



Tending Loves Flame: Keeping the Love Alive Handout

All relationships need work to maintain closeness and magic. Many relationships lose their flame at times, but that doesn't mean you can't get the spark back. You can make changes to relight the flames of love and attraction that first brought you together.

How might you build the loving connection between you and your partner?

- You may wish to find a couples expert or a minister, to assist you to move forward. A group for couples in your area or at your VA is an option to better your connection.
- Relationships are a bond between two people, where each person has a role in what goes well and what doesn't. If you want a strong relationship, then learn about your part in hurting, and your part in helping. It takes one person to change a dynamic in the relationship.
- Loving someone, beyond the early falling in love, is an act of giving. Really loving means giving and being patient when you don't feel like it. It is owning that you and your partner are not perfect.
- Keeping or increasing the sparks of love requires nurturing. If you want to keep love alive, it takes conscious effort and investment.
- Remain curious, your loved one is never fully known. Think of them as ever-changing. Invite chances to explore, listen, learn, and encourage who they are. How do you feel when others pay attention and are interested in who you are? Give this attention to your partner.
- Listening to your partner is a good way to bring loving care back to your relationship. Hear without butting in, without thinking about your answer back, or trying to get your point across. Listen by trying to hear, accept, and value what the other person is talking about. Make time in your day to check in and make special times to just talk and listen.
- Pay attention, notice, and focus on, the talents that you love, value, or find appealing. Make daily effort to pay attention and say you are grateful. Not only



will it boost your partner, it will cause you to focus more on what you love and build those positives.

- Get busy with activities where you are spending time together. Go out on dates and dress up. Have time that is devoted to being together as well as having time apart.
- Touching and sexual activities feed the health and life of your relationship. Tenderness is a healing path that leads to closeness and sexual health. Reach out with a touch, a kiss, a hug, a back rub and enjoy the closeness, both giving and receiving.
- Your partner is not part of yourself, recognize them as an individual. Be aware that you want them, and you don't own them. Closeness can break down if you no longer see them as the one of a kind, tempting, person that they are.
- Believe you have value, are wanted, and worth attention. Knowing your own value and self-respect is attractive to your partner.
- Take a risk, reach out, make a special effort, or shake up the routine. Treat them to a special love note, a gift out of the blue, or a surprise. Be spontaneous and playful. Have some fun together!
- Enjoy the comfort of your relationship, but do not take it for granted. Remember the gift that you have been given. Remember the gift that you are to your partner.

You can restart the flames again when you decide to use your heart, your care, and your energy.