Talk with your partner

So how will you get in the mood this Valentine's Day? Will you wait for your partner to fulfill your wildest dreams? Something straight out of a romance novel or movie like The Notebook? If you are a woman, it's likely that you have taken this approach and it's also likely that on many occasions your dreams were not fulfilled. Research and common knowledge tells us that Valentine's Day is more important to women than men (Ogletree, 1993). Whether gay or straight, women learn from an early age through movies and media that someday our prince will come and be able to read our minds, make us feel desired, and live happily ever after. According to Morse & Neuberg these ideals and the way people often compare themselves to others on holidays like Valentine's Day ultimately results in less relationship satisfaction and is often a recipe for failure and disappointment (2004).

Making a romantic evening or weekend a success takes two and it often takes a collaborative effort. Also, starting with what we can control is more likely to create the results we want so how about this year, you try a different approach?

Talk with your partner

Positive communication is consistently linked to greater relationship satisfaction (Gottman 1994 & 1999). While many couples think communicating what they want sounds too simple. Research indicates that communicating in a positive way is essential to satisfying relationships. So what keeps people from communicating more directly given such positive outcomes? Couples get into habits of complaining, using in-direct communication and mistakenly seeing this as direct communication. Complaints and in-direct communication can actually result in a greater struggle to be romantic because of a fear of failure or being judged or criticized. So, maybe taking a more collaborative and loving approach might help.

Maybe talking to your partner in the past hasn't worked because your partner didn't see the value in romance. All the more reason to communicate to our partner how much you desire romance, how it makes you feel, and specifically what sorts of things you consider romantic. Give your partner the space to tap into their inner romantic with encouragement and non-judgment.

Or maybe the reason you haven't sat down and talked with your partner about what you would like your Valentine's Day to look like is a common response such as, “If I tell my partner what I want, it doesn't feel romantic or it takes away from the experience” – sure, if you say so. You can keep doing what you have always done but just know - then you will keep getting what you have always gotten. You can choose to appreciate your partner's efforts or you can choose to continue to be resentful and disappointed year after year. Sure, the first time your partner provides you with everything you have asked for it might be hard to receive it wholeheartedly or it might feel less genuine. However, when your partner makes an attempt to romance you, those
efforts to make you happy and to make you feel desired are genuine whether or not you gave them the ideas or they came up with them on their own. Over time your partner may get more skilled at knowing how to romance you and you may even eventually forget that you instructed them on how to do it.

**Tap into your inner romantic**

Another obvious way to experience more romance is by making your own efforts to be romantic. It's likely that at one point in time you were acting like a romantic – maybe writing your valentine love notes. Maybe you were even dancing around in lingerie or introducing some fun lotions, potions, or sex toys into the bedroom. If you used to be romantic and sexually creative, great, you know how to do it and it's just a matter of tapping into that part of yourself again. If you have never been the pursuer or the romantic, then now is your time. There are way too many resources out there today with a variety of ideas on being sexy, erotic, or romantic in ways that you can fit your comfort level. Just Google it – you will get more suggestions than you can imagine.

Maybe by you tapping into your inner romantic you will even create some space for your partner to respond in a similar fashion.

**5 Senses to being more sensual**

Struggling with the motivation to be the romancer or pursuer? A great way to tap into your inner romantic or your eroticism is to create the time and space for it. Focusing on your 5 senses with an erotic intention is a great place to start. Sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing. You remember these from school right? Just probably not in the context of sex and romance. Take the time to experiment with the suggestions below and you may awaken a side of you that has been hibernating for a very long time.

Starting with sight, look around, what colors are pleasing to you? What do the different colors awaken in you? Which specific colors could more likely awaken your erotic side? What sorts of visual things turn you on? Some colors tend to be more erotic or sexy than others. Does wearing something red, black, or sexually provocative get you in the mood? Or would buying a sexy item of clothing for your partner and thinking about how they would look in it get you in the mood? Is there a particular part of your body or your partner's body that gets you going? What would it be like to take a sexy pic of that body part or that item you have purchased and send it to your partner? Lastly, consider what type of lighting makes you feel most sexy and romantically open. Candles no doubt create more of a romantic mood than fluorescent lighting.

For many people touch is one of the most powerful senses when it comes to tapping into the lover in them. Go around your house or take a shopping trip and feel the different textures. Which fabrics, lotions, etc. are pleasing to you? Why are they pleasing? Which are sexier than others? How about purchasing something for your partner that would bring out the lover in you or for yourself that can open up your erotic senses, put you in the mood, or create a sexy mood if you were to share it with your partner? Of course the benefits and boundaries of touch extend far beyond this article when it comes to sex – that is a whole other blog, visit www.talksexwithliz.com/blog for ideas about touch and sexual satisfaction.

Another great way to tap into our romantic or erotic selves is through smell. Take some time to explore feminine perfumes, masculine colognes, lotions, candles, oils, and find which scents you like. Ask yourself why they are pleasing to you. What does each scent bring up in you? If you were to choose a scent for an erotic evening, which would you choose? Purchase it!

Hearing can take us away to a whole other world. Music is a great way to trigger romantic thoughts and feelings. Music can make us feel sexually empowered and provocative. Consider finding some music that relaxes you and feels like something you would like to make love to. Also consider music that arouses your frisky and seductive side. Buy a C/D and/or create a play list. Consider making two playlists – once for frisky/seductive moods and one for more slow and intimate lovemaking – or combine them so you can tap into both.

Lastly, we can’t forget how taste plays into sex and romance. In her book, Simple Sexy Food: 101 Tasty Aphrodisiac Recipes and Sensual Tips to Stir Your Libido and Feed Your Love, Dr. Linda Devillers talks about how opening up your mind and thinking about what foods represent can bring out your romantic and erotica self. Maybe its finger foods like strawberries and whipped cream or something that brings out the carnivore in you like a rare steak. Go hit the grocery with the intent of finding some sexy foods that ignite your erotic hunger. There are plenty of foods that have been historically considered to be sexy or even aphrodisiacs but ultimately it's your mindset and openness to food being sexy that will drive your hungry romantic.

**Bottom line**

Creating a satisfying sex life, Valentine's Day, or romantic experience can begin with you. If your partner doesn't eventually join you in both effort and desire then you may be a good candidate for Sex Therapy. Sex Therapy can provide you with greater tools for creating the intimate relationship you desire.
References


About the Author

Liz Dube, MA, MS, LMFT, CST

Liz Dubé is a Certified Sex Therapist & Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. At her private practice in Long Beach and Huntington Beach, in Southern California, Liz specializes in helping individuals and couples thrive in their intimate relationships, overcome sexual difficulties, and create empowering sexual identities. Liz also speaks to groups on creating more satisfying sexual relationships and blogs regularly at www.TalkSexWithLiz.com. Liz has 2 children and has been married for 16 years.

Office Location:
5855 E. Naples Plaza Ste. 215
Long Beach, California
90803

United States
Phone: 562-277-1069

Contact Liz Dube

Professional Website: www.talksexwithliz.com

Categories: communication, Healthy Relationships, Marriage, Sexual Health | Tags: Valentine's Day, Relationships, Sex, Intimacy, Communication

Related posts
Coping with Holiday Stress: The holidays can be an incredibly stressful time of year, and because of that, it's important for us...The Case of Valentine's Day: Relationship Rapture or Massacre? Valentine's Day is an annual festival to celebrate love. A day when we celebrate love in all of its ...Valentine's Day Can Also Destroy Relationships Valentine's Day is an annual festival to celebrate love, and yet while all the focus is on how relat...

Pingbacks and trackbacks (1)
Comments are closed
Recent Articles

- Electroconvulsive Therapy Should Treat Severe Depression Says New Study
- Wendy Williams: The Treachery of the Persona
- Snapchat Dysmorphia: The Harm with Social Media Filters

Former Chief Justice Works to Change the Conversation around Mental Health
- FDA Approves First Drug For Postpartum Depression
- The Very Thought Of Coffee Can Perk You Up According To New Research
- Parkland and Newtown Suicides Highlight Need for Support For Those Suffering Survivor’s Guilt

Archive
Authors
Login
Save your marriage and your business by talking to your partner and coming to agreement about these issues. Before heading into any conversation, make sure you have your “ducks in a row.” Know how to answer the questions your partner (from this point forward, for ease of use throughout this article, I'll be using “partner” to refer to your partner in life, which may include a girlfriend/boyfriend or a spouse, and “s/he” to refer to “she/he”) may have. Talk to your partner about your plan and let him/her know that you don't want to put your family's security at risk. Your partner may want you to save up more than six months' worth of living expenses, so keep an open mind as you go into this conversation.