

GREAT DATES #9

Building a Creative Love Life

Tonight's topic is going to deal with your love life as a couple. "What love life?" you reply. Yes, having a love life and having children seem to be mutually exclusive. My husband pointed out to me a Mother's Day card that said, "Honey, lately something has come between us..." and it had a picture of a Daddy's feet, a Mommy's feet and between their feet is a set of little feet. On the inside of the card, it goes on to say "Happy Mother's Day from the other side of the bed."

The arrival of children changes our love lives. Having two careers changes our love lives. Having different biological clocks changes our love lives; i.e., one of you is a night owl and the other is a morning person. Ongoing stress is almost lethal to love lives. Health issues can impact our sexual feelings.

Tonight is not the time to go all the way back through your sexual history together. This is not the time to air old, ongoing grievances in this area.

Tonight is a time to start talking about your love life, and, in particular, how you might want it to be now. Sometimes, we do have good memories of how it was at an earlier time. It is okay to reminisce about those times and to look and see what made them so special and how might we recapture some of that again.

- 1. A fulfilling sexual relationship takes work.** Achieving success in any area requires work and practice, and sex is no exception. Take advantage of the many good books that are out there now for Christian couples: Great Sexpectations by Robert

and Rosemary Barnes, Intended for Pleasure by Ed Wheat, 52 Ways To Have Fantastic Sex by Clifford and Joyce Penner.

- 2. A fulfilling sexual relationship takes understanding.** When we get married we do not automatically understand each other. It is good to talk about each others expectations, turn-ons, turn-offs, etc. A really good question is, "What puts you in a loving mood?"
- 3. A fulfilling sexual relationship takes time.** Giving your love life 10 tired minutes after the ball game is over or the late night news is over is not a good habit to fall into. You need to carve out regular time to be alone when each of you is at your best. It can be mornings, lunch, etc. Try to get away together overnight once in a while. Brainstorm creative solutions to finding time for love.
- 4. Keep a sense of humor.** Laughter helps us relax and relaxation helps our love lives.
- 5. Do the unexpected.** Go ahead and kidnap your spouse for a night or weekend away. Pack his or her bag. Make arrangements for the children and pets. Pick him or her up at work and do not tell him or her where you are going. What about midnight sex on the back porch swing? How about a pallet in front of the fireplace while the kids are away at a sleepover?

ASSIGNMENT

Each of you check the following statements that apply to you. Give yourself 1 point for each statement checked. Share your answers with one another if you feel safe enough to do so.

- _____ I enjoy my sexual relationship with my spouse.
- _____ I think he/she enjoys it too.
- _____ I look forward to the next time of physical intimacy.
- _____ My mate tells me that he/she is satisfied with our sex life.
- _____ I'm satisfied with our sex life.
- _____ I initiate lovemaking from time to time.
- _____ I plan times for us to be alone together.
- _____ We have had an overnight getaway (alone) in the past Six months.

- _____ I often tell my spouse that I desire him/her.
- _____ My spouse would describe me as a tender lover.
- _____ I'm more than willing to work on areas in our sexual relationship that need improvement.

Now, each of you pick just one of the statements listed above to talk gently and privately with your spouse about. You can choose a statement and talk about your own feelings in this area. Talk in a “companionate, assertive” style. Don’t blame, placate, justify, belittle, or over-power the other person. This is not the time or the place for those sorts of communication styles. Don’t become passive and share nothing of substance.

Next pick a question and ask your spouse to share their thought on this topic. It is so critical that each of you provide safety for the other in these discussions. This area of conversation can be very vulnerable.

Next identify barriers that are present right now and are working against a satisfying sex life for you both. Again, place no blame.

Then get to the fun time of brainstorming ways to get around, over or under the barriers. Get creative. Get fun. Think outside the box. The end of the day is the worst time to have sex for many people.

Guys are more visual than women usually and can get into the mood for love with very little prompting. When it comes to getting into the mood for women, it may take a little more effort. Women are more in their heads and it takes effort to shift from the work hat, the housekeeper hat, the mommy hat to the lover hat. Ask your wife to talk to you about things that will help her get into the mood easier.

Dr. Kevin Leman has a great book called Sex Begins In The Kitchen. And research has shown that how you greet each other at the end of the work day is critical. If you each stop for 2-3 minutes, give each other undivided attention, hug, give a real kiss, be glad to see each other, and finish it off with a little pat on the rear, and you will be amazed how much better things will go in the evening hours.