

Keeping the connection

Has your partner stopped looking at you in that special way, and doing or saying special things? Dr Vesna Grubacevic can help the two of you reconnect.

When we first get into a new relationship, we feel the excitement, passion and adventure of someone new in our life. In that excitement, we are open to experiencing new things and are more accommodating of the other person's needs. After years of being in the same relationship, however, complacency can set in and partners can end up in a comfort zone.

The main problem with a comfort zone is that we tend to drift along in life and in a relationship, feeling unfulfilled. We stop challenging ourselves and each other, and the excitement of life and the relationship may disappear over time. In turn, the close connection and intimacy between partners can suffer.

By using the four strategies below, you can prevent this happening in your relationship, and ensure that you keep the close connection with your partner for many years.

Positive associations

One sure-fire way to ruin a relationship is by having too many or too intense negative associations between partners. For example, every time a couple goes to bed, they argue or talk about their problems in bed. This can link arguing and problems, and all the associated feelings, to the bed. Often this can lead to less intimacy in bed because of the ill feelings that have been linked to the bed. Other ways of developing negative associations include: complaining every time you speak with your partner; frowning all the time; using a commanding or demeaning tone of voice.

Instead, next time you are with your partner, make sure you use a facial expression, tone of voice or touch that assists you

partner to feel a positive emotion. If you want to only have a positive association to the bed, make sure that fighting or discussing problems in bed is off-limits, and only reserve the bed for intimacy.

Re-ignite the attraction

Remember the first time you met and the attraction you felt for each other? Too many negative associations over time can outweigh that attraction for your partner. To re-ignite that attraction, sit opposite each other and look into each other's eyes. As you each remember that moment when you were first attracted to each other, really feel that attraction. Repeat this several times on separate occasions to bring that attraction that you once felt for each other back.

Fulfilling each other's love needs

There are three ways that partners know that they are deeply loved by the other: being looked at with a certain look or being taken out to places, or being bought gifts; being told certain words (such as, "I love you") or hearing a certain tone of voice; being touched in a specific place or in a specific way (a kiss or hug, for example).

When you first started your relationship, you probably did all three of these, then after years of being together, you each settled

into your preferred one. Often the love needs between partners can be different, so it is important to understand these. For example, if your partner has a need to be taken out in order to feel loved, and your need is to hear that you are loved in a special tone of voice, when was the last time you did this for each other? By fulfilling each other's love needs regularly, you feel a greater love and connection between you.

Align your priorities

Our priorities in life and in a relationship can change over time. This is how partners can drift apart and feel little or no connection. Therefore, it is important that each of you is clear about your top five priorities in life and in a relationship. Your priorities determine how you spend your time, so if you complain that your partner spends little time with you, perhaps your priorities are different. It is important that you align your priorities, then set common goals that you can work towards as a couple.

Applying these strategies will assist you to keep a close and strong connection with your partner for many years to come. **em**

Dr Vesna Grubacevic is the founder of award-winning company Qt, an NLP Trainer, who holds a PhD in Clinical Hypnotherapy and a BEc. She is an author, speaker and the creator of breakthrough behavioural change techniques. For more techniques on improving your relationships, visit www.qttransformation.com.



F
wi
Subs
delive
Garde

mi
90
res

The G
you c
Find t
www.

I wo

 For
First no
Surnam
Addre
Suburb
Teleph
Email
*Email c
 I en
pa
(Pe
OR sub