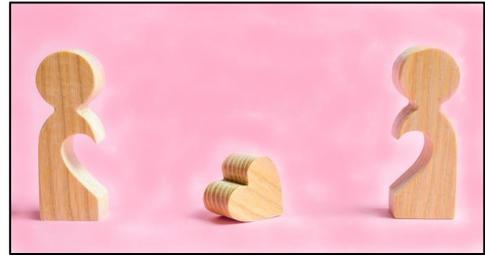


Relation-----ship Disconnect

This past weekend was Valentine's Day. According to wallethub.com, did you know that \$21.8 billion was spent on Valentine's Day purchases in 2020? That equates to about \$200 per couple. Of these numbers, 43 million people received \$9.5 billion in gifts they probably didn't want. What does this mean? Although most of us try to create a meaningful connection with our partner on the annual holiday, roughly one-third of us miss the mark. Relationships have a 'trial and error' component that is lessened over time. But missing another opportunity to express love to your partner, can be one of many markers denoting relationship disconnect.



Do you have 'COVID distance' with your partner? Are you so occupied that you have little or nothing left to invest in your relationship? What's behind the distance/tension/disconnect? If you find yourself out of sync with your partner try these relationship injection tips:

- First try finding your center. If you've fallen out of connection with your centered-ness (i.e. your spirituality, your faith/God, your Zen) work to align yourself to a place of wholeness. Then offer your best to your partner, not your leftovers.
- Be gracious and give a compliment. It is easy to find fault in others and overlook their efforts. Remember how great it makes you feel when someone acknowledges your efforts or character. Try daily compliments for words or deeds of your partner. This will enforce behaviors that you appreciate and draw you both closer.
- Cut out extra distractions. In today's high digital media daily engagement, it's easy to get distracted from relational investment. Set social media parameters, limit entertainment, and reduce distractions that takes your attention off your significant other. Instead, focus on relational closeness and physical/emotional intimacy.
- Own up. It is challenging to consider, what do "I" bring to the relationship? Particularly for the negatives, 'how have my words/actions made it difficult for my partner to draw close?' No matter what you bring, your partner will appreciate your willingness to 'go there', acknowledge shortcomings, and seek betterment/closure.
- How does your significant other like to be loved? Author Gary Chapman suggests individuals have a primary and a secondary love language in 5 Love Languages: Words of Affirmation, Acts of Service, Receiving Gifts, Quality Time, and Physical Touch. What's yours? Does your partner know your primary and secondary love languages? What's your partner's? It's important to show love the way your partner is wired for, rather than expect them to receive it your way. It requires study and intentional effort.
- Acknowledge the gap. Have you sat down with your partner and co-shared about disconnect (outside of an argument)? The top reason for divorce is lack of commitment - which is evidence of a relationship drifting apart. Try acknowledging the ditch-sized divide early, before it grows to an ocean apart. This earlier acknowledgement of a relationship gap can provide a better chance of survival.

If your relationship needs a helping hand, please reach out to the ART. We can provide resources to assist you on your relationship journey.