



Bed Death: A Valentine's Day Resurrection by Arlen Keith Leight, Ph.D.

FACT: More relationships break up on Valentine's Day than any other day of the year.

Valentine's Day is supposed to be about roses and romance, dining and dancing, sensuality and sex. It is unrealized expectations that create a sense of loss and the realization that "my relationship is not what I really want it to be". The hype around Valentine's Day magnifies the emptiness and heightens the desire to have a more complete and fulfilling partnership. The result is often separation and moving on.

This is not necessarily a bad thing. Maybe we got involved with someone who was perfect for us when we met, but we have a different world view now. Or, perhaps, the man we once knew to be warm and generous is now cold, indifferent or abusive. Often the person who used to bring out the best in us now brings out the worst. Sometimes it is best to leave behind a relationship that is not working.

Then there are times when everything is working quite well, but the sexual connection is just not what it used to be or what it could be. It is true that the hot sex you had when you first met will never be hot in the same way, but that does not necessarily mean it cannot be passionate, new, different and fun.

It always starts with communication. Talk about what's going on-or what's not going on. Let your partner know something is not working for you. It doesn't get easier with time, so don't put it off. Let your love for one another guide the conversation and not some resentment or hurt. It is important to express feelings without assessing blame.

Talk about how TOGETHER you can make your sex life work for you. The old idea of planning a date is a good idea. Do something you really enjoy doing together. It doesn't have to be going out for dinner. Take a walk on the beach, that bike ride you've been meaning to take together or a long drive to a place that has special meaning. Set the tone for coming home to shower together, candlelight, and music. Shut off those cell phones, unplug the phone at home, and make each other your only focus of interest for the day or evening. Ask yourself if your work or other interests are more important than the connection with your partner. What does it mean to you if the answer is "yes"?

Often times our relationships have become so nice, the bed we share feels too sacred or just too boring for some hot, passionate lovemaking. Plan to go separately and meet at some sleazy hotel. Live out a fantasy. Bring some toys. TALK about what might be fun. Try something you've always wanted to do sexually but were afraid to ask. Step out of your comfort zone. Free yourself from the usual-after all, that's just not working.

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Find ways to break the rules. Use pornography or create it. Bring a video camera. Be a porn star for an evening. Talk dirty, breath hard, scream loud. Remember what HOT sex was like. Recreate it with your partner. Make out in public. Take it to the beach or into the woods. Try phone sex with your partner.

What about leather and/or lace? Don't be shy; tell your partner what turns you on. Whips? Chains? Restraints? Why waste a good fetish by keeping it to yourself? Visit the local leather/fetish shop together and find some items that might be fun for one or both of you.

There is also the possibility of bringing a third person in to play with you. This option can be very exciting and often works well to reenergize a sexual relationship. However, because of the many issues and challenges that can arise, be certain you have formulated parameters around how it will work-and that includes safe sex.

Finally, there are many couples who love each other deeply, but there seem to be too many barriers and/or obstacles to reigniting sexual passion. If it is OK with both partners to agree that the sexual part of their relationship is simply a part of the past, there is nothing wrong or bad about that. However, if one or both would like something more, there are workable steps that can be taken under the supervision of a trained clinical sexologist that may help. Any couple feeling dissatisfied with any aspect of their relationship that they can't seem to work out themselves should seriously consider asking for professional help. What is more important than a healthy and strong loving partnership? And what could be better than a healthy, strong loving partnership with good, fun, passionate sex? Happy Valentine's Day!

Having challenges in your relationship? Consider [Communication for Intimate Couples](#)