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Five tips to help give your relationship an M.O.T

Relationship expert Kate Mansfield offers some gems of wisdom on how to help a few common complaints

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LIFESTYLE



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Valentine's week isn't all roses for some couples. If your relationship needs an M.O.T. now's a great time to address the areas that may need some working on.

Here, relationship expert Kate Mansfield, offers some gems of wisdom on how to help a few common complaints...

Relationship problem 1: My partner doesn't do enough around the house

Nagging will ALWAYS make it worse. Try reverse psychology - saying something like "It makes me so happy when you help me out, I really appreciate it when you pull your weight".

Even if it's been ages since this has happened, it will trigger your partner into a memory of it and will make them want your approval. They will be more likely to start taking action.

When they do something, anything, no matter how small, say this "I notice that you took the bin out/put a wash on/did the washing up. that was so nice, to see that we are a team. I appreciate that".

Or let them know that it turns you on- they love to feel they have that power and will make them want to do it more! Noticing and focussing on the positive will inspire your partner to do this again.

Relationship problem 2: I don't find my partner attractive any more

Is there a real reason, like have they put on loads of weight or let themselves go? If not, it is likely boredom has set in. Again, noticing the positive things and connecting to old memories of when you first met can really help.

Make some time for each theory and do something out of the normal routine. Try to work out what has become stale and make an effort to reignite the romance.

Often, when we are bored in our own lives we try to blame this on the relationship, as a focus, this is not fair and doesn't help.

Go and do some things for yourself, take some space from each other and then write a list of all of the things that you love about your partner. Often the grass seems greener, but it really isn't!

Relationship problem 3: My partner thinks their work is more important than mine

If this is really true then it's a problem, but in most cases this issue is really about something else - power and control, or ego.

Is it really true, or this is a story that you are making up because your partner spends too much time at work and is there a deeper problem, like a lack of connection or intimacy in the relationship.

Exploring the details of this are really key - does your partner earn a lot more than you? Often, when one person works part time or from home, it is not taken as seriously. Talking about it calmly will help to resolve this.

Relationship problem 4: My partner and I seem to constantly bicker over the kids

Sit down and make a practical plan, make sure that each of you is getting enough time off, self care and then time together without the kid is essential.

Many couples also don't put enough thought into their ideals and values before having kids. Cultural difference and religion, or just personal family habits differ hugely between people, it is really something to explore and make sure that you agree about before having children.

Vastly different parenting styles and ideas can cause separation and divorce, because it is often something that people feel really deeply about and are not willing to compromise on.

Relationship problem 5: My partner seems disinterested in sex

Almost always this is nothing to do with you. It is hard not to take this personally, but find out what is going on. Is your partner depressed? Are they feeling insecure about their body?

Confidence or problems at work, stress, kids and financial pressure can really sap your sex life if these things are not dealt with. Don't put pressure on, focus on being sensual, massage and touching without expectation can rekindle things slowly. If it persists, make sure to get professional help.

For relationship advice visit www.katemansfield.com

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