



Tips for Keeping Your Relationship Emotionally Healthy

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In the wake of Valentine's Day, many people rush to the department store and the florist to ensure that their "special someone" feels the love. And while remembering to pick up a Valentine's Day gift is a lovely gesture, it takes much more than that to keep a romantic relationship emotionally healthy. Take some advice from the clinical staff at WellSpring Resources to help keep your relationship going strong even after Valentine's Day is long gone.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T. We all want just a little bit of respect and that does not exclude your partner. Tell your partner how much you respect them, what you like about them or how grateful you are for what they do. We often think that we convey these messages without having to say a word, but our meaning sometimes gets lost in the daily grind. Being direct about showing your appreciation or admiration for your partner will ensure that they know for sure. Make small commitments that will make a difference over time, such as saying "I love you" every night before you go to bed or complimenting your partner at least once a day.

Don't assume your partner is a mind reader. It may seem like a given, but communication is crucial to keeping any relationship intact. A lack of or poor communication skills can lead to distance (emotional and physical), arguing, and sometimes affairs.

"Couples need to stay in the habit of talking to each other, of taking time to reflect on the other's ideas and opinions, and of getting clarification on things instead of assuming," Charity Nevins, a therapist at WellSpring Resources, said.

Make sure you tell your partner what you want, what you feel and what you need and encourage your partner to do the same. Your partner can't help you get the things you want and need without knowing what those things are.

Get touchy-feely. “Touch is actually a very important element to an emotionally healthy relationship,” Brianna Fritsch, a therapist at WellSpring Resources, said. Try holding hands, giving each other massages, or just cuddling.

Conflict isn’t always a bad thing. That is, when it is handled properly. Conflict is inevitable in a relationship, but when the conflict leads to a calm discussion it can actually be an opportunity for the relationship to grow. After each party has calmed down, talk about what lead to the conflict and discuss how to better handle the situation next time. Avoid blame or name calling. Avoiding conflict can actually lead to more complications later on.

Find balance in your relationship. A relationship, even a marriage, shouldn’t be all consuming. You should take time out of your week to do things separately, but that doesn’t mean that time spent together isn’t just as important. Schedule time together to just focus on each other. It is not the quantity of time spent together, but the quality of time spent together.

Founded in 1959, WellSpring Resources is a total mental wellness resource serving Madison, Greene, Jersey, and Calhoun counties. With offices in Alton and Jerseyville WellSpring’s compassionate professionals work with children, adults and families to inspire hope and personal growth. Last year, 4,600 people sought to change their lives for the better through WellSpring’s mental health and substance abuse services. Visit www.wellspringresources.co for more information.

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