



Caring about the quality of your relationships.
Brenda Montani, MSC. RCC

NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT

Have you and your partner come to a place where there is little meaningful conversation anymore. Are you talking about things that offer no real connection. Given an hour of free time in the car or a dinner out are you both hard pressed to engage in conversation that stimulates or creates intimacy. It is frustrating and anxiety provoking for both parties to find themselves in this place in their relationship.

Many people misinterpret this period as a sign that they've picked the wrong partner or that the relationship is doomed. Imagine how such a perception of this situation can snowball into negativity and escalate into something more serious and long term.

The truth is that most relationships find themselves in this place at times. If, as a couple, you are resourceful this can be a red flag that kicks you into action. It can be an opportunity to look for creative ways to get out of the slump. It's simply an indication that things have gotten stale and so you, as a couple, need to look at new ways of being together. Here are some suggestions that will take you in this new direction.

1. **Speak up:** It sounds easy but many couples are afraid to say to their partners something like, "These are the things that are going on with us right now that I would like to work on changing. I love you and I want our time together to be richer, more connected." You can see how different and more effective this approach would be than, "You never talk to me anymore. You just don't seem to care about the relationship!"
2. **Have fun together:** Some of you have forgotten how. Our lives are way too busy at the expense of our relationships. It takes time, planning and scheduling today to make our relationship a priority. Make a date to sit down and write out



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- a list of all the things you might do together that would be fun, no matter how small. Create a date night and start going through the list.
- 3. Learn some new communication skills:** We all have different styles of communication that often take away from our ability to communicate in a way that creates closeness. New knowledge and skills about communication enhance your effectiveness in being verbally intimate. Learn these skills together.
 - 4. Do a session with a counselor:** Your marriage doesn't have to be in trouble to see a marriage counselor. We love it when you come to do preventative work. Tell the counselor that you just want one or two sessions and that you want to specifically work on improving your communication skills and level of intimacy.

The sure thing is that anything done to address the lack of connectedness is positive. Doing nothing and hoping it will pass is the worst choice of all.

TIP

Know that I am offering a course entitled **Closeness Through Conversation** that is developed so that you and your partner can work on the issues in this article. It is a skills based clinic that is fun, interactive and non threatening. It will leave you with new techniques for communicating. To register go to improving-relationships.com, registration.

It is being offered in **Kelowna** : Wednesday November 9th, 6:30 to 8:30 or Monday November 14th, 6:30 to 8:30

Whistler: Thursday Nov. 17th 6:30 to 8:30