

How You Can Bring the Spark Back to Your Marriage

As a marriage counselor, I've seen marriages get stale.

After nine years of marriage, Janet and Steve felt uneasy. They loved each other but it wasn't the same anymore, the spark was long gone. Arguments were mostly avoided but the same fights about parenting and money seemed to come up over and over.

Janet and Steve didn't need a complete marriage overhaul; they simply needed a jump start. If your marriage feels a bit flat, these five tips will show you how to bring the spark back to your marriage.

1. Remember the good times. Conflict and tension can cloud your vision until it feels like your entire relationship is terrible. Identify the best parts of your relationship. It will remind you of the foundation of love from which you can rebuild a solid relationship. Simply acknowledging the good in your marriage will rocket your connection. Stop and remember when your relationship was awesome. Find pictures of you and your spouse having fun and remember the good times you've experienced together.

2. Turn down the noise. The busyness and noise of life often drown out communication in marriage. It's not that your communication is so terrible; it's the noisy distractions that cause your communication attempts to fail. Keep your schedule from getting overbooked by saying no to nearly all weekday activities. Every day when you come home from work leave your phone in another room and talk to your wife face-to-face.

3. Focus on connection. Successful marriages consist of couples who show up each day and focus on each other. Improving communication skills, learning conflict resolution

techniques, or developing a good financial strategy are all helpful but never last without focusing on connection first. Take a minute right now to think about your wife. The next time you see her, give her a long hug and tell her how much you love her. All the other tasks of life will work out better after you're well-connected.

4. Dig deeper. It's not enough to simply hear the words your spouse is saying. If your wife asks, "Are you even listening to me?" and you respond by repeating the exact words she said, you're missing the point. The point of listening is to understand her more. Listen for her heart. Hear the vulnerable emotion and desire for connection in her communication. Take turns expressing your emotions including your desires and fears. Risking vulnerability allows for deeper intimacy.

5. Celebrate success. Connect well with your wife and the sparks will fly again. Excitement and passion will return like wildfire. Make sure you celebrate your success. If you're not intentional, the improvement won't last. Avoid the roller coaster of amazing closeness followed by the same old conflicts and tension. A weekly date night is a great way to continue celebrating your relationship. Find another happily married couple and go on a double date together. {eoa}

For the original article, visit .