

LIFE LOVE *etc*

Our monthly look at the world of love, friendship, sex and relationships

TWO IS ENOUGH

A recent study by the Open University, where more than 5,000 people of all ages, statuses and sexual orientations were interviewed, found that childless couples have happier marriages. The project discovered that those without kids were more satisfied and likely to feel valued by their partners, with a higher quality relationship.



DIGITAL LOVING

One in four British adults sends saucy messages or photos to a partner, with over half of those who have received intimate material storing it on their smartphone. Out of 529 adults questioned by internet security company McAfee, a quarter of women surveyed also confessed to have checked their partner's phone for messages and pictures, while 50 percent of men admitted they were likely to log into their partner's social media accounts.

Soul SEARCHING "I want to learn to trust again"

Q I recently found out my husband had an affair when we were first married. I want our marriage to work as I love him deeply. How can I forgive him?

A I'm so sorry to hear your story. Though the good news is that you are asking this question – that is the first step on the path of forgiveness. It will help to remember that you forgive him, the man you love, but not how he has behaved.

Free your emotions

What is important now is to remember you cannot forgive if you shut down your feelings of pain, anger, or sadness. They will simply leak out later as attack or blame. You also need to listen to the stories you are telling yourself, the meaning you are giving to your



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husband's affair – that you aren't attractive enough, or good or exciting enough for him. It will be difficult to forgive him if you are somehow making your husband's behavior a reflection of your own worth.

Put pen to paper

To connect with how you are feeling, try writing a journal. Ask your husband to sit down and listen as you tell him what you are feeling, and what you need now. Ask him to tell you what he is feeling and what he wants. Sitting and talking,

listening to each other without blame or defensiveness, opens the doors to intimacy that strengthens your relationship and supports forgiveness. This transparency will also help to rebuild trust. In showing him your feelings, you give him an opportunity to see you and feel the full effect of his behavior. It may be useful to seek support for this from a neutral third party.



DID YOU KNOW?

Having a supportive spouse can help reduce your risk of heart disease, according to a study from the University of Utah. It found that when both partners support one another, it can improve your cardiovascular health!

“Sitting and talking, listening to each other without blame or defensiveness, opens the door to intimacy”

The process of forgiveness is slow – it doesn't happen in a single moment, and the process of rebuilding trust is also slow. As you work through this difficulty together, your goal and motivation at every stage will be to build an even stronger and more resilient relationship together, based on honesty, acceptance and trust.



90%
of you are suffering in silence when it comes to vaginal dryness. A recent survey of 2000 adults found that one in five women suffer from vaginal dryness, a problem easily alleviated by the use of an effective organic moisturiser and lubricant that is pH balanced.
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The LOVE CLINIC

OUR LOVE GURU ON LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS



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One of the most common questions I get asked is “how do you sustain a long-term relationship?” With this in mind, I'd like to share with you one of my top tips for sustaining love and intimacy. It is something so subtle that it is easily missed. However, if we pay attention to these small cues, it can revolutionise how we feel connected with our partner.

Reaching out

Studies show that often when one person in a relationship wants to get the others' attention, they make a small gesture or comment. This is a 'bid for attention' from the other. It may be a comment or it may be a subtle movement, which is easily missed. These gestures are often disguised as something else, so we need to pay attention to them. For example, one partner may put out their hand at the breakfast table. Ostensibly it may appear that she or he is reaching for their cup of tea, but the hand goes slightly aside the cup, reaching subtly towards the other person. If the other partner doesn't pick up this subtle cue for connection, the first person is unlikely to repeat it.

Once an attempt for attention is made and missed, that person may feel ignored, unimportant or even rejected. The opportunity has passed in that moment. We will need to wait until another opportunity presents itself.

Feeling distanced

The same is true with throw-away comments. The person may comment on something they see or have experienced. Once spoken, if the other ignores them, the first person will tend to withdraw a little from the other. It may seem subtle and hard to spot at first, but this attention to the small things is a key in continually creating a bond with our partner.

You can think of it this way – each of us wants to be seen. It may be hard for us to openly invite in this sense of connection and love. So, instead of asking outright, we make these subtle attempts for attention. If the bid is seen and responded to, we feel loved and connected to our partner. If it is ignored, we are likely to revert to old beliefs possibly around lacking self-worth, or feeling foolish for wanting that connection. So, however subtle you may think their attempt is, I encourage you to pay attention to it. Otherwise, the consequences may be negative for your relationship in the long-term.

