

Where Did the Romance Go? How to Rekindle “Date Night”

by Karen Card, Relationship Coach

She loved it when he used to send her flowers and take her out dancing. Their dates made her feel special. Somehow though, their dates gradually changed from a night out with dinner and dancing to staying home with take-out food and movie rentals. Soon, they did not even go out for the videos, they just ordered a pizza and watched television. Along with the decline of their dating life, they also saw a gradual decline of their sex life. What happened? Where did the romance go?

Ever wonder why there was so much romance in the beginning of your relationship, but not now? There may be a good reason. Most men, when presented with a challenge in their life, will focus strongly on the challenge until they have reached their goal or solved the problem. Then, feeling proud of their accomplishment, they sit back and relax, moving on when the next challenge arises. Unfortunately, many men look at relationships in the same manner. The woman he is dating is the challenge so he puts a lot of time, energy and focus into courting her until he has “won” her. Once he is confident that she is committed to him, he has reached his goal and can now sit back and relax. This is very normal behavior for most men.

What men do not realize is that women need romance throughout the relationship, not just at the beginning. When a man stops the romance, which is something she really needs, many times the woman will stop appreciating him, which is something he really needs, and the relationship starts to decline. If his romantic behavior becomes stale or predictable, she cannot continue to be excited about being with him. It up to both partners to work to keep romance in their relationship. Here are 5 tips to keep the romance alive:

- 1. Regular “Date Night”:** The most effective way to keep romance alive is by going out on dates. Whether you are young and like to party, or settled down with several children, a couple needs a “Date Night” to keep the spark going in the romance department. To make Date Night successful it needs to be just the two of you, out of the house, including dinner and another activity (movie, dancing, walk on the beach, etc.), without any talk about serious issues. The goal of Date Night is to focus on being romantic – like you did at the beginning of the relationship.
- 2. Let the man plan the date:** To make Date Night more romantic, the man should plan the dates, as he did at the beginning of the relationship. When a man sets up and confirms the details of the date, the woman feels special and cared for. While she may initially have to request that he put in the extra effort required to plan and execute the date, after he takes her out, he will be rewarded with her appreciating him and his efforts.

3. Plan ahead: It is hard for women to appreciate a date that is rushed and unplanned. The last thing she wants to hear is him asking in the car, “What would you like to do tonight?” Men have the power to keep the love alive, by making an effort to plan dates ahead of time. Women love the excitement they get from looking forward to a date which has been planned several days ahead of time. Try to have the date plans in place by Wednesday for a weekend date.

Yes, it requires more thought and more energy on the man’s part, but the effort is worth it. This type of romance will put the spark back in your relationship and she will respond to him with appreciation.

4. Focus on each other: An important part of Date Night is having uninterrupted time to focus on each other. The rule is that there will be no talking about the kids, the bills, or the problems of the day. The conversation needs to be light and easy – after all, you are on a date, not in a family meeting.

5. Do not get lazy: Just because you get settled into a relationship, does not mean you should settle down. Although it is easier to stay home and rent videos rather than going out to the movies, do not take the lazy way out – it is a slow death to your love life. Women need to let their partner know that they still need to have dates. She needs to ask him to plan their dates in advance and take her out on the town. Both partners need this. At the very least, try to have one Date Night each month. Keeping the romance alive will keep the relationship alive and healthy.

Both partners benefit by putting some effort into the romance department of their relationship. Recognize that romance needs tending to throughout the entire relationship – it does not stay hot and heavy forever, unless you consciously make it happen. You have the power to bring the romance back by bringing back the feelings you had at the beginning of your relationship. Bring back Date Night.