

Restore the Interest and Intimacy to Your Lifeless Marriage

By Peggy L. Ferguson, Ph.D.

Does it feel like something is missing from your relationship? Does it seem like you stay busy all the time and spend very little quality time with your spouse? If it seems that you are not really angry with each other, or that you have not fallen out of love with each other, but more like you never really get around to devoting time for each other and talking about how important you are to one another, you could benefit from learning how to make your relationship a priority.

It is easy for your relationship to get lost in the process of living day to day. When you do consider the state of your relationship and intimacy you yearn for that old "closeness". You entertain the notion of actually sitting down and talking about feelings and your thoughts about the nature of your relationship. In the "old days" you spontaneously talked about your dreams, goals, ambitions, feelings, and childhood experiences. Once upon a time, it felt natural to just spend time together, just "being" and loving each other.

You may have even made some effort at having a date night, only to find that the conversation was short lived and that you rather quickly resorted to the "weather report", the "kids report", and the "chores list". After a while the date nights didn't seem worth the bother. Maybe you are just a little bored with your relationship. Maybe you feel like you have just drifted away from each other. You probably can't even remember when you stopped really having fun together and started "sleep-walking" through your marriage.

When it feels like your marriage is on "automatic" there are some things you can do to change that. If in the past, when you have carved out time to spend together, but struggled to find something out of the ordinary to talk about, you can take it one step further. There are some things that you can do to "jump start" the interest and passion in your marriage. You can rekindle the spark by carving out a "special time" for your relationship and making it a priority.

Setting aside a "Sacred time" for couple communication or relationship enrichment is highly rewarding. You can bridge the gap between yourself and loved one by taking action now. There are couples enrichment weekends that are sponsored by local churches, and structured or semi-structured communication exercises such as "Couples Feelings Meetings" and "The Honey Jar".

The "Honey Jar" is a conversation starter for couples, that assists in opening up those lines of communication and restoring the sense of "Us" that may be eroding. It consists of sentence stems, printed separately on business-type cards, and fitting neatly into a one quart mason jar. Thus "The Honey Jar". It helps you start talking again, about yourself and the relationship in a way that is non-threatening. Honey Jar can benefit couples at any stage of their committed relationship.

A simple communication exercise that is established as a "Sacred event" can be tremendously helpful in assisting in creating the desired changes in your relationship. "Sacred event" can be defined as something over which nothing else takes priority. Pick a day, time, and place to spend time together communicating, then let nothing get in the way of that time together. A healthy relationship is more easily maintained by attending to it now, rather than trying to mend it later.

When spouses feel taken for granted, unimportant, shoved aside, or even bored with their spouse, these feelings can set the marriage up for conflict, a mindset of negative perceptions, hostility, rigidity, infidelity, and even divorce. Revitalize your marriage by restoring open, caring, interested communication. Something so simple can restore a sense of partnership and renewed interest in the relationship.

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Hubbard House Publishing, Stillwater, Oklahoma