

# You Can Keep It Special.

In the last lesson, you discovered that relationships usually begin with passion and excitement. As the relationship progresses to moving in with each other or marriage, that passion decreases and can even disappear.

Does that mean the wonderful excitement and passion is gone forever? Happily, no. You can keep that fire of passion going. We're going to discuss some of those strategies in this lesson.

## The Power of Making Your Relationship a Priority

A priority is something or someone you spend time, energy, and money on. That someone or something is the most important in your life.

**If you're unsure about the top priority in your life, ask yourself the following:**

1. **Who or what takes up most of my time?** You may spend most of your time at work, but why do you work?
  - Sure, you work to pay the bills, but don't you work so that you and your partner have what you need for your lives to flourish?
2. **Where does my money go?** Some people are great at saving money while others don't know where it went.
  - Most of your money may go to providing a place to live. **When that house or apartment is for a home and not just a place to live, you have set your relationship as a priority.**
  - If most of your money goes to something just for you or other than your family, then your family is not your priority.
3. **Who or what do I think about the most?** What you think about uses your mental energy or mental currency. What you think about the most, especially when not at work, let's you know what your greatest priority is.

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- When it's your spouse or partner, then your relationship is your priority.

The routine of work and taking care of shelter, transportation, food, and clothing can occupy much of your time and energy. When you keep your partner as your priority (and your expanded family if you have children), it's easier to keep the passion going in your relationship.

**Forming a few habits or rituals to enrich your relationship helps keep those fires burning and makes the routine exciting and fun.**

### **Routines versus Rituals**

Your routines are actions which enable you to accomplish the necessities of life. These are the actions to get yourself going in the morning, making it to work, and ending your day.

Rituals are a type of routine, but they have a deeper meaning behind them. Rituals provide a specialness to your activity. Some common rituals are found at church, family celebrations, and even ball games and concerts.

When you establish a few meaningful rituals in your relationship, you reinforce the importance of your partner and your relationship.

### **Rituals to Cement Your Relationship**

Have some fun establishing rituals for the two of you. The only ground rule is that they be meaningful for both of you.

### **Fun rituals which have provided excitement and intimacy for others:**

1. **A special greeting sets the tone and mood.** Whether you do a happy dance and then throw your arms around each other or say, "Honey, I'm home," followed by a warm hug, have a meaningful greeting for each other.
  - The way you greeted each other when you were dating may still be perfect for the rest of your life together. Your body has its own memory and your greeting will trigger the memory of the fun you

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had when first dating.

2. **Saying “Good Night” and “See You Later.”** Just as you set the tone of your time together, you want to make the ending of your day or time together special.
  - Not meaning to put an element of fear or anxiety here, but, if something were to happen, what are the last words you’d want your loved one to hear?
3. **“Spontaneous” Gifts.** “I love you” gifts and actions can brighten up a tough day and give a warm, tingly feeling.
  - Meaningful “I love you” gifts vary according to the person. Flowers or cards are the ultimate for some while others prefer uplifting words of affirmation. There are those who feel all tingly when you empty the dishwasher.
  - If your partner asks you what is the greatest “I love you” gift for you, be sure and tell them what you enjoy, not what you think they want you to say.
4. **Remember why you fell in love.** This is for you. Make it a daily habit to remind yourself of the wonderful qualities in your loved one and be in a place of gratitude for them.
  - As your relationship grows, recall the new things you appreciate about your partner. Keeping these in mind will assist you when life gets challenging, and there will be those challenging times.

### Summary

Keeping your relationship a priority and demonstrating that priority by rituals of love and affection will cement and bolster your relationship. **Make it a daily practice to remind yourself why you love and appreciate your partner.**

Take a few minutes with the following exercise to anchor in what you’ve learned. Then head over to the next lesson where you’ll learn how to handle things that may already be getting difficult.

