

Balancing Act: Being too busy for love can hurt your work life

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Jeremy Wilson spends long days courting customers and building his South Florida software business. He arrives home engaged in conversation about cost structure or competitive advantages. Married for 19 years, Mr. Wilson said he typically eats a quick dinner with his wife and logs on to tackle email.

Researchers have a reminder for Mr. Wilson and others like him: Couples who regularly strive for greater romantic love rather than companionship enjoy more satisfying relationships, according to a study published by the American Psychological Association in 2009.

Experts say there are plenty of ways to keep the passion alive all year.

Ditch the excuses: To rekindle romantic love in a relationship, start by taking responsibility. "Working hard, being tired, that's not an excuse," says Maya Ezratti, a Miami relationship expert and founder of Rewarding Relationships, a dating and relationship counseling firm.

Show more affection: Work demands make it easy to overlook being affectionate at home. But maintaining passion can be as easy as holding your partner's hand. "A touch goes a long way," Ms. Ezratti says.

Communicate differently: In balancing work and family, daily discussions with a spouse often center on logistics. Experts recommend adding in deeper conversation whenever possible.

Mix it up: Bringing back freshness in a relationship takes creativity. Even date night can get old if you're always renting a movie or going to the same restaurant.

Have more sex: One in every 4 married or cohabitating Americans claim they're so sleep-deprived that they're often too tired to have sex, according to a study by the National Sleep Foundation. Larisa Wainer, relationship specialist with the Morris Psychological Group in New Jersey, recommends couples schedule sex on the calendar. "The fact that sex is spontaneous is a myth," Ms. Wainer says.

Find new ways to flirt: Make your partner feel desirable. Try flirty text messages to build excitement for a later sexual encounter or romantic evening together.

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