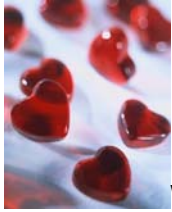




Romantic Ideas for Couples

Introduction



Whether your relationship is a new romance or one that has passed the test of time, there are probably days where you wonder how to keep the fires burning.

As time passes, and you settle into a comfortable relationship, you may find it all too easy to relax and forget the 'romance'. Suddenly you feel that something is missing.

Perhaps your spouse or partner has complained that the romance is missing from your relationship. Maybe YOU are the one who has noticed the change.

And now, it is time to do something about it.

But, you aren't sure what you are supposed to do!

You don't have to be a creative person, or even a dreamer or a hopeless romantic to get things back on track.

Most people just need a 'starter kit', a set of ideas and concepts they can use to get the juices flowing.

After that, you will probably find that you can come up with plenty of ideas on your own.

The only thing you need is the desire to put romance in your life and to spend a little time and energy focusing on your relationship. Take the time to pay attention to your love life!

It may sound corny or trite, but putting some romance in your life will improve your relationship and ensure that your partner knows he or she is loved and valued.

If you invest a little energy in the process, you'll find that soon you and your partner, spouse, fiancé or new love will come up with new ways to surprise each other and take pleasure and interest in keeping the process going.

The men in the crowd may feel that they don't know where to start, or that they don't have a romantic bone in their bodies. The women may feel that they will expect too much or that they will overwhelm their partners.

Perhaps you will schedule a romantic dinner and stare at each other across the table, feeling you have failed the test.

Don't despair!

If you have neglected the romance in your relationship for a while, or if you are uncomfortable expressing your feelings, it is going to take some time and practice before you become a 'pro'.

That's OK.

Most of us are not born spouting love poems or reciting romantic movie scripts.

It is more important that you find a way to express who YOU are, rather than trying to play a role.

If you find it easier to use humor, then do so.

You can be funny and romantic at the same time!

If you aren't good at writing or talking about your feelings, find a song or a poem to do it for you.

Your partner will LOVE YOU for the effort and you will not feel inadequate in your expression of love.

What is important is that you try, and that you show that you care by your effort.

But let us be clear! We're not saying you have to 'settle', because we KNOW that with a little effort you can make a splash with your romantic expressions.

You may not THINK you can become the romantic lead in your own love story, but after you finish reading this book, we feel certain you will score very high with your partner.

Before we look at your personal situation, there are a few – only a few – do's and don'ts you'll want to remember as you prepare for ROMANCE:

- *DO Be Yourself* – don't try to pretend you are an actor in a movie. Remember that your partner is with you because they care about YOU. You don't have to PROVE anything!
- *DO Use Your Creativity and Your Smarts* – if you really apply yourself, you can think of lots of things you know about your partner and use those things to come up with creative ideas to please them.
- *DO Focus on What is Important* – we'll give you some more elaborate suggestions for special occasions, but for the every day romantic touches, you don't have to spend a lot or go crazy trying to please your partner. They will love

the idea that you have thought enough to do something small. You don't have to go broke!

- *Don't Make This a Competition* – romance should not become an effort to 'out do' each other. Appreciate the little things and the big things and don't try to IMPRESS your partner by outing THEIR efforts.
- *Don't Think About What YOU Want* – remember what your partner likes and focus on that. Hopefully, they will do the same and you will get some of what you want too, but YOUR efforts should be about romancing your partner!
- *Don't Spend More Money Than You Have* - simple inexpensive things to show your partner or spouse you are thinking of them are more important than going into debt to get a little romance in your life. The wheels will come off the love wagon if you both go broke trying to take expensive trips or buy expensive gifts. Keep it simple!

Now that we have that out of the way, let's take a look at YOUR love life, and see where we can improve your rating on the romance meter!

Check Your 'Romance Meter' – How Are You Doing So Far?



Before you choose ideas to use for your personal 'couples romance', take a moment to get your 'romance meter' rating.

How romantic are you by nature?

This little test is not scientific, but it will give you an idea of how much work you have to do to increase your awareness of romance in your life and to keep romance uppermost in your mind as you pursue your relationship.

Don't get caught up in the gender differences.

There are just as many women who forget about romance, and while women may be raised to look for romantic touches as proof of caring, romance and intimacy or important to many men, as well.

For each question on the '**Romance Meter**' Profile, pick the answer that *most closely matches* how you feel about the topic.

Be honest!

Don't pick the answers you THINK YOU SHOULD PICK, or your score will not be accurate.

When you are finished completing the profile, take a look at your score!

Question	Answer
1. My general attitude toward romance is a. Clueless b. Uncomfortable c. Cautiously assertive d. Very enthused	
2. My idea of a romantic wedding would be a. A wedding with the Justice of the Peace b. A backyard cookout with family and friends c. A barefoot wedding on the beach d. A tiny chapel filled with flowers	
3. I think it would be romantic to surprise my partner with a. Pizza and beer b. Going to a 'date movie' c. A candlelit dinner d. Rose petals strewn on a turned down bed	
4. I think a really romantic gift would be a. A gift certificate to my partner's favorite store b. A piece of clothing he/she needs (shirt, pants, jacket) c. A bottle of my partner's favorite wine d. A handmade card with a romantic message inside	
5. A romantic date would be a. Going to a sporting event and eating hot dogs and soda b. Dining in a good restaurant and going to see a romantic movie c. Inviting my partner to a secluded location, and taking a picnic lunch and a bottle of wine d. Getting dressed up and going dancing, followed by a glass of wine and a moonlit walk to a favorite spot	
6. If I had to pick a romantic destination for a 'special couples trip' it would be a. Los Angeles b. New York c. Hawaii d. Paris	
Question	Answer
7. The most romantic food I'd like to share with my partner is a. A sandwich b. Pasta	

c. Ice Cream d. Tira Misu	
8. I think the most romantic day or evening I've ever had was a. Something my partner planned b. Something I planned c. Something special we did (like a trip or an evening out) d. A spontaneous, unplanned event we shared	
9. My idea of a great romantic movie is a. Star Wars b. The Sixth Sense c. Sleepless in Seattle d. Casablanca	
10. I think the most romantic kind of music is a. Rap or Hip Hop b. Oldies c. A symphony or classical piece d. Love songs and romantic ballads	
11. The most romantic fragrance is a. Food cooking b. Musk c. Rose Water d. Lavender	
12. If I had to pick a song to describe my love life today it would be a. Achy Breaky Heart b. Are you Lonesome Tonight? c. My Heart Will Go On (Theme from Titanic) d. Everything I Do (I Do It For You)	
13. When I think of getting romantic with my partner I feel a. Nervous b. Hopeful c. Confident d. REALLY EXCITED	
14. The most romantic thing I can think of to say to my partner is a. What do you want to do tonight? b. I'm glad we are together c. I love you d. You are the most important person in my life and I will love you forever	
Question	Answer
15. When my partner tries to get romantic with me I a. Try to change the subject or the situation b. Head for the bedroom	

c. Stop and enjoy the moment d. Respond with romantic behavior and let the moment take us wherever we want to go together	
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OK!


If you've completed the profile, it is now time to tally your score.

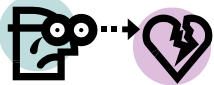
Look at the chart below and write your totals for each answer:

For every...	Give yourself...	Total
Question you answered with an 'a'	15 points	
Question you answered with an 'b'	10 points	
Question you answered with an 'c'	5 points	
Question you answered with an 'd'	2 points	
Now, Add Your Points here:		
My Total Score is:		

Now that you have your total score, take a look at the chart below and find your 'Romance Meter' results

Total Score	Your Romance Meter is
30-70	 <p>Your romantic instincts are GREAT! You are a very romantic person Your partner is very fortunate to have you in their life. You will find the suggestions in this book right in line with what you want to achieve in your love life and you will come up with lots of other ideas on your own</p>
71-100	 <p>You are a romantic at heart. Your choices may not always be perfect, but you have good instincts. Read this book and see if you can find other romantic ways to please your partner. Keep up the good work.</p>

Total Score	Your Romance Meter is
101-150	 <p>If your total is 101-120 if you need to do some work to get</p>

	romance uppermost in your mind, but you are not in TERRIBLE shape. If your total is over 120, you are bordering on clueless. Read this book and get your creative juices flowing, come up with your own ideas and get to work before you lose that special someone in your life.
151-225	 <p>If your total is 151-180 you are in trouble. You may not be totally clueless, but you are close. If your total is 181 or over, it is a good thing you have this book. Get in touch with your romantic 'instincts', lose your inhibition and stop assuming that your partner KNOWS how you feel. Affection and intimacy are critical to a long-term romantic relationship! <i>Read carefully, take notes and get moving.</i></p>

Now that you know where you stand on the 'Romantic Meter', it is time to move on to some great romantic ideas to use in your personal 'couple' life.

Whether you are a hopeless romantic or just plain hopeless, these ideas will get you started.

Once you get into the swing of things, you will find it is much easier to come up with your own ideas and your romance will be interesting, fun and rewarding.

Fanning the Flames



To get some spice and romance back in your life, you'll want to do something new and different. You don't have to START with things that seem foreign to you.

If you have never done anything more romantic than slap your spouse on the behind, it may be a bit of a stretch for you to pull off a lavender scented bath for two with rose petals floating on the water.

Start small.

That way, you will get more comfortable with the idea of romance and as you proceed you can think of new and more elaborate things to do without feeling you are out of your element.

You have to get used to the new habits, and that takes a bit of time.

Don't worry, we're going to give you plenty of ideas for those small romantic touches and for the big special occasions like anniversaries and proposals.

First, let's see how well you know your partner. The key to romance for YOUR relationship is to do things you know YOUR partner will like.

Don't worry about what made that woman on the big screen melt, do what makes YOU and YOUR partner happy.

Though your discomfort with romance will fade as you practice, if you try to do something that feels foreign to you as a person or to your relationship you probably won't want to try it again.

So, just how well DO YOU KNOW YOUR PARTNER?

#	Question	Answer
1	How does your partner like to relax at the end of a long, tiring day?	
2	What is your partner's favorite dinner entrée?	
3	Does your partner like the 'pet name' you've given him/her?	
4	What makes your partner smile?	
5	What does your partner like to do on a special occasion?	
6	What kind of movies does your partner like best?	
7	What is your partner's favorite place (park, beach, etc.)	
8	What city would your partner find romantic?	
9	What puts your partner in a romantic mood?	
10	Name a celebrity your partner finds attractive or sexy	
11	Does your partner like to get up early, or sleep late?	
12	Is your partner a night owl?	

#	Question	Answer
13	What recreational activity does your partner like best? (dancing, jogging, biking, horseback riding, sports, etc.)	
14	Does your partner prefer a hot bath or a long shower to relax?	

15	Does your partner prefer red wine or white wine?	
16	Does your partner like public displays of affection or is he/she a very private person when it comes to romance	
17	If you had to dress in something sexy for your partner, what would they like the best?	
18	What kind of music puts your partner 'in the mood'?	
19	When your partner is distracted or upset, does he/she find words, or touch, more comforting or perhaps both?	
20	What is the fastest way to turn your partner off? What pathetic or revolting attempt at sexiness would they find unsexy or unromantic?	

You may wonder why this exercise is important.

Very simply, these answers will help you personalize your romantic experience with your partner.

If you found it hard to answer some or most of these questions, you don't have to give up on romance. Just take the time to ask questions and find out more about what appeals to your partner.

It doesn't have to be an interview or inquisition.

You can start by saying something like "You know, from the pictures I've seen, I always thought the Caribbean would be a romantic place. If you could pick a romantic spot to go, where would it be?"

By asking your partner questions, you will find out who they are TODAY, and not have to depend on 20-year-old conversations you had during your first date.

Remember, a big part of romance is knowing what makes the other person tick and showing how much you care by doing something THEY will like.

The Creative Romantic



Let's start small with the creative little ideas you can use every day. No special occasions here, just a lot of things you can do to remind your partner that you love them EVERY DAY.

Try some of these ideas to get you started and to get you more comfortable with your romantic side. And remember to pick the things you feel will best suit YOU and YOUR PARTNER.

Some of these ideas cost NOTHING, some cost a little bit and some cost a bit more, but nothing in this section is EXPENSIVE.

Dive in, pick a few ideas and highlight them or mark them with check marks so you don't lose track of them. See how many ideas you can use to spice up your 'couples' life.

1. Write some funny, silly or very romantic messages for insertion into fortune cookies. You can order 'custom fortune cookies' online.

Here are a few sites. Just be aware that we don't recommend or approve these sites, and you can find more sites by performing an online search using the keywords 'custom fortune cookie messages'.

<http://www.tankinz.com/>

<http://www.e-fortunecookie.com/>

<http://www.e-fortunecookie.com/>

<http://www.specialfortunecookies.com/>

http://www.fortunecookiestore.com/mall/c100/s2935/cookie_custom.asp

Most of these companies will make and ship your fortune cookies within a week or two and if you are not particularly creative, most even have suggested sayings for your custom fortunes.

Order your cookies and give one to your partner every day or on every date, whatever you choose. Your partner will love it!

2. Buy an inexpensive, pretty wooden box or one made of glass, ceramic – whatever appeals to you, or whatever you think your partner would like.

You can buy colored construction paper or some parchment paper from an office supply store.

Use different colored pens to write messages for your partner and then tape or staple them closed, or just fold them in half.

Give the box to your partner and tell them to open one each day in the morning before they leave the house or when they get home.

Whatever they would prefer. Tell your partner that they can use the messages in this box to remind them that you are always with them and that you care for them.

If you are not good at writing messages, use lines from a favorite movie, or go to the library and check out a book of love poems.

You can mix up the messages by writing some very romantic things, some very sexy, seductive things and some silly or funny things, so your partner will never know what they will get on a particular day.

3. Use lipstick or soap to write a love message on the bathroom mirror. Just be sure you try it in advance and you know what it takes to clean the message off the mirror.

If you don't live together, try it on your mirror first so you are prepared with information on how to clean the message from the mirror when it is time to do so. If you DO live together, try a test run while your partner is out of the house.

But, be aware that your partner may not WANT to clean the message off the mirror right away.

4. Buy an inexpensive bottle of wine or champagne and write notes to leave a trail for your partner. Think of a scavenger hunt, wherein each note will lead them to another location.

It is even more fun to write messages that include information only THEY will know, like the answer to a private question.

They will need to know this answer in order to find the next location.

So, the episode may go something like this:

Tape a note on the front door that says, "Find the place we last kissed".

When your partner gets to that location in the kitchen, there might be a wine glass with another message inside that says "Now go to the place you found your lost ring" where your partner will find another wine glass.

Inside that glass is another note that says, “Now meet me where you hang your robe”. And perhaps your partner will find you sitting in the bedroom closet with a bottle of wine.

5. Make a sandwich for your partner and put a note in the middle that says “I love you” or something else romantic, OR open a bag of Potato Chips or other snack food and put the note in the bag on top of the chips. Then let your partner dig in to find the note inside.
6. Instead of buying expensive massage oil or essential oils to spice up your sensual massage, use butter or whipped cream. It is tasty and is a fun way to get things going.
7. Write a check for One Hundred Kisses and make it out to your partner. Leave it on the dashboard of their car or on the counter – someplace that you KNOW they will see it.
8. Make a card for your partner and draw all the pictures yourself. You don’t have to be a great artist. The thought that you made it will please your partner immensely. Write something you want to tell them about how you feel about them.

If you aren’t good with words, find a line in a poem or song and use that, or make it funny to make your partner smile and end it by signing the card with “I Love You”.

9. Call your partner when they are at work, at school or when you know they are not going to answer the phone, and leave a message that says something like “I can’t wait to see you tonight” or “I just called to say I miss you”.
10. The next time you get your haircut, ask the stylist or barber to save you a lock of hair. Buy a keychain, locket or other small repository and put the lock of hair inside.

If you don’t want to spend a lot of money, you can find a tiny plastic bag that seals and place the lock of hair inside with a small note that says the lock of hair is to remind your partner of your love.

11. Make a homemade lottery ticket or coupon that tells your partner to return the paper to you to cash it – then show them how much you love them!
12. Get home before your partner and run a nice, hot bath. Put some lavender oil or other nicely scented oil in the tub or fill it with bubble bath. Light candles and turn off the overhead light.

Now, light a candle and leave it in a safe place near the door with a note that says to follow the trail of candles.

Place lit candles in safe locations where your partner can easily see them and let them follow the candles to the bathroom. Help your partner undress and get them into the tub.

You might even want to have a portable CD player playing soft music in the background to relax them.

Perhaps you can read to them from some love poems you have selected, or just sit next to the tub and wash their back gently with a soft cloth or a loofah.

13. Pick a clear night in the spring or fall and surprise your partner by taking them for a spontaneous walk under the stars.

Take along a light blanket to sit on and something to cover you if it is chilly. And bring a bottle of wine to share! Now snuggle under the stars in your yard, in the park or in some other quiet locale and enjoy the company.

14. Leave a note in your partner's car or on their desk and tell them to meet a 'secret admirer' in a special location.

It might be a location that only the two of you know or it could be a very public place.

Tell them the hour to meet you, and tell them what to wear, if you'd like.

When they arrive, be prepared to take them for a moonlit walk, or to a favorite restaurant or just take them for a ride in the car to a place you both love to visit or walk.

Put a cooler in the car and bring cheese, bread and wine or just some chocolate covered strawberries to share!

15. Fill your partner's car, gym locker or closet with balloons or flowers, or a basket of love notes with or without candy.

16. Gather smooth stones from your neighborhood, or buy a bag of colored glass or colored stones from a craft store.

Use indelible marker or 'colored white out' correction fluid to draw shapes on the stones, a different shape for each color to color code them, or write a single word on the stone – like the old-fashioned valentine candy hearts.

Whenever you want to remind your partner of your love, leave a stone on the kitchen counter, under his pillow, in the bathroom sink or on their desk at work, in a briefcase or suit pocket.

17. Make a CD with your partner's favorite songs on it and use a favorite picture to decorate the inside of the jewel case.

OR draw or cut out pictures that have personal significance to you to create the CD graphics. Then leave it on the seat in their car or on their desk.

18. Take pictures of yourself, or have a friend help you take the pictures. You can get silly and take pictures in funny poses or clothes, or you can be very romantic and seductive in the shots and take the pictures at romantic locations you've visited or even holding a magazine or picture of a place you both think is romantic.

Then slip these pictures into the places and things that touch your partner's life (the refrigerator, a briefcase or purse, a drawer in the bedroom, under a paperweight, under a magnet on the refrigerator, in a cupboard inside a favorite coffee cup.

19. Play Twister! Be sure you have a bottle of Schnapps or a nice bottle of wine to keep you limber and increase the fun!

20. Bake a heart-shaped meat loaf and surround it with mashed potatoes. Draw an arrow and point in the mashed potatoes so that the arrow goes through the heart shaped meat loaf. Make the arrow out of small chunks of tomato or kidney beans.

21. Create a romantic scavenger hunt for your partner by leaving notes and clues in their office or at home.

The last clue should lead them to you at a restaurant, or in another room at home, where you will be waiting with a romantic snack like chocolate covered strawberries and champagne or at a table in a restaurant with a great appetizer and bottle of wine waiting for them to arrive.

The Romantic Date



Let's suppose that you want to take your partner on a romantic date.

Whether you are just starting to date and really want to make a good impression, or you have been dating for a long time, are engaged OR married, a romantic date is a great way to let your partner know just how special they are to you.

As with all the other suggestions in this book, we think you'll find it easy to come up with your own, once your mind gets on the track and your creative juices start flowing.

As with the other ideas we've given you, some are more elaborate and some cost just a little money to execute, while others are totally free except for your effort!

So, feel free to pick one or more of these ideas, or change them a little to make them more personal for you and your partner.

Remember you have the answers to your questions about your partner to give you clues so you can decide which idea(s) will work best for you.

Once you get started, you'll come up with all kinds of ideas of your own!

1. Rent a limo and show up at your partner's door, dressed in your finest to take her/him out for a surprise evening.

If you can't afford the limo, ask a friend to drive you in a rental car OR pay for them to have their car washed and have them drive you around throughout the evening date.

Bring a camera and take pictures of the places you go and of the two of you in the limo or 'rented car'. Bring a bottle of wine or champagne along as well.

2. If you live in a city that has commuter trains, you can buy two tickets on the train during off peak hours when it isn't crowded and bring along a picnic lunch.

Plan to stop at one or two interesting towns to go shopping, or share a cup of coffee in a nice coffee shop.

3. Engage some of your friends (preferably those your partner likes) and have them meet you in a street side deli or a public table in the mall to serve your food and drinks and act like waiters.

OR, have them come along to serenade your partner in the evening when you know he/she will be home.

You can print up booklets with love songs and everyone can sing them. If you want to get really elaborate, you can assign parts for each person to sing. Just be sure your friends have good voices.

4. Create an entire evening of charades using sayings or statements you've written, or chosen from love poems or movies.

As each charade is solved, your partner will get to hear the statement or line of love you created for him/her.

5. Take your partner on an old-fashioned date, ice skating, roller skating or going to a county fair.

You can really do it up right by bringing an old-fashioned box lunch or picnic basket for a local restaurant or caterer and buying flowers from a street side vendor.

6. Take your partner on a hot air balloon ride OR a helicopter tour of a lovely area. Pick him/her up in a car and insist that they wear a blindfold.

Bring a bottle of wine for the journey and don't reveal the special surprise until they are on board or as close to the craft as possible.

7. If you are in a city with horse drawn carriages or hansom cabs, plan to take a leisurely walk one evening after dinner, and grab a carriage to take you around the beautifully lit city or countryside.

8. Hayrides are also very romantic. Bring a blanket to lie on and one to cover you and a little bottle of cognac or schnapps to keep you warm!

9. Schedule a secret evening – don't tell your partner what you have in mind, and give her/him a 'spa night' to remember. From the moment they walk in the door, don't let them lift a finger.

Draw a bath with lovely scented oils and candles in the bathroom, wash their back gently, play soft music, serve a glass of wine or hot mulled cider.

After the bath, serve a home cooked or take out meal as you choose, complete with candles on the table and special music in the background.

Push the furniture back against the walls and create your own dance floor, perhaps even decorating the living room like a romantic 'dance club'.

Dance the night away and see where the mood takes you.

10. Involve your partner's co-workers in your scheme and have them plan a working dinner either at a restaurant or calling for takeout to work on a project.

Then arrive with flowers, music playing on a portable CD and an outstretched hand to whisk your partner away from what they expected to be a hard evening of work.

Go to a little, out of the way restaurant – if you can find a new one that everyone thinks is great, so much the better.

Have the dinner ordered and ready to serve, so that your wine is poured and your dinner is served as if by magic with no orders placed and no waiting.

11. Fill your living room with dozens of candles and spread a blanket on the floor in front of the fireplace or the TV.

Light the candles and, when your partner arrives home, have a favorite romantic movie starting, the room lit with only candles and a fire burning, if you have a fireplace.

A bottle of wine or champagne and a small basket of flowers in the middle of the picnic blanket can add the finishing touches.

12. Many hotels have great weekend 'romantic getaway' rates. Rent a hotel room in a nice area of town where you can walk around and shop, go to the theater or browse in museums or just walk through the park.

Don't tell your partner where you are going, just tell them to meet you in the hotel lobby at a certain time (make it after check-in, so you can get checked in and bring all of your 'tools' up to dress up the hotel room).

Go to the hotel early, check in and place candles in the bathroom, and run a hot bath with bubble bath or bath oil. Bring a CD player and play some romantic music.

Light candles and place them around the bedroom as well. Now turn down the bed in the hotel bedroom and spread rose petals or other flower petals across the sheets.

Bring some massage oil and do it up right. After a relaxing afternoon in the hotel room, you can go out for dinner, walk in the park or go to a museum or play, as you wish.

13. Plan a day to pretend you are millionaires. Visit and tour homes you could never afford, test drive a Mercedes or Masserati and go to shops to try on clothes or jewelry you would never buy.

End the day with appetizers and drinks or just Tira Misu and coffee with Grand Marnier and stay in that millionaire frame of mind as you try to imagine just how the rich people treat their lovers and partners.

14. Stop at your favorite romantic restaurant or a new one you'd like to try and pick up a matchbook with their name on the front.

In a brightly colored ink, write a romantic message, asking your partner to meet you at the restaurant at a certain date and time and then leave it where you know they will find it.

Be sure to leave the cover of the matchbook open so your partner will notice the brightly colored message peeking out at them.

Then get to the restaurant early and bring a flower, order a bottle of wine and get ready for some romance!

Now that you have some ideas for dates, you can continue with more of your own, using these ideas every week, or every few weeks, to surprise your partner.

The Long Distance 'I Love You'



What if you are in a long distance relationship?

Perhaps you met your partner but you find yourselves trying to sustain your romance while you are living in different cities.

Or maybe you are in school and your partner is living someplace else. Perhaps you just have a job that requires you to travel and you spend a lot of time away from home.

Whatever the reason you find yourself distant from your loved one, you may often feel disconnected.

So, how do you keep the romance in a long-distance love affair?

Here are some suggestions you may want to try. And, when you have exhausted these, try coming up with some on your own.

Remember that romance is a personal thing, and no one knows what your partner likes as well as you do!

Use what you know about your partner, and the questions you answered about your partner above, and decide what will work best for you.

1. Buy a 'half heart' locket or pendant. You keep one half and give the other half to your partner. Every time they look at it, they will think of you.

2. As an alternative, write a sweet message or just 'I Love You' on the face of a one-dollar bill, and then cut the bill in half. Give your partner one half to keep in their wallet and you take the other half.
3. Write a list of things you miss about your partner, OR things you love about your partner and mail it or email it to them.

OR write these 'things you love or miss' on separate pieces of colored paper and mail one per day.

You can also tape a picture of yourself on the paper before you mail it, or simply cut a picture out of a magazine.

Choose a picture that is calming, beautiful or peaceful, or one that depicts people in love, and send this along.

4. Try 'exchanging' written mail or email to finish sentences started by your partner. You start by writing something like "When I am away from you I feel..." and then ask them to finish the sentence and start another sentence and end it back to you.

Now, it is your turn to finish THEIR sentence. Keep going until you have an entire paragraph of sentences and thoughts of love.

5. The next time you see your loved one, give them a carved wooden box, or a glass or ceramic box – something nice they can keep on their desk at work or on their dresser at home.

When you leave again, start sending pretty colored construction paper or stationary, each with a numbered message –starting at one and going up to 100 or whatever number you wish – each message number should be a reason why you love your partner or why you miss them, whichever you wish.

For example ***'Reason Number 5: You are the cutest thing I've ever seen!'***

6. Make a poster out of poster board or other material and every time you come home, add another message on the poster. Date the message and draw a little heart or picture.

That way, your partner will be able to look at the poster and remember when you were last there to visit.

7. An alternative to the suggestion above is to make or buy a calendar. On each block of the calendar write a love message or something to keep them going until you next see them.

Have them read and mark off the messages every day until the next time you come home.

Then draw a big HEART on the day you arrive home and keep track of the days you are there by drawing a heart for every day you are NOT AWAY.

When you leave again, you should leave another set of messages for them to read every day on each block of the calendar.

8. Buy a bag of your partner's favorite kind of chocolate kisses and put them in a drawer, box, container or bag.

You can decorate the container with lips or hearts. Give them one kiss to open and eat for each day you will be gone!

If you want to be really creative, you can cut little slips of paper to staple or tape to the end of the little paper sticking out of the wrapper.

On each tiny slip of paper write a love message, or if you are female, put a lipstick kiss, or just draw a heart or something else for them to find when they open the kiss.

9. Send flowers or a card or something else you know will please your partner. Send it to their office or home as you wish.

Many people like to receive gifts and mementos at work because they want to keep the object there to remind them of you when they don't get to see you all the time and they like to show their co-workers that their fiancé, boyfriend, girlfriend or spouse is thoughtful!

10. Buy a deck of cards at the drug store or discount store – the large decks are great because they have a bigger face on which to write.

Write one message on each card face and every day you can mail a card to your partner until the deck is complete.

When you are finished mailing every card in the deck, mail the box in which the cards came and write a message to put inside the box.

Tell your partner to keep the deck and whenever they are feeling lonely and miss you, they can pull out a card and read your message.

Maybe they can even play the number of the card in the lottery!

11. *Get creative with your computer.*

Send an email every day using a different color background or a different font, and maybe inserting a JPG or other electronic form picture with a picture of you or some location or scene you think your partner would like, or a picture of a city you visited together.

Whatever you know they would enjoy seeing. In every email, send a different message.

The messages can consist of just one word, but you can mix up the size, style and color of the font and the pictures so that every one is different.

For example, on the first day you might send a picture of a park (you can find all kinds of free images on the internet).

Your message might be in a HUGE, RED FONT and it could say simply "Wish I was walking in the park with you".

1. Send a sound file (WAV, Windows Media, whatever) attached to an email and let your partner download a love song with an email message from you.
2. SCHEDULE a chat with your partner and open a chat room. While you are chatting, have some sound files, text files and pictures to send him/her with images of love, hearts, and pictures of YOU or love songs, etc.
3. If you both have video capability on your machines, schedule a time you can get online and SEE EACH OTHER live.

Talk and send messages back and forth via instant messaging programs. You will feel less disconnected and more like you are really together.

12. Give your partner a 'memory box' and buy or find unique things to send her/him.

Each item should have some significance to the two of you in the same way that a charm bracelet has a shape or symbol that reminds you of an event or an activity.

These can be free items you pick up, like a seashell near the ocean, or small items you buy at a discount store, or they can be expensive if you wish.

It's up to you.

A great place to find shapes, items and things to use is a craft store. These stores have lots of little figures, animals and shapes you can use to represent events or things or ideas in your life.

When you send one to your partner, write a little note to explain what the symbol or figure represents to you.

They can store them in the memory box you gave them and look at the items whenever they get lonely.

13. Leave a video record of thoughts for every day. Tape yourself with little messages for every day. It will only take a few minutes to do and your partner can watch one per day until you get home.

You can separate the messages by writing numbers on a piece of paper and hold the paper up in front of your face for each day.

Then put the paper down and record your thought for that day, then hold up another paper in front of your face with the number for the next day, then lower it and give the message for THAT day.

Keep doing this until you are finished and your partner can watch the messages in order.

Romantic Ideas for VERY Special Occasions



It is your wedding anniversary, or maybe the anniversary of your first date, an after prom date, New Year's Eve, Valentine's Day!

The pressure is on!

What can you do to make the occasion VERY SPECIAL?

Here are some ideas. Again, some of these are expensive, some are very reasonable and some are free.

Enjoy!

Planning that Special TRIP

If you have the time and the money to plan a very special trip, your partner will LOVE YOU FOR it. It isn't really the investment or how fancy the place is, it is all in the planning and in the fact that YOU DID THIS YOURSELF!

If you can keep the trip a surprise, so much the better.

If this is really a special occasion, the trip will take some planning, so be sure you start far enough in advance.

Remember the list of questions you answered about your partner's preferences?

Use these answers to come up with some ideas about where you want to take your partner and what you'd like to do while you are on that special trip.

There are lots of places to consider for that special trip.

Of course, where you go and how long you stay will depend on how much money you have to spend, but there are lots of travel deals out there for resorts and other lodging and some included airfare, etc.

Spend some time looking online.

Romantic locations of course include:

**Paris, France
Turks and Caicos
Venice, Italy
Fiji
Bermuda
Cancun, Mexico**

**Hawaii
St. Martin
Florence, Italy
Jamaica
San Francisco, CA**

But, if you go back to what interests your partner, you may have something more special and personal in mind.

For example, if your partner really loves old architecture maybe he might like to go Austria to see the castles.

If your partner loves old artwork or old churches, Rome may be the place to go!

London has the pomp and circumstance of the Royal Family, the changing of the guard and the old art museums.

But Cleveland Ohio has the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Cooperstown New York has the Baseball Hall of Fame, so you'll have to decide what your partner will like the best. And then there is Vail and Aspen Colorado or Utah for the skiers!

The closer to home you stay, the better control you have over transportation and you will be able to keep the destination a secret until you are THERE.

That has its advantages!

Here are some things to consider as you plan the trip:

- If you are making travel arrangements, try to have confirmations come to your office and phone calls coming to your cell phone or to your office phone, so you don't spoil the surprise.
- If you need them, be sure you have passports because if you don't, then you will have to spoil at least that much of the surprise to get your partner to renew or get their passport for your trip out of the country.
- Check the weather and the 'high season' for other countries and tourist resorts to be sure that your low priced vacation is not low priced because you are going during the rainy or snowy season!
- Be sure your partner is free to go during the time you are booking the trip. Make certain they don't have a big project coming up or that the trip doesn't fall during school when they cannot leave.

You can call a co-worker or their boss and get them in on the secret so that you may not even have to tell your partner they are taking vacation time. You will just whisk them away!

- If you are planning to tell your partner about the trip, you can still keep much of the trip secret and not reveal all of your special plans. Tell them as little as possible and they will really appreciate the trip.

They will be telling friends and family about just how it happened for weeks and months after the trip is finished.

- Be sure you plan to accommodate travelers cheques, clothes (if you are packing for your partner) and other things you'll need on the trip.
- Take along your 'tools of the trade', or know where you can buy them. Things like candles, lingerie, massage oil, a CD of love songs and a portable CD player, fancy clothes for that dinner dancing you plan to do in Paris, etc.

Other Weekend or Day Trip Ideas

A less expensive but nonetheless special getaway would be to a bed and breakfast in the country for the weekend.

There are many such locations throughout the United States in the Northeast, Atlantic Coast, and Pacific Coast, and even in the middle of the country.

Just go to your computer and use your search engine to find bed and breakfast locations in certain states or areas of the country and then investigate what there is to do in those areas.

If your partner enjoys hikes and horseback riding, pick a place that has that kind of activities. If you just want a cozy weekend alone, pick a cabin in the woods, far from cell phones and TV sets.

Again, you want to think about what your partner likes and how the two of you will spend your time while you are away.

Rent a sailboat if you are near the water, or a paddleboat for something more old-fashioned and simple.

- If your partner likes to be with other people and do things with groups, you might choose a city tour instead of a country bed and breakfast.

Take the double-decker bus around New York city to see where *'Seinfeld'* locations were filmed, or go to the theater or the opera, or go dancing in one of the many clubs.

- OR, go to San Francisco and look out over the bay, climb or drive the hills and windy roads and view the grand old houses on Nob Hill.
- Perhaps Boston with its historic walking tours and magnificent Charles River crew boats is more up your alley.
- Or maybe you'd like to go listen to the Blues in Chicago and walk along the water and eat great food.
- Go to Memphis and visit the home of Elvis Presley and listen to great music and drink great home brewed beer.

It's all up to you and it is all according to what your partner might like.

Here are some ideas to get your creative juices flowing:

- A weekend drive in the country. Stay at a bed and breakfast and tour the local winery or go horseback riding, hiking or play tennis or golf. Leave the cell phones at home.
- An EVENT based weekend with tickets to a great stage performance, ballet, opera or gallery opening, a great dinner dressed in your finest and a great bottle of wine. Leave the kids at home!
- Go to an all-inclusive Caribbean resort and wind surf, scuba dive, swim in the pool and the ocean, eat all you want and lay in the sun.
- A visit to Washington DC to cruise the Potomac on a dinner cruise, visit the monuments and night and have a great dinner.
- Go to San Antonio, Texas and take the Riverwalk. Walk the bridges, listen to the strolling minstrels in the great restaurants and get a feel for the beauty of the Southwest.
- A casino trip complete with a great in-room Jacuzzi, some slot and table play and a good show.
- A weekend overnight trip to a hotel in a local city. Swim in the indoor pool, order room service and snuggle in bed and watch old movies and drink wine or champagne.
- Visit Cape Cod Massachusetts, or Newport, Rhode Island and tour the old mansions, the shops. Snack at the coffee shops and candy stores and have a great meal in one of the main street restaurants.
- Go to Disney World or Disney Land and tour the other theme parks and resorts in the area.
- Go to Jamaica or Bermuda and rent mopeds or motor bikes. Walk along the beach and soak up the local color.

Collect seashells and dine at night in nice restaurants. Take a shot at the local gambling and see how you make out!
- Visit the Queen Mary in Long Beach, CA. Stay aboard and shop and eat. You'll feel like you've had a mini-cruise.
- Take a cruise to Alaska and stand at the rail watching the beauty of the great Northwest go by, visit a huge iceberg, take a dog sled ride.

- Cruise the Caribbean on a private boat with your own crew, stopping in ports for shopping, activities and meals. Or stay onboard and swim boat side, and scuba dive, fed by your own chef.
- Go to a spa in Arizona, New Mexico or California. Stay the weekend and be pampered, massaged and fed. Swim and work out, take long walks and enjoy great, healthy food.

Romance on a Budget



All of this sounds great, doesn't it? But what if you just don't have the money to fly to Fiji and stay in a thatched roof hut for a week?

Here are some great romantic ideas you can pull off for a small investment and some of them don't cost much at all.

Of course you WILL have to eat, but other than that, the investment is minimal.

- A stay-at-home weekend with the phone, TV and other disturbing devices unplugged. Plan a 'full your fantasy' weekend. Get your food in the house and plan things to satisfy your partner.

You can plan to split the weekend so that you spend Saturday pampering your partner and they spend Sunday pampering you, or split morning and afternoon pampering. Whatever you prefer!

Be sure to have candles, wine, massage oil, and other romantic tools on hand and luxuriate in each other's company.

Music is allowed, but no TV, computers or cell phones. Don't answer the door!

- A camp-out weekend on the beach, with a picnic basket, a blanket and the stars, and a great bonfire.
- A camping trip to the woods, with the tall pines watching over your campfire at night. Plenty of good camp fire food (steaks or marinated fish, wine, bread, etc.)
- An old-fashioned town fair weekend staying at a bed and breakfast and going to the county fair.

Ride the Ferris wheel, eat cotton candy, and take a turn at the booths to win your partner a stuffed animal.

- OR go to Amish country and watch the picturesque horse-drawn buggies, eat homemade ice cream and see how quilting is really done.
- Take a trip to a ski lodge (whether you ski or not) and snuggle by the lodge fire. Take long walks and look at the blindingly beautiful snow. Shop in the local shops and eat great food.
- A camp out in your back yard or on the roof top of your apartment building (check to be sure you can do this before you plan to get up on your roof).

Get a two-man tent, or if the weather is warm, snuggle under a blanket on top of an air mattress.

Bring some wine, cheese, bread and whatever else you'd like to top off the evening. Light a lantern, or candles depending on where you are and what is legal.

- Pretend you are strangers, meeting for the first time in a restaurant or bookstore or on the street. Have an impromptu cup of coffee or glass of wine at a bistro and ask each other questions about your favorite things.

You can be truthful or make up outrageous stories about your life and background.

Now go out for the evening or go home, as you wish and continue the charade.

It may be hard to get started, but you'll love it once you get used to the role-playing and, if you are truthful with your 'getting to know you' date, you may even find out some things about your partner you did not know.

Young Love



You may be young, but that doesn't mean you can't plan a romantic activity with a girlfriend or boyfriend. Even if you don't drive, there are options!

Take a look at some of these ideas and see what you can find that you like:

- Plan a 'picnic' in your room. Spread a blanket on the floor, make sandwiches, bring soda and play some nice romantic music on your CD player or snuggle and watch a romantic movie.
- Sign up for a cooking class together and be partners at the stove.

Your mother or father can drive you there and pick you up, but you'll have a great time in between cooking and feeding each other tastes of the foods you've cooked and you'll learn something in the process!

- Start a 'couple website' where both of you can post pictures and maybe even have a blog where you can write things down and have your friends comment, etc.

You can track important dates there, talk about the prom, and post pictures of the two of you climbing out of the limo.

- Visit your local library together and when you are finished doing your homework, go to the love poems section and choose a few books.

Share the passages and citations you find in the books and write down the names of your favorite love poems.

Then find them online and send snips of the poems to each other via email.

- Place bets on your favorite sport or the sport your girlfriend or boyfriend likes best.

Whoever wins the bet that week gets to select a 'treat', a walk in the park or whatever they'd like to do that they find romantic.

You'll learn more about the sport your boyfriend or girlfriend likes and earn brownie points at the same time.

- OR set a challenge for your boyfriend or girlfriend to find a love letter written by a famous historical person (Abraham Lincoln or Benjamin Franklin, etc.).

Then whoever finds it first online or in the library must show proof that they found it and they get to choose a romantic treat.

- Take a language class together in school and speak French, Italian or Spanish – whatever – to each other using romantic phrases.

It will encourage you to do better in the subject and it will be romantic at the same time.

You'll have your own secret language for communicating little love messages!

The Seasoned Pro...Romance for Seniors



Romance is something that applies to every age group. No matter how old you are and how you feel physically, you can still be romantic.

Music, gentle touch, gentle massage and sweet whispers and words are understood by every age group!

And remember, you CAN teach an old dog new tricks.

So, just because you have not been all that romantic with your partner in the past, doesn't mean you can't develop some new and improved habits.

Start small and don't get too elaborate until you get comfortable with your new habits.

After that, the sky is the limit.

Here are some ideas to get you started. Whether you are limber and healthy or you have some limitations; whether you have a full wallet or your resources are limited, there is something here for you!

And, don't be afraid to create some moments of your own!

1. Picnics are romantic at any age. And you don't necessarily have to cook. You can order a nice box lunch or picnic basket for a local store or restaurant.

Just take a look in the phone book and call around or, if you are internet savvy, get online and perform a search for 'box lunches' or 'picnic lunches' in your area.

If you'd rather get the picnic items yourselves, you can shop for them together at a local store, then gather your items in a basket and head for your picnic site.

If you are not up to the walk through the woods and the lugging of baskets and bottles.

Find a nice city park or a small public area with park benches or a fountain and park close to the walkways.

Lead your love through the area and settle on a bench with a lovely bottle of wine for a few hours to enjoy the sun and watch the sights.

2. If you are up to it, you can take some dance lessons together. This is fun AND romantic and it will give you the exercise you both need.

After you graduate, you can go out dancing for an hour or two – whatever you feel you can handle – and then settle in at a table near the dance floor to share a cocktail and watch the other couples glide across the floor.

You can even request a favorite love song to be played by the band or group providing the music. And a dedication to your love would not be a bad idea either!

3. Take a leisurely stroll through a museum, taking breaks to sit on the benches and gaze at the beautiful art.

Most larger museums now have coffee shops or restaurants where you can have a meal as well.

Check the listings to see if you can go on a group tour with a guide. That makes it even more interesting.

4. Go to a wine tasting together. Spend a couple of hours tasting wonderful wines and then buy your love a bottle of the wine they favor most.

Follow that with a nice dinner or rent a movie, order food to be delivered to the house and watch a favorite old, romantic film like 'Casablanca' or 'An Affair to Remember'.

5. OR go to a local winery, if you have one in your area. Enjoy the wine tasting and browse the shelves. Then buy a bottle, and take a drive to a nearby location and buy some cheese and bread.

Share the feast together on a park bench or even in your car watching the sunset over some beautiful hillside, and listening to a romantic CD in your car.

6. Check out the seniors trips in your area. Many offer a nice day on the road with a visit to a special restaurant and maybe even a show.

Bring along some snacks for the bus ride and wear comfortable walking shoes and buy your love a special memento in a shop to remind her/him of the day you spent together.

7. If you are up for the exercise, consider taking golf lessons together. If you prefer something more sedate and shorter sessions, sign up for a gourmet cooking class.

You'll have a great time cooking up a storm and feeding your love special bites of the foods you've cooked.

AND you can try your hand at cooking these meals at home together to keep the fire burning.

8. Go to an auction and have a ball bidding on items for charity. Pick something you both like in advance if you get there early and keep an eye on that.

If you can't afford it, you can at least enjoy watching the bidding process.

OR go to a Sunday flea market or an art show in the park on a weekend. Walk around and visit the vendors, sit on a bench to take a break and share a cup of tea or an ice cream cone.

9. Another great place to spend an early Sunday morning is a local Farmer's Market, if you have one.

Shop for fresh vegetables and interesting items and then go out for brunch or go home and use your fresh items to make a nice meal.

10. Join a monthly book club together and attend the meetings as a couple. While you are reading the book during the month, you can meet to read to each other.

Or talk on the phone, or over dinner, about the book, and share your thoughts about the characters and the plot.

11. Go to a book signing for your favorite author, or just visit a local bookstore. The larger stores have coffee shops inside and you can browse the shelves.

Then buy your favorite books (maybe even a book of love poems) and then share coffee and a snack with your love.

12. Spend an old-fashioned day at the County Fair or a local fireman's fair. Walk a little, sit a little, play the games and enjoy the fun.

If there is a park space near the fair you can even bring your own picnic basket and enjoy the day.

13. Volunteer together at a local hospital or for charitable events like auctions, dinners, etc. Plan to meet for coffee before your 'work' begins or afterwards, whichever you choose.

Check in with each other during the day and, if you have a break for a meal, have a bite together before the day is over.

14. If you live close to a local park with ponds and paddleboats or rowboats, and you are up for the challenge, take a nice ride on a clear day and serenade your love by singing, if you are so inclined.

Or by bringing a portable CD player with a stack of your favorite love songs.

15. Read to each other over coffee or a glass of wine. There is nothing more intimate and romantic than reading love sonnets or a great romantic story.

You can take turns reading aloud, while your partner enjoys their wine. Perhaps you can even play a great, relaxing classic piano CD or some nice instrumental music in the background for mood!

If you don't like to read aloud, get a book on tape of your favorite, romantic novel and listen together while sipping wine and watching a fire crackle in the fireplace.

16. Start a local 'date club' with other seniors. A good place to get this going is by attending a monthly or weekly seniors club meeting in your community or an event where you know you will run into other seniors.

Print fliers to give them information on what you have in mind or just talk to them about it. The idea is to get a group of people together – they don't have to be married or even in love, just willing to DATE for an evening.

Then you and others come up with ideas of places to go and meet as couples, OR to go as a group on a rented van or bus for a date.

You can start small with a local coffee shop or restaurant and a movie you all want to see, or you can have everyone over to your house for movie night.

Everyone brings a potluck dish or a bottle of wine or a dessert (if you want to do just dessert and coffee) and you enjoy the movie together.

Then, if it really takes off, you can plan those more special events on a bus to the city to see a show and have dinner or to go to a local resort within driving distance for a great lunch and a stroll on their grounds.

Whatever you can create and imagine can be done. Engage everyone in the planning so you don't have to do all the work and watch it take off!

Surprising Sexy Ideas



Here are some sexy ideas to put romance and surprise back in your life:

1. Arrive at their door wearing only a coat. Throw some massage oil and a candle and matches in your coat pocket and have fun!
2. Buy a can of whipped cream, chocolate sauce and maraschino cherries, cover your bed or other surface with spare sheets or blankets that you can wash afterwards, and 'decorate' your skin surface these tasty treats.
3. Follow the instructions in #2 above, and add ice cream to make human sundaes!
4. Turn off all the lights, put on some romantic music, light a few candles and slowly undress your partner. Then have your partner SLOWLY undress you.
5. Play strip poker
6. Take a picture of yourself in a sexy outfit or in the nude, if you wish, and give it to your partner to carry in their wallet or keep in a secret location.

Even if you don't think your body is attractive, you can drape yourself in a beautiful scarf or a colorful blanket and position your nude arms and legs so they show outside the covering you are wearing.

Your partner will get the idea!

Wear a nice piece of jewelry to dress up the nude or nearly nude look and get the lighting just right so that it is romantic – perhaps a dim lamp or a lamp with a sexy scarf draped over it to make the lighting right, or just a lot of candles to set the mood.

A video is even better if you like posing and acting for the camera. You can purse your lips and send a great big kiss by video for that moment when your partner wants to revel in your sexiness and you are not around.

7. When your partner comes home after a long day, wait until they get in the shower and then sneak in on them with some great scented body gel.

Take a nice hot shower together with a loofah or a washcloth and wash their back and body. Let them do the same for you!

The ‘Two-Way Street’



Remember that romance is a two-way street. If you are trying to get some romance back into your life, or trying to hit it off with a new love, let your partner know what you are trying to do and enjoy the creative process together.

Know your partner well enough to know whether your changed behavior will be a pleasant surprise OR just perceived as odd or unusual behavior.

If your partner needs to be ‘in the mood’ you probably shouldn’t surprise them until they are used to your new habits!

Take a look at the answers you gave to the questions about your partner’s preferences and decide how you want to approach this.

Some people may want to surprise their partner first with a new romantic idea or event and THEN tell them that they’d like to keep this kind of thing going as an ongoing treat for the both of them.

Others may prefer to talk to their partner first and tell them what they have in mind and then even make it a creative contest to discuss what they might like to do for a special event and WHEN.

That excitement alone can get increase the romance meter as you look forward to the planning and execution of your special adventure.

Still others may wish to ask some questions and casually explore whether their partner is open to new ideas and to trying some new romantic activities.

BUT, if the answer is 'no', then you have to decide how to handle the situation.

You certainly don't want to FORCE your partner to do anything they do not want to do!

And, if you are really trying to put romance in your life and IF you are sensitive to your partner's preferences and desires, you should have no problem convincing them that you will both enjoy this process.

If you do have a problem, you may want to sit down and talk honestly about your relationship and find out if there are other things going on.

Assuming things go smoothly and you break the ice, encourage your partner to come up with ideas and things to do, or to surprise you with whatever THEY might like to do.

Even if you consider yourself a boring person without a creative bone in your body, once you try the suggestions we've given you here, you WILL come up with your own ideas and you'll discover more about what you and your partner like and do NOT like as you proceed.

Using Your Support Network



For those couples that have childcare or elder care issues, or those who are divorced and trying to manage two families, finding the time to get away for an evening, a weekend or a special trip can be a challenge.

Even work can restrict your schedule sometimes!

Be sure you engage your support network when you are ready for some time alone.

Don't be embarrassed about the topic.

You don't have to go into great detail and tell family, friends or co-workers what you have planned.

However, you can tell them you and your partner just need some time away to spend together as a couple.

There's nothing intimate or embarrassing about that statement, and most people will readily understand your problem.

If your family or friends are not particularly forthcoming with offers, you can also suggest an 'exchange'.

Offer to take your neighbors kids to practice for a week or two in exchange for your children's overnight visit to their house while you take your partner away for a weekend.

Ask your sister or friend to come and stay with your child while you go out for a romantic evening.

Talk to your co-workers or boss, or the people your partner works with and tell them you'd like to get some time away.

Ask if they can get coverage or trade some workload to make this happen and then make the appropriate arrangements.

If all else fails, ask around in your community and get references for a good sitter, house sitter, dog sitter, companion – whatever you need to make your getaway possible.

Allow yourself plenty of time to find the right person. Don't just leave your home or caretaker issues to a stranger without KNOWING they are competent.

Preferably, find someone that a friend or family member used so you know from experience that they are good.

Now make a list of what has to be done, and leave contact phone numbers in case they have to reach someone. If you don't HAVE to leave your own numbers, so much the better.

Perhaps your brother won't watch the kids but he will act as the emergency number for the person staying at your home if they have a frozen pipe or their car breaks down and they can't get the kids to soccer practice.

IF you can get a friend or family member to take care of your dog, house, children or elders while you are away, be sure to thank them by giving them a gift certificate to a favorite restaurant, or flowers, or candy or some other gift to show your appreciation.

They are more likely to say ‘yes’ the next time you want a favor if you remember to show appreciation!

It’s Never Too Late!



If you are ready to get your romantic life ‘fired up’ but you feel you’ve neglected your life as a couple for too long, or that your partner will think you’ve lost your mind, just remember that it is never too late to make a change.

How difficult that change may be really depends on how lax you’ve been up until now.

If you barely speak to your partner and take them for granted every day, you will have to break some old habits before you can revitalize your ‘couples life’.

Take this little test to see just how far you’ll have to climb. You may find yourself in better shape than you thought you were, or you may feel pathetic after you’ve finished the test. Not to worry!

There is still hope. Read on!

For each question below, select the answer that best suits your situation:

Question	Answer
1. On our first date we a. Rented a movie b. Went out for coffee c. Went to a romantic movie and had drinks or coffee d. Went out for a romantic dinner etc.	
2. For his/her birthday this year I bought a. A gift certificate b. An article of clothing c. A personal item or item from the store he/she wanted d. Dinner and Tickets to an event I knew she/he would like	
3. For Christmas this year, I plan to a. Figure out his/her size and buy some article of clothing b. Ask her/him for a list of what she/he wants c. Buy that special thing they’ve been talking about for months d. Give him/her a hand made certificate for a trip to a romantic location over the holidays	





Question	Answer
4. The last time I said 'I love you' was a. I can't remember b. Last month c. This week d. Today	
5. When we have an evening at home alone I usually a. Watch TV or use the computer b. Sit next to my partner while we read or watch TV c. Talk to my partner about his/her day over tea, coffee or a glass of wine d. Put my arm around my partner or sit with her/his head in my lap, maybe massage her/his shoulders and snuggle under a blanket talking or watching TV	
6. The last time my partner and I spent a romantic evening out was a. I can't remember b. A couple of months ago c. A couple of weeks ago d. Within the past week	
7. The last time I went on vacation with my partner we a. Visited family b. Went to a sporting event or amusement park c. Visited a city or country area we both love d. Went to a romantic location and spent some time alone	
8. When I want romantic attention from my partner I	
9. The most romantic music is a. Hard Rock or Heavy Metal b. Blues or Jazz c. Romantic Ballads or Love Songs d. Ravel's Bolero or Chopin's Waltzes	
10. When I come home after being away for the day I a. Go get changed and don't talk to my partner for 5-20 minutes after I get into the house b. I holler to my partner on my way through the living room and ask what time dinner is being served c. I call out to my partner and tell him/her I am home and say hello d. I find my partner in the house and give them a hug and a kiss	

Now, let's take a look at your score!

Look at the chart below and write your totals for each answer:

For every...	Give yourself...	Total
Question you answered with an 'a'	2 points	20-45
Question you answered with an 'b'	5 points	46-75
Question you answered with an 'c'	10 points	76-110
Question you answered with an 'd'	15 points	111-150
Now, Add Your Points here:		
My Total Score is:		

Now that you have your total score, take a look at the chart below to see how much work you have to do to get you and your partner comfortable with your new habits.

If your Total Score is	Romantic History and Future
20-45	 <p>You may want to talk to your partner before you start your new romance program. Thus far in your relationship you have been neglectful and totally unromantic so if you just start out of nowhere, your partner may think you have lost your mind or you've been taken over by the alien 'pod people'</p>
46-75	 <p>In the past, you've had your moments where you have attempted to think about what might be romantic but you haven't really gotten it right. You may choose to talk to your partner before you start the romancing program you have in mind, OR you may just wing it and go with some creative small ideas to get you started, before you get to the big stuff.</p>
76-110	 <p>You are doing pretty well with this romance stuff and your partner is only going to love you more for the additional effort and the new creativity and ideas have for ways to increase the romance in your life.</p>
111-150	 <p>You don't need any help, but the new ideas you bring to the relationship will add intimacy, affection, humor and LOVE to your couples life.</p>

Now that you know where you stand, it is time to get started.

If you scored low in the tests you've taken as you read this book, DON'T GIVE UP!

You should sit down and come up with your best approach, talk to your partner if you feel it is appropriate and start the plan as soon as possible.

Don't be embarrassed to talk with your partner about this subject.

If you care about each other, you are only going to improve things in your relationship.

You don't have to start with the MOST intimate discussion or decide who has been the most neglectful.

Remind your partner that the both of you WANT things to be the best they can be and that you both care about each other, and take it from there.

As we've said before, you will get more comfortable with this romantic role as you proceed with your plan. So, for now, don't try to be the most romantic person on the face of the earth, or blow away your partner with a new, overwhelming effort every day.

Just get on track with the small stuff, and then build your romance as you go.

It will give you something to look forward to in the coming months and years!

The Personal Touch



As you prepare to energize your romantic life and send your Romance Meter soaring, remember to keep it personal!

No romantic suggestion is likely to work for you if it is something that you KNOW you and your partner will not like.

There is a difference between feeling uncomfortable because you still have to form those romantic habits, and feeling uncomfortable because the romantic event or gesture you chose is something that DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT for you or your partner.

You want your life as a couple to be renewed and romantic, but not awkward.

You don't want to feel like you are being phony or fake, or it will not work.

Before you begin, think carefully about yourself as a person and what YOU find romantic and sexy, and then think about your partner and what THEY find romantic and sexy.

Review the profiles and questions you completed as you read this book and look for clues there and then begin.

Do what feels right for you!

If it feels right to start off with a **BANG, by all means DO SO. If it feels right to start with a gentle **WHISPER**, that's OK too!**

This is YOUR romance.

You are one-half of a very specific, unique couple and you should never try to be something you are not.

You may find a hidden lothario inside your quiet demeanor, or you may find that the BIG, BOLD, BRASSY lover you want to be is actually a gentle poet at heart!

There is no right or wrong answer for everyone – just what is right, what FEELS right, for you and your partner.

As your romantic adventures proceed, stay in touch with your own feelings and your partner's feelings about what is happening.

Talk about what is working and what is NOT working, if anything, and make changes, as appropriate.

You may think that your spouse, fiancé, girlfriend or boyfriend REQUIRES the sexiest, most romantic partner ever seen on this earth.

You may feel you have to rush home with flowers every night and shower your partner with gifts or whisper sweet nothings to them every minute you are together.

In fact, your partner may be perfectly happy with the little things you do every day to show them that you care.

It is critical not to neglect your partner or your romantic life together, but you don't want to overdo it or try to become someone else either – so be sure you know the right balance for YOU as a COUPLE!

No matter what your age, ethnicity, background, income or gender, you can be romantic with your partner.

All you need is the willingness to invest the thought and time in the process. You don't have to be wealthy or beautiful or handsome or built like a Greek God or Goddess.

You just have to care for your partner and love them, and want to show them that love!

You will both LOVE the experience that this new romance brings to your life and if you are already a hopeless romantic at heart, the new things you do will only add depth and love to your relationship.

There is nothing more important in this world than loving and having the love of another person.

Let your partner know you care – in the little things you do and in the larger events you plan.