

Reinventing Date Night

Objective: Marriage isn't all love notes and flowers. In fact, it's usually not. Whether you have been married one year or thirty, these ideas for reinventing your marriage can help you out of your rut! According to Arthur Aron, PhD, a professor of psychology at Stony Brook University, going on interesting dates is good for a marriage. Dinner at the same old restaurant will only bring ho-hum into an already ho-hum relationship. Instead, you've got to make it a point to try new things.

Any time a couple does something together, it can be fun. But when it's really exciting, that fun gets associated with the relationship. In other words, when you have fun with your spouse, you begin to think of her/him as fun.

Song Suggestion: Smoke on the Water by Deep Purple. Or Prayer of St Francis (Blue 368, Red 721)

Bible and Catechism Readings:

Eph 6: 10-11, 18

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have **love**, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have **love**, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have **love**, I gain nothing. ...

Eph 5:28

In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Catechism 22335

Each of the two sexes is an image of the power and tenderness of God, with equal dignity though in a different way. The *union of man and woman* in marriage is a way of imitating in the flesh the Creator's generosity and fecundity: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." All human generations proceed from this union.

Saint

Saints Joachim (sometimes spelled "Joaquin," pronounced "wal-keem") and Anne, are the parents of the Virgin Mary. Joachim and Anne serve as role models for couples and both deserve to be honored and emulated for their devotion to God and Our Lady Mary, the Mother of God

Vignette: – Tim and Samantha have been married for 15 years. They had a wonderful courtship and are in a happy marriage. The challenges of raising the kids, work, home ownership, etc. has caused them not to invest in spending quality, alone time together. When they do occasionally get the opportunity to go out, they seem to go to the same restaurants and only talk about the kids/family. They both love each other but the ‘spark’ seems to be way in the past.

Questions for Large and Small Group Discussion:

What was the last date you and your wife went on? How did it go?

What prevents you from having regular dates? What can you do to overcome those obstacles?

What kinds of things make your wife really happy? How can you incorporate one of those things into a date?

Resources:

1. Date Night Cincinnati: <http://datenightcincinnati.com/>
2. 100 Cute date ideas so you never get bored:
<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/relationships/a31405192/cute-romantic-date-ideas/>
3. Date night jar: <https://www.musely.com/tips/DIY-Date-Night-Jar-For-Great-Dates/30589347>

Action Plan:

Decide today ... right now, that you are committed to surprising and delighting your wife with an awesome date night(s). Examples:

1. For those with small children, you call and book a babysitter for next Saturday night. Don't ask your wife ... just do it! Then what is something you did while you were dating that your wife enjoyed but you just haven't had the time or energy to do it recently? Is it going to a movie, putt-putt, hiking, canoeing, get an ice cream, etc. Get it set up and tell your wife to block out Saturday night and you will take it from there.
2. Create a date night jar for your wife. In the future, when you decide to have a date, make it a 'popsicle date'. Commit that no matter what your wife chooses, you will have a date and do it!
<https://www.musely.com/tips/DIY-Date-Night-Jar-For-Great-Dates/30589347>
3. Do you have an anniversary, mother's day, birthday, or Christmas coming up? Make 12 boxes for your wife, numbered one through 12 (or January through December). In each box put together a date for the particular month of the year. Could be anything you will do together: go get ice cream, long walk, movie, play, sporting event, etc. Write it up and put one in each box, with the note that you will take care of getting a sitter. If you really want to commit, buy a gift card or ticket to the event of the month.

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