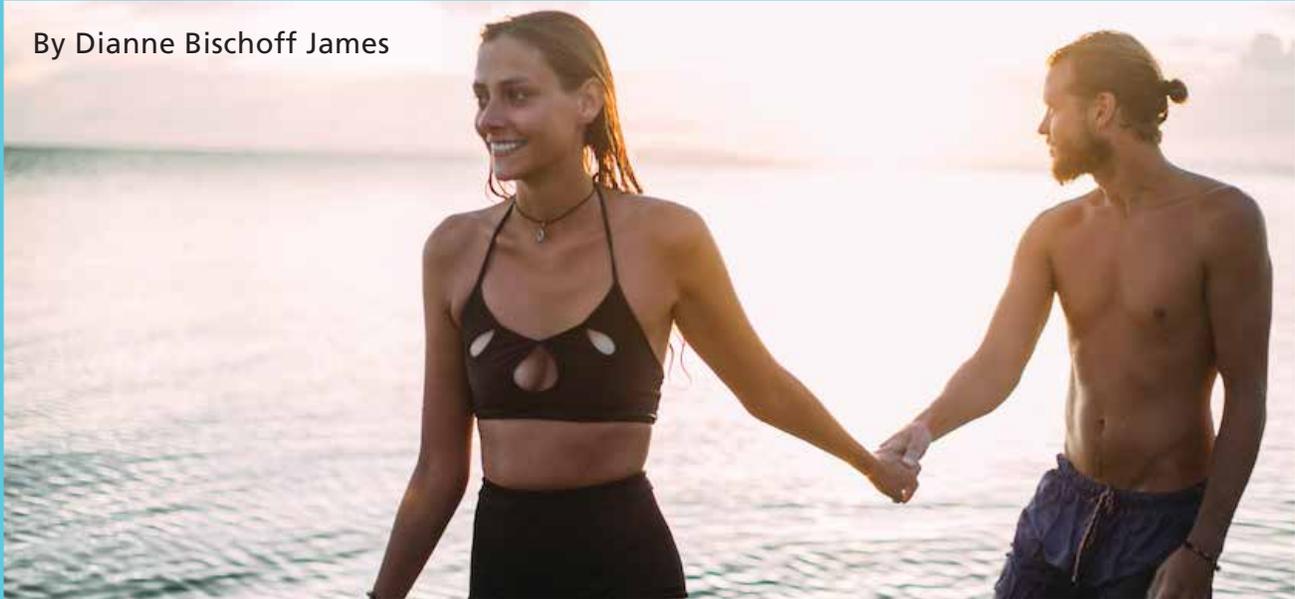


MindBodyGreen

By Dianne Bischoff James



8 Steps To Tap Into The Raw Passion Of Your Relationship

According to the wisdom of romantic comedies and other popular media, everyone who is coupled-up should feel the beat of a full, tender heart for their beloveds day in and day out. But what's the reality? Many of us are caught up in the chaos of working (often more than one job), raising children, trying to take care of ourselves, not to mention the pure exhaustion of the daily grind.

So what happens if you find yourself longing only for more hours of sleep and a peaceful moment alone, rather than a sexy night with your partner? Well, you're not alone ...

After eight years in a committed relationship, I felt like I'd settled for a dull, yet comfortable nest with little emotional connection or romantic flutter. But I refused to let this be the status quo. Instead, I developed eight simple steps to reboot a heartfelt connection and get the loving (and sexy!) feelings back between you and your partner.



1. Don't forget to recharge your own batteries.

Driving around without any gas is a sure way to get stuck on the side of the road. [So take time to recharge yourself as the first step](#) in rebooting your relationship.

This may seem counterintuitive, as many of us look back on the "honeymoon phase" of our relationship and recall feeling focused solely on our other half, perhaps even sacrificing aspects of our personal lives for the sake of the relationship. But for long-term, sustainable love, both partners in the relationship need to feel properly taken care of individually, so that they can be there for one another without becoming frustrated or resentful.

So make sure to create some "me-time" in your life, whatever that means to you. If it's scheduling a spa day, so be it. If it's talking a long walk or curling up with a favorite book, own it and create space for these habits in your life. This will ensure that you feel a sense of wholeness, and that wholeness will totally open up your perspective on the relationship. If you meet your own needs, you will be more open and available to your partner.

2. Ditch those patterns of avoidance.

If you typically watch TV, check emails or put in earbuds after a long day's work, you're enhancing your relationship with the electronic device in question, not with other humans. Patterns of avoidance come in many forms and create an escape hatch so you don't have to deal with the intensity of emotions you may be feeling, even emotions like love.

It's important to note what you do to avoid true intimacy. From there, you can then make the commitment to rid yourself of these distractions at least two days per week. Create the space and time you really need to see your partner and talk from the heart. This is an essential ingredient for rekindling the emotional connection, and for not treating the relationship like another bullet point on your "to do" list.

3. Give "brownie points."

So many issues that surface in relationships stem from taking our loved ones for granted. Think about it: it's rare to receive acknowledgment for the mundane tasks we perform every day for our close friends and family members. Even though it may not register, these are the missing brownie points in life!

Trust me. **Watch your partner's face light up when you express thankfulness** for their hard work such as, "I want you to know that I really appreciate it when you ... do the laundry every week, get up early to buy the milk when we run out, or pay all the bills for us." Gratitude makes the heart space expand and grow.

4. Do something romantic, even if you don't want to.

We all know that feeling of not wanting to go to the gym, but deciding to go anyway. We always feel so much better.

There are many challenges like this in life: doing something we might not want to do but that we know is good for us. It almost always pays off in the end.

Well, romantic gestures can be like that. **Many of us don't identify as "the romantic type,"** or would feel cheesy writing a partner a love letter. So think of this step as a challenge.

Especially when things get all too comfortable in relationships, we get in a rut, expressing frustration with our jobs on a more regular basis than expressing affection for our partners. But it only takes a little extra effort to offer a foot rub, buy flowers or schedule a dinner reservation. And the mutual satisfaction in your relationship will dramatically increase (even if you don't think it will).

5. Request, don't complain.

If the dishes were not unloaded from the dishwasher, **the go-to move for most of us is to complain.** But ask yourself this: when was the last time a complaint worked to make a productive change in your life? I guarantee you that complaining to your partner about something you're annoyed about will only serve to enhance any feelings of disconnection. It may even create conflict.

So, to avoid future conflicts with your partner, and to establish a healthier way of communicating more generally, make clear and specific requests instead of complaining. For example, "I would like to ask that you empty the dishwasher over the weekend. Do you mind agreeing to that request?" A simple, polite and reasonable request cannot be denied.

6. Spoon way more than you already are.

While resting in bed with your partner, spoon them. This undeniably gives a warm sense of union. Spooning reminds us to relax and re-enter our bodies within a close embrace. It is sensual, but also safe. It is also a great way to transition from the fraternal, casual and work-week mentality to the Eros-psyche, private and sensual.

7. Get in touch with the relationship's fun side.

All work and no play over time will bring any relationship to a screeching halt. But that's not how your relationship began, no matter what it's like now.

Remember the last time you and your partner had an amazing time together? I know you do. So write down all of the activities the two of you love to do together where you shared laughter and your lighthearted-self was running the show. Then go out as a couple and remember what it feels like to have tremendous fun.

8. Realign your goals collaboratively.

Once your relationship has been positively recharged, it's always a good idea to touch base with your partner, and realign your goals from time to time. Express your future desires from a heart-centered space, allowing the time and space for a dialogue to take place. [Enter the conversation visualizing a unified future direction](#), and you'll be more likely to create winning formulas for growth as a couple.

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