Nigel Summerton – ways to feel close to your partner

# Five ways to feel closer to your partner

In our increasingly busy lives, with our careers, family life, chores, passions and hobbies, it can often be the relationship with our partner that gets less airtime. In between working overtime, ferrying the kids around, doing the shopping or socialising with our friends, we can forget to spend time nurturing our relationship. If we take our partner for granted, it can lead to problems further down the road, so just taking your time to reconnect with your partner can strengthen your bond and keep your relationship happy and healthy in the long term.

Here are five simple things you can do to maintain a strong and close bond with your loved one.

**Show an interest in their hobbies and passions**

We are all unique and we often have passions or hobbies that are ours, and not shared with our partners. You may have no interest at all in your partner’s hobby or passion whatsoever, but the point is not to like what they love, it is to show an interest. In doing so, you are showing an interest in them and what makes them happy. Studies show that showing an interest in your partner’s passions is the key to a healthy relationship.

**Communicate and listen properly**

Much of the communication between you and your partner can often be just passing on information, coming to quick decisions or discussing what’s for dinner. Healthy communication is the foundation of a strong relationship. Take the time, and it doesn’t have to be long, to ask questions, listen intently, probe deeper and explore their feelings. If you partner tells you they’ve had a terrible day, take the time to explore their feelings in more detail. This will help them process their emotions, feel supported and it will also bring you closer together.

**Meaningful compliments**

Everyone loves a compliment. It releases feel good hormones and can make our day. Between partners, the compliments we give each other are often vague and non-specific. ‘You’re beautiful’ is all well and good, but if you take the time to be specific, it will have a much greater impact and make your partner feel that you mean what you say and you aren’t just saying it out of habit.

**Learn each other’s love languages**

We all have our own language of love, things that make us feel special and appreciated. For some it is physical – a warm hug is exactly what we need to feel comforted and safe. For others it is random gifts that make us feel special, or kind words of affirmation. Some people respond to just being given time, to be the focus of their partner and for some, when their partner does something for them they feel that warm glow. Take the time to find out what your partner’s language of love is and use it to strengthen the bond between you both.

**Do things together**

Not everyone has time in their lives to spend as much time as they’d like with their partners. If you have children and family commitments, it can be difficult to find the time to just be together. But by doing things together, you not only strengthen the bond between you both, but it also gives you the opportunity for meaningful communication. If you have the time, go for a walk together but if you are pushed for time, incorporating your time together into your daily and weekly chores can also give you the time that is needed. Cooking dinner together or even doing the weekly shop will help strengthen your relationship and bring you closer together.

**Summary**

There’s no getting away from the fact that our lives are increasingly busy, with almost every waking minute of our days being accounted for. But we need to recognise the importance of maintaining closeness with our partners, and finding little ways to bring us together will help keep our relationships happy and healthy.