

Connect in 3 Simple Ways

Prior to the pandemic, I was pulling exceptionally long days, staying overly busy, and getting home each day with just enough time to eat, shower, and go to bed. This is not uncommon by any stretch, and while I enjoyed seeing my partner at the end of each day, I was leaving little time to connect. We enjoyed each other's company, and felt positive about our relationship, but I put the onus on our busy routines and blamed a lack of time for my lack of real effort to connect on a deeper level. Fast forward to now -me working from home, and my partner still leaving the house to work each day- and there is blatant evidence that a lack of time really was just an excuse. Relationships take work. Period. While it's normal to feel disconnected at times, here are 3 simple ways to strengthen the bond you share with your partner.

What Language are You Speaking? After taking this popular love language [quiz](#), my partner and I learned that we don't speak the same language at all, which didn't come as much of a surprise to either of us. However, after reading a bit more on the topic, we learned that we may not be communicating our affection and love in a way the other "hears". Just this small bit of information provided enough insight to significantly change our perspective and reactions, and it was simple enough to put into practice right away.



Share GEMS. [Olga Bloch](#), a therapist who specialized in working with couples, uses the acronym GEM, for "Genuine Encounter Moments". It's a regular occurrence in our home to finish off the workday with a bit of a rant, and both of us are happy to listen. But what we hadn't been doing was asking questions. Without any distractions like phones, tv, or eating, ask your partner questions like "What was that like for you?", "Did you enjoy that?", "How can I support you?". This shows that you're listening, that you care, and can help you to understand each other better.

Experiential Intimacy. Experiencing something new together can create closeness. Whether it's a leisure activity, learning something new, or even just enjoying the sunset from a new location. Just make sure that this time is free of distraction (looking at your phone while watching the sunset is not watching the sunset).