

Romance on a Budget

from www.TwoOfUs.org

During the courtship process, romantic feelings are usually very strong and partners go out of their way to reveal them to each other. With time though, these romantic feelings can fade. These practical ideas can help couples “fight the fade” and reignite the romance of their relationship.

Before we dive into the tips, let’s talk about the two common barriers to reigniting romance that you should keep in mind. Time is a major barrier for most couples, so before trying any of these tips, sit down and compare schedules. Even the busiest couples can usually find some time if they plan for it and stick to the plan. Doing so sends a message to each other, and to your kids, that you care about each other and your relationship is important.

Another barrier can be finding or affording quality child care. If you do not have family who can babysit for you, find a friend (perhaps one who also has children) and arrange to exchange babysitting with each other.

Now that the barriers have been addressed, let’s get to re-establishing romance in your marriage.

1. **Write what you feel.** Take a moment to reflect on things you really like or appreciate about your partner but often neglect to say. Write them down in a note or on a decorative card. If

writing is not your strong suit, just keep your sentiments short and sincere.

2. **Go “out” to eat together.** Making reservations and going out for dinner is traditionally a popular way to show your partner that you care. Due to the expense, this gesture is usually reserved for special occasions. Try using the same concept of a fancy dinner at home. With a little planning, a few candles, a decorative presentation and some soft music, you can bring the joy of fine dining into your home.
3. **Catch a flick.** Movies are a great way to de-stress with your partner. They allow you to sit back and forget about life’s challenges while sitting shoulder-to-shoulder with the one you love. If going out is too expensive, rent a video and stay home.
4. **Go hear some music.** Look through your local mainstream and alternative newspapers each week to see what kind of activities are going on in your area. Many options are low or no cost.
5. **Phone in your feelings.** In this day and age, cell phones are a common part of everyday life. Use yours to send a romantic text message to your

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Celebrate National Marriage Week

National Marriage Week is February 7-14. Here are ten simple things you can do throughout the week to celebrate being married. Encourage your married friends and relatives to join in the fun.

1. Renew your wedding vows.
2. Talk about how you met and remember how it felt to fall in love with each other.
3. Watch a romantic movie together.
4. Bundle up and go for a walk outside.
5. Write a love letter to your spouse.
6. Talk to other married couples about marriage and what it means to them.
7. Display a photo or album from your wedding in your home.
8. Dance to a slow song on the radio.
9. Hold hands while watching television.
10. Remember the day you got married and share what your favorite memories of that day.

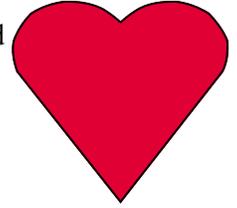


"What greater thing is there for two human souls, than to feel that they are joined for life—to strengthen each other in all labor, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to minister to each other in all pain, to be one with each other in silent unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting?" ~ George Eliot

Valentine's Day is not only a day for adults but a day that children can tell their parents how much they love them. This can make the day a family affair. There are "sweet" ways that you can connect with mom and dad that are fun and satisfy everyone's sweet tooth. Here are some ways to say I Love You throughout the day:

- Make heart-shaped pancakes with mom and dad for breakfast and tuck an "I Love You" note in your their napkins at the breakfast table, listing what you love about them.
- Make a statement by cutting out a heart shape from paper and glue candy hearts around the edge along with a printed message like "UR the best."

- With the help of your parents cut out a heart from a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
- End the day with making up a sweet story for bedtime. Start the story by saying
- "Today was completely sweet because..." and take turns making up your own sweet story.



Valentine's Day is a special day to remind you to say "I love you," but you can tell your parents any day of the year. Don't forget to show your love by ending the day with a great big hug for mom and dad.

Don't let arguments push you apart From *Becoming a Family*

It happens to every couple. Feelings get hurt, patience runs out, and arguments happen. It's a part of life. Even so, arguments don't have to push you apart. There are basic skills you can learn to help you to solve conflicts and move on.

Think prevention. You may be able to avoid some arguments by setting a time to make decisions together. If you plan how to share the weekend's chores on Saturday morning, while the baby is napping, that might be better than trying to come up with a plan while the baby is crying and you're fresh out of groceries.

Limit when and where it's okay to argue. It's easier to solve conflicts, and better for your family, if you can generally avoid arguing in front of children and others.

Set and agree to some basic ground rules: No

yelling. No name-calling. No threatening. Let your partner finish a sentence, and really try to listen, before answering back. Those are the rules of the Speaker-Listener technique that was covered in the third module of your MEG.

Get help if you need it. Solving conflicts is one of the biggest challenges that most couples face. We all need help, at times, to calm down, consider the other person's view, and find our way back to love. Don't forget to utilize your Family Support Specialist if you need help.

No couple ever gets to the point where they agree all the time, and very few learn to argue without getting angry. We can, however, learn to disagree in a more loving way, keeping small problems from becoming big ones.

*This article came from the book *Becoming a Family*, published by *Strengthening Young Families*. For more information, go to www.syfbooks.org.*

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partner. It can be a pleasant surprise to receive a random and it can also initiate intimate moments later on!

6. **Break a sweat together.** Getting physically fit is not most people's idea of a good time, but physical changes (for the worse) can negatively impact a couple's sexual intimacy. Consider joining a recreation center and working out together. Working out is not necessarily enjoyable, but once you begin to see results, it can be rewarding and lead you back to romance.
7. **Take a hike.** There is a lot to be said for the simple act of walking. It's a great activity because it can be a relaxing time to talk about life. Not only that, it is a great way for you and your partner to get fit.
8. **Get "board."** Board games are a timeless and inexpensive way of having a great time. Once purchased, you can enjoy them for years to come. Playing cards or putting together puzzles are also great alternatives to watching television.
9. **Dream out loud.** Part of forging a healthy marriage is setting goals for your future together. Part of this goal setting begins with discussing your hopes and dreams for the future. This simple activity can be a great escape from your present financial challenges because it allows your imagination to run free.
10. **Expand your circle.** Online, in the newspaper and at houses of worship you can identify and join a wide array of social groups for couples. These groups can be safe environments to strengthen your marriage and meet other couples with similar goals.

Event Details

Calendar of Classes

February 2009

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|-----|-----------------|-----|------------------|-----|------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 GGC | 3 | 4 You Paid... | 5 | 6 MFK Long Live |
| 7 | 8 | 9 GGC MFK | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 MFK Long Live |
| 14 | 15 | 16 MFK | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 MFK Long Live |
| 21 | 22 | 23 MFK | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 MFK Long Live |
| 28 | | | | | | |

March 2009

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|------------------|-----|-----------|-----|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | 1 | 2 MFK | 3 | 4 You Paid... | 5 MFK-retreat | 6 MFK-retreat |
| 7 MFK-retreat | 8 | 9 MFK | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 MFK |
| 14 | 15 | 16 MFK | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 MFK |
| 21 | 22 | 23 MFK | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 MFK |
| 28 | 29 | 30 MFK | 31 | | | |

February

Marriage for Keeps

February 6, 13, 20, 27 at the White Tiger Martial Arts Bldg. 1905 W Wyatt Earp, Dodge City 3-6:00 pm. This class will be in Spanish.

Marriage for Keeps

February 9, 16, 23 at the Dodge City Community College 6-8:00 pm. This class will be in English.

You Paid How Much For That?!

February 4, 7-8:30 pm at Catholic Social Service Office, 603 N. 8th. Garden City.

Guiding Good Choices

February 2, 9, 16, 6-8:00 pm at the Garden City Community College, Endowment Room.

Long Live the Healthy Family

February 6, 13, 20, 27 3-5:00pm at East Garden Village, #463. This class will be in Spanish.

March

You Paid How Much For That?!

February 4, 7-8:30pm at Catholic Social Service Office, 603 N. 8th. Garden City.

Marriage for Keeps-Retreat

March 5, 6, 7 at St. Anthony of Padua, Liberal. This class will be in English.

Marriage for Keeps

March 6, 13, 20, 27 at the White Tiger Martial Arts Bldg. 1905 W Wyatt Earp, Dodge City Ks. 3-6:00pm. This class will be in Spanish.

Marriage for Keeps

March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 at the Dodge City Community College 6-8:00 pm. This class will be in English.



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Marriage for Keeps Announcements

You Paid How Much for That?! Feb 4, Thursday, at the CSS office 603 N. 8th from 7-8:30. Some of the topics covered will include: Where are we headed?, What do we have?, Smart borrowing.

Change of time for Long Live the Healthy Family – Class will be every Saturday in Feb from 3-5:00. This is a “program for building and maintaining strong Latino marriages and families”. Class will be in Spanish, child care is provided. \$10 gift card for signing up. A total of \$40 is gift cards for attending classes For more information or to sign up call 272-0010. *Thanks to the Center for Children and Family, Kansas State University and GCCC Adult Learning Center for partnering with MfK*

MfK Classes Will Be Offered in Dodge in February.

Spanish class starts Sat. Feb 6, 3-6:00 at White Tiger Martial Arts. English class starts Tues. Feb 9, 6-8:00 pm at DCCC
Liberal MfK Weekend Retreat at St Anthony of Padua March 5, 6, & 7. Food provided and \$50 in gift cards.



Are you remembering to:
Decide, don't slide
Make it safe to connect
Do your part

marriageforkeeps-ks.org

catholicsocialservice.org



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