

The Romance Factor

Article



THE ROMANCE FACTOR

Use all five senses to connect with your spouse.

By Twanda R. Smith, for the study “Romantic Sexuality”

Remember when you and your spouse were dating? When dinner was consumed to the strains of soft music instead of to Sponge Bob? In the day-to-day busyness of married life, romance is often the first thing to go. Yet the “Romance Factor” can have a high impact on the success of your marriage.

The Romance Factor encompasses much more than just sex. It invokes the five senses: sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch. It’s the emotional, spiritual, and physical connection between a husband and wife.

In my work as a romantic events planner and consultant, I discuss romantic preferences with a lot of husbands and wives. You might be surprised to hear that many men enjoy romance just as much as women!

Yet, many marriages neglect the Romance Factor. We’re so busy with our children, houses, jobs, and church obligations, that we forget to reserve time just for our spouse. After a long day, we collapse into bed, exhausted. No time—or energy—for romance.

But with a little effort, romance can become second nature. While planning ahead is great, so is a spontaneous romantic evening. Try the following techniques, and see if you don’t find yourself spending an unforgettable evening with the one you love.

The Sight of Romance

Start by making your bedroom a romantic sanctuary, where you can shut out the world and enter a paradise created for two. Sight plays a significant part in everyday life, so just imagine how important it is to romance. Many are attracted by the sight of their intended before they actually speak to them. So make your sanctuary a sight to behold.

You can do this by making just a few minor adjustments to the room. First, clear the clutter. If your bedroom is like most, it may have become a catchall for clothes, papers, books, and toys. Once you’ve achieved a clean room, change the lighting by adding candles—the more, the better. Choosing lower wattage light bulbs will give you a similar effect. The soft glow of candlelight will enhance the appearance of even the most ordinary room.

Next, spruce up the room with flowers and rose petals. Don’t worry about creating a mess; concentrate on creating an oasis. Be careful not to overdo the flowers, though, since their fragrance can be overpowering. You may opt for artificial or silk flowers as a resourceful substitute.

You may even consider a few decorating tricks to enhance the bed. Drape sheer, richly colored fabrics across your headboard, over your window treatments, or hang them from the ceiling (with hooks from your local hardware store). You’re going for exotic here, so the sky’s the limit. Imagination plays a large part in how appealing your romantic oasis will be.

The Smell of Romance

Scent is an important component in the art of romance. Smell can be an excellent inlet to passion; it stimulates areas in the brain that affect the way we feel and react. Just think of the way you respond when you smell fresh bread baking. The aroma causes your taste buds to swell, your mouth to water, and your mind to wonder. Scent is a powerful instrument.



The Romance Factor

Article

Aromatherapy is making quite an impact these days. Experiment with different fragrances to find which ones work best with you and your mate.

Some I've found to be particularly effective are vanilla, coconut, chocolate, lavender, and jasmine. Scented candles are excellent for stimulating two senses instead of one: sight and smell. Check out some of the aromatherapy stores in your area.

The Sound of Romance

Sound can mean music playing softly or the way you whisper your spouse's name. Speaking in low sexy tones is a definite turn-on for many men. The soft sound of a woman's voice in its natural God-given state can melt the strongest man's heart.

The music you choose is just as important. Whether it's soothing jazz or your favorite oldies but goodies, make it something you both enjoy. Music melts away the day's stresses and struggles. And music can also be the catalyst to another technique, touch. Music sets the stage for dancing, if your sanctuary is large enough. If not, just listening with your love can be stimulating.

The Taste of Romance

My grandmother used to say the best way to a man's heart was through his stomach. Boy, is that true. Sometimes nothing inspires a man more than a mouthwatering meal and sweet treats. Prepare a simple yet elegant meal for two or a tray of delectable mini desserts. Experiment with tropical, exotic tastes and don't forget the dark chocolate, which is said to be an effective aphrodisiac.

You don't have to be Betty Crocker in the kitchen. Many grocery stores have freshly prepared meals in the deli section. Even those chocolate-covered strawberries are readily available in the produce section. Your favorite restaurant is also a good place to provide meals on the go.

The Touch of Romance

This is the last and definitely the most powerful element in the Romance Factor. The bond of physical contact is one of God's most enduring senses. In the beginning of life, the touch of a mother to her newborn begins the human need for touch. We're created to crave this on a daily basis. A hug, a caress, or a kiss arouse the tiny blood vessels located just beneath the skin in our bodies. In a marriage, touch forms a connection between husband and wife. One way to use touch is through the art of massage. Try taking a massage class together or get a book on proper massage techniques. This will teach you about pressure points and areas of concentration for a romantic, relaxing evening.

Caution!

There's one important prerequisite to using the Romance Factor techniques: communication. Communicate honestly with your spouse to learn his or her wants and needs. Just ask. Sometimes, too, a little experimentation will reveal what each of you likes or dislikes. Then let the Romance Factor take your breath away.

—Twanda R. Smith, owner of Romantic Moments, a romantic event-planning business, lives in Charlotte, North Carolina.

"The Romance Factor," by Twanda R. Smith, MarriagePartnership.com

