Maintaining a healthy relationship with your partner

Monday 9 February, 2015

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, relationships are a hot topic of conversation at the moment. You may be in the midst of a blossoming romance or have been with your partner for decades, but this time of year offers all of us the perfect opportunity to take stock of our romantic relationships and look at what makes them click.

So what is the secret to making love last? Every couple is different, but there are some simple, practical steps that we can all take on board that will go a long way in helping maintain a healthy, loving relationship.

We spoke to Dr Sherylin Thompson, a Registered Member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, on the matter. She offered the following advice:

> **"Appreciate your partner**. Show appreciation for what your partner does for you, especially when it comes to the little things. Whether they have washed the dishes, hoovered up, or simply packed your lunch for work, small gestures of gratitude every once in a while – like flowers, chocolates, or even a hug - are a quick and easy way to show how much you care for them and what they do.
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> **"Make time for one another**. When you've been together for a long time, it can become very easy to take one another for granted. It is vitally important to make time for each other on a regular basis outside of your normal, everyday schedules. Organise a date night each week where the two of you can go out for a meal, catch a film, or go for an evening stroll to help keep the romance alive and well.
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> **"Be spontaneous**. Whether it's Valentine's Day or not, surprise your other half by doing something unexpected. It doesn't always have to be expensive meals or trips abroad, but try and keep things fresh and exciting in your relationship by breaking up your daily routines by doing something new.
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> **"Communication is key**. One of the most important aspects of any relationship is communication. Having open and honest dialogue with your partner is key to maintaining a healthy, loving bond between the pair of you. However, there can come a time when those communication channels break down and the help of a qualified therapist may be needed to help you both work through your issues in a productive and positive manner."

Therapy offers a safe, confidential environment to talk with someone who is trained to listen and help you work through any problems you may be having. You can access therapy through your GP for free, or you can access it privately.

If you decide to access counselling privately, BACP's public website http://www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk/ contains a wealth of information for anyone considering therapy, including information sheets, videos and links to recent research. Its 'find a therapist' directory can also help you to find a private therapist in your local area.

Notes to editors

Dr Sherylin Thompson is available for follow-up comment. For any enquiries related to this press release, call our media team on 01455 883 342, or email media@bacp.co.uk. For non-media enquiries please call our main switchboard on 01455 883 300.

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