your relationship.

After you have been married awhile and you have heard all of each other's stories, it feels like you don't have anything to talk about that does not involve work or the kids. It may even seem like you are so wrapped up in day to day living that you are boring to each other. With all that is going on, the communication and conversation just seems to taper off.

When that happens, it is harder to be able to assess where you stand in your most important relationship. You may be able to deal with logistical issues that arise, but maybe you just don't feel as close as you want to.

Communication is essential for two people to feel closeness and to maintain that closeness over time. Without it, you may be just guessing about what your partner is thinking and feeling. Some of the guesses may be considerably worse than reality. communication, each partner may be constantly making faulty interpretations of the other's behavior. There is plenty of room for confusion when there is no communication. Confusion about the other person's motives, intentions, and actual behavior causes a tremendous amount of conflict and distress in relationships. Even if you are not in a lot of conflict, you might just miss your partner.

Spending quality time with your partner where you are actually present with each other and communicating can accurately and effectively convey love, acceptance, desire for connection, and contentment. When you spend time together talking, the feeling side of the relationship gets attention. Feelings get expressed and listened to. Each partner's inner experiences get to be shared. Communication is necessary to know and to be known.

Couple communication exercises can serve as the catalyst for opening up the lines of communication. The Honey Jar is an entertaining and fun couples' communication exercise. This handy, little conversation starter is small enough to put in your airplane your car glove compartment to take on your trip.

The Honey Jar was developed for devitalized couples who have been together for a long time and who have run out of things to talk about. This set of 250 sentence stems simply serves as a prompt to get the conversation flowing once again. Each partner finishes the

sentence stems with his or her own experiences, feelings, thoughts, memories, or opinions. The Honey Jar can be purchased and downloaded from this website.

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