

MARRIAGE
COURSE

DISCOVER
DEEPER
Intimacy
IN YOUR MARRIAGE

MODULE 1

HOW TO CREATE INTIMACY IN YOUR MARRIAGE



**FIRST
things
FIRST®**

SET THE *Mood*

Dim the lights, light a candle, make sure you're in comfortable clothes, whatever you need to do to set the mood.

PICK ONE:

Give each other a hug for 13 seconds

Close your eyes and hold each other for 30 seconds and just listen to each other breathe and feel the heartbeat of your spouse

Share a kiss lasting for a minimum of 20 seconds



DISCUSS HOW THAT MADE EACH OF YOU FEEL

Activity

Face each other. Briefly think about each statement below and choose your best answer. (Don't overthink on this one!)



Choose which best describes the relationship between intimacy and sex. *Intimacy and sex are...*

- A) Peanut butter and jelly.
- B) 2 Twix bars.
- C) Like watering a plant.
- D) Pizza and toppings.

SPOUSE 1

SPOUSE 2

TAKE A *Moment*

Explain why you chose the answer you chose with your spouse.



2

Finish this sentence: *In my opinion, the most intimate couples...*

- A) Can talk for hours about their dreams, hopes, and desires.
- B) Can be in a crowded room and others can pick up on their chemistry.
- C) Have passionate sex frequently

SPOUSE 1	SPOUSE 2

TAKE A *Moment*

Discuss which of these 3 scenarios would make you feel the most intimately connected with your spouse.



3

Pick the statement you most agree with:

- A) Intimacy can be sustained like a runner in a marathon—You start the marriage with excitement and then set a pace to maintain that level of intimacy.
- B) Intimacy is like an oak tree—it starts with an acorn and grows big and strong over time.
- C) Intimacy is like a house—there must be a firm foundation and there are different rooms for different purposes.

SPOUSE 1	SPOUSE 2

TAKE A *Moment*

Explain why you chose your answer to your spouse

INTIMACY OR, A LACK OF INTIMACY,
AFFECTS *every marriage.*

But, what is intimacy? How do you create it?
What purpose does intimacy really serve in your marriage?

Activity

Grab a piece of paper for each of you and write out your answers.

1 **Individually write your own definition of intimacy.** (Don't look at what your spouse is writing.)

2 **Compare your definitions.** Everyone tends to define intimacy differently. Notice how each of your definitions are similar and different.

ACCORDING TO REGGIE & JULIE, MARITAL INTIMACY IS _____

TAKE A Moment

**DISCUSS YOUR INDIVIDUAL STORIES WITH EACH OTHER.
ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:**

What did you learn about intimacy growing up?

What examples of intimacy were set for you?

What did you wish you had learned about intimacy growing up?

WHAT DO YOU *See?*

Look at each picture on the next page and
discuss the following questions:

1 Do you see *intimacy* in this picture? If so, explain.

2 Did you see anything that resembled this during your *childhood*?

3 If so, what did it say to you about *intimacy in their relationship*?

WHAT DO YOU *See?*

1



2



3



WHAT DO YOU *See?*

4



5



KNEE TO KNEE:

What are some expectations you have for intimacy in our marriage?

What do you think has formed or shaped those expectations?

FOUNDATION OF *Intimacy*

Intimacy is to _____ what _____ is to concrete.

The purpose of intimacy in marriage is to _____

a _____ helping you live out your commitment to one another.

THE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS TO BUILDING A STRONG, INTIMATE MARRIAGE

TRUST

What does trust look like in your marriage?

Discuss an example in your marriage where trust was evident.

Are there any areas where you feel a high level of trust? Are there any areas where you'd like to see your trust grow?

COMMITMENT

Discuss what commitment means to each of you.

Explain why you are committed to your marriage.

Share an example you feel shows your spouse's commitment to your marriage.

CARE

How do you know your spouse cares about you?

What makes you feel most cared for? Most valued?

INTIMACY *looks different* IN EVERY MARRIAGE.

Activity

Choose a song that carries a special memory or feeling for your relationship. Listen to the song while you dance with each other and talk through these questions:

1 What do we want intimacy to look like in our marriage?

2 What are signs I can look for to know you feel fully open and connected to me?

NOTES

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MODULE 2

THERE'S MORE THAN 1 TYPE OF INTIMACY IN MARRIAGE?



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things
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THERE'S MUCH *More*

There's actually a lot more to building intimacy in your marriage than just great sex.

IT'S BEEN SAID THAT...

Sex is _____ of intimacy.

It's an important _____, but it's only _____.

Numerous studies show that _____, such as _____ are the single most important source of life satisfaction. (SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN)

THERE ARE SIX DIFFERENT TYPES OF INTIMACY *you should know.*

Let's get started getting to know them...

/ 1. INTELLECTUAL INTIMACY

This is when your marriage feels safe to share your thoughts and opinions. Your relationship is strong enough for the two of you to have spirited discussions about all kinds of things, knowing you love each other and that being willing to share your deepest thoughts brings you closer. You both are willing to let your guard down in an effort to know each other at a deeper level.

TAKE A *Moment*

A FEW WAYS TO ENHANCE INTELLECTUAL INTIMACY:

- Regularly share things with each other that are rolling around in your brain. What do you think about when you have a moment to process or daydream?
- Practice having conversations on topics you know you disagree on. Make a goal of seeking to understand your spouse's perspective on the issue. Don't try to change each other's mind or do anything other than listen.
- Ask a lot of questions - be curious about what your spouse thinks and feels.

INTELLECTUAL INTIMACY

Activity

If you aren't sure what to talk about, try answering some of these questions and explain the why behind your answer.

- If you weren't in your current profession, what would you be doing?
- When I retire, one of the things I want to try is...
- My whole life, my biggest fear has been that I will...
- My biggest challenge in life right now is...
- If I could change one thing about myself right now, it would be...

DON'T FORGET TO ASK, "WHY?"

2.

EXPERIENTIAL INTIMACY

This is best described as all of the shared experiences you have racked up through the years—good, bad, hilarious, fun, adventuresome, challenging, sad, etc. that make you who you are as a couple.

TAKE A *Moment*

A FEW WAYS TO ENHANCE EXPERIENTIAL INTIMACY:

- Plan a trip together, go for a bike ride, or take a hike together in a new location.
- Create a timeline of your marriage. Include touchstone moments, all the highs and lows, hallenges, bad arguments, moves, birth of your first child, a trip, etc.
- Discuss disasters or tense moments that happened in your past that you both laugh about now.

EXPERIENTIAL INTIMACY

Activity

REMEMBER WHEN...

The way you complete the sentence could be a super fun memory or a hard thing that happened. Think flat tire in the pouring rain, in the middle of nowhere and... you get the picture. Here are a few prompts to get you started:

- We went on that trip and...
- We had that party with all of our friends and...
- Everybody came over to our house for the holidays and...
- The electricity went out for days after that storm and we...
- We were so poor we...
- It made me so sad when we...

3.

EMOTIONAL INTIMACY

At the heart of this is trust, openness, and vulnerability. Author and speaker, Brené Brown says, “without vulnerability there is no intimacy.” One of the challenges most of us face is we armor up to go out into the world, and then we find it hard to take off the armour when we get home. If you want intimacy, you have to be willing to take the armor off.



A FEW WAYS TO ENHANCE EMOTIONAL INTIMACY:

- Be willing to be vulnerable with each other.
- Be curious about each other.
- Be an understudy of your spouse.

4.

SPIRITUAL INTIMACY

This is about sharing spiritual beliefs and practices together. Spiritual intimacy is formed when spouses are willing to share spiritual questions or struggles with each other or discuss their thoughts or feelings about spirituality with their spouse. You have to have a willingness to listen to each other as you each process your needs, thoughts and feelings. In the end both spouses should feel supported in their spiritual journey by each other.

TAKE A *Moment*

A FEW WAYS TO ENHANCE SPIRITUAL INTIMACY:

- *Go out in nature for an extended time is a spiritual experience (Walk/Hike/Bike)*
- *Volunteer together*
- *Do a devotional together*
- *Pray or have moments of silence together.*

5.

PHYSICAL INTIMACY

You might be thinking this is all about sex, and it is for some people, but not everyone. Physical intimacy is more about what you do physically to increase connectedness. For some, intimacy can lead to sex. For others, sex builds intimacy, but sex is not the same thing as physical intimacy.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT PHYSICAL INTIMACY CAN LOOK LIKE:

It's the look your spouse gives you from across the room that only you would know the meaning of, hand-holding, any secret nicknames you have for each other that you don't use in front of others, a caress of the cheek, a flirtatious smack or pinch on the behind, a sweet hug, a neck rub, laughing at jokes you've heard hundreds of times (or at least it feels that way), a passionate kiss that's just that—a kiss, a hand on your spouse's thigh when you sit down next to them on the couch - anything between the two of you that creates a loving, emotional connection and draws you towards each other.



A FEW WAYS TO ENHANCE PHYSICAL INTIMACY:

- *Share with your spouse the things they currently do that make you feel cherished and loved.*
- *Are there other things you would like them to do that would also make you feel connected?*
- *If you don't feel like you're super great at physical intimacy, explore possible reasons for this and potential ways around it. It could be that one of you isn't super touchy feely and the other is all about the hug. Just having the conversation about what speaks love to you can help build intimacy.*
- *Take time to be curious. If you are struggling with physical intimacy in your marriage, try to understand why. It's possible hurt from the past, stress, illness or something else may be keeping the two of you from growing in this area of intimacy.*



SEXUAL INTIMACY

This one may feel self-explanatory. And it is... sexual intimacy is defined as... well. Having sex. And doing sexual things with each other. Here's the kicker: most people go into marriage thinking sexual intimacy will come easily, but they don't think about the fact that each of them could be coming into marriage with different perspectives about sexual intimacy. This is why having conversations about what you like and dislike, what you're open to exploring and not up for, what feels good and what doesn't, is super important.

**BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IT'S THE ONGOING
CONVERSATIONS ABOUT *sexual intimacy***

that help you continue to grow closer and have better sex over time.



A FEW WAYS TO ENHANCE SEXUAL INTIMACY:

- **Make time for conversation to talk about your sex life.**
- **Anticipate being together and remind each other of what's ahead that evening or at some point during the week. Create anticipation! Your best sex might start by how you leave the house for the day. Foreplay might be at 6am for what's gonna take place at 10pm.**
- **Take a survey of your bedroom for things that could be a distraction for sexual intimacy. The typical culprit is TV or smart phones, but there could be other things like clutter, children close by, etc.**
- **Create a sense of adventure by making a list of all the places you would secretly like to have an intimate encounter.**
- **After you drop the kids off at school, go back home and spend some time together. (Hey, adults can play hooky, too.)**
- **Create an email address just for the two of you – No discussion about the children or picking up dry cleaning. This space is reserved for flirting, sweet love notes, sharing, foreplay, creating anticipation and talking with the one you love. *This is especially helpful if you don't want the kids to read your texts.**
- **Remember this – A child's most important need is to have their parents together. So many parents tend to the needs of their children before they tend to the needs of their marriage.**
- **Save the best of yourself for your mate – It's easy to give your best at work and to your friends. Make sure you're giving your best to your mate, too.**

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MODULE 3

UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER'S NEEDS FOR INTIMACY



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DIFFERENT TYPES OF INTIMACY *may speak more to one spouse* THAN THE OTHER.

Self-awareness helps you _____
to your spouse how to _____ you well.

EXPLORING YOUR INTIMACY *Needs*

ASK YOURSELF:

Are there types of intimacy that mean more to you than others?

Do you have specific things you like or need within the various types of intimacy?

How do you know when your spouse is hitting that “sweet spot” of knowing you almost as well as you know yourself?

NOTES

Activity

Using the scale below, rate how important each type of intimacy is to you. (Don't look at each other's answers yet!)

INTELLECTUAL intimacy

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

EXPERIENTIAL intimacy

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

SPIRITUAL intimacy

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

EMOTIONAL intimacy

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

PHYSICAL intimacy

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

SEXUAL intimacy

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

Now rate how important you believe each type of intimacy is to your spouse.

INTELLECTUAL *intimacy*

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

EXPERIENTIAL *intimacy*

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

SPIRITUAL *intimacy*

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

EMOTIONAL *intimacy*

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

PHYSICAL *intimacy*

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important

SEXUAL *intimacy*

0	1	2	3	4	5
Not Important	.	.	.	.	Extremely Important



SHARE YOUR ANSWERS WITH EACH OTHER

What do you notice about yourself and your spouse and where you landed with intimacy needs?

SHADES OF *Intimacy*

Just like different shades of paint, intimacy can have different shades.

Activity

Now that you've rated each type of intimacy's importance to you, choose the two you rated the highest. Talk about them with your spouse.

Learning your spouse's intimacy needs will help you know your spouse more fully and let them know you deeply care about them. What your spouse rated the highest may have been rated the lowest for you.

Tell your spouse what **speaks intimacy** to you in those two areas by answering these questions:

1 How would you like those **intimacy needs met**?

If you are struggling to answer the question above, try thinking about these questions:

2 When do you feel **most connected** to your spouse?

3 What do you **long to do more of** with your spouse?

4 What makes you feel **most known** by your spouse?

IT'S AN ONGOING *Conversation*

Talking about your needs and asking your spouse what their needs are will be an ongoing conversation in your marriage. The results will be powerful for your relationship.

KEY POINTS:

Always ask questions with a heart of curiosity and a true desire to hear and learn the answer. Pursue your spouse because you want to fully know them.

You want your spouse to know you care and you're committed.

You want your spouse to trust that you view your marriage as your highest to priority.

When you _____ and ask questions to _____ ,
you're sending the message you want to know them and that you
_____ them.

REMEMBER THESE QUESTIONS WE ALL WANT TO ASK OUR MATE:

Do you _____ me?

Are you _____ to me?

Do I _____ ?

Will you _____ when I call?

Am I _____ and _____ by you?

THE PERSON WHO *feels heard*
IS THE PERSON WHO *feels valued*

In marriages where spouses not only understand each other's intimacy needs, but actively seek to meet those needs, each person feels connected and safe in being vulnerable.

Dr. John Gottman, marriage researcher and therapist, encourages couples to consider doing the following when it comes to meeting each other's intimacy needs.

1 _____ that you understand your partner's needs and why it's important to them.

2 Reiterate why tending to their needs is _____ to you.

TALKING ABOUT YOUR NEEDS

ISN'T A ONE TIME THING BECAUSE...

a You won't always _____.

b As you grow, you _____, sometimes your needs _____.

c You'll make _____, and that's ok.

d There's always something new to _____.

OBSERVE:

Study your spouse. Pay attention to the things that turn them on, frustrate them, get them excited, and turn them off.

Notice how they respond to different triggers, both good and bad.

Notice the topics that cause them to want to talk for hours.

Pay attention to what they complain about.

Take mental notes of what gets them to their happy place.

Learning your spouse's needs through observation and study will help you know your spouse more fully, and show them you deeply care about them.

As you try to understand and meet each other's intimacy needs, keep these tips in mind:

- 1** **Keep a heart of curiosity.** Trying out different ways to meet your spouse's needs can be fun and adventurous.
- 2** The simple fact that you're **willing to try new things** for the sake of your relationship can be appealing in and of itself.
- 3** Sometimes your best made plans won't turn out like you thought they would. Instead of giving up or feeling rejected, **adapt, adjust the playbook and try again.**

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MODULE 4

HAZARDS TO INTIMACY IN YOUR MARRIAGE



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THE QUESTIONS WE *Ask*

Psychologist Dr. Sue Johnson says in her book, “Hold Me Tight”:

“Whether it is out loud or only an inner voice, children and adults alike are constantly asking questions like...

- *Do you love me?*
- *Are you accessible to me?*
- *Do I matter?*
- *Will you come when I call?*
- *Am I valued and accepted by you?”*

Take a minute to consider the things that currently get in the way of experiencing intimacy between the two of you. Think about the different types of intimacy we mentioned in Module 2. Write down your answers below:

**WHEN IT COMES TO BUILDING AND NURTURING
INTIMACY, HERE ARE SOME *potential hazards*
TO CONSIDER INDIVIDUALLY & TOGETHER...**

HOW SELF-AWARE *Are You?*

Being self-aware can actually open the door to deeper intimacy, if you're willing to take a good look at yourself and are open to sharing all the thoughts and feelings rolling around inside. This doesn't give your spouse permission to try and fix it, but it allows them to understand you on a deeper level.

Activity

Answer these questions separately. Then come together and share your answers with each other.

- *I feel strong in these areas right now...*
- *The thing I am most excited about at the moment is...*
- *Right now the best words that describe how I am feeling are...*
- *The most stressful thing for me at the moment is...*
- *Right now I am struggling with...*
- *These are the goals I am working toward right now...*
- *I spend most of my time thinking about...*
- *Right now I feel like we are...*

Responding to these statements will give you insight into your current state of mind and can shed light on why you might be struggling to feel known and cared for in your relationship. Or why your spouse may be struggling.

DO YOU HAVE GOOD *Boundaries?*

A lack of boundaries or losing sight of the boundaries you've set for your marriage might be one of the biggest enemies of intimacy.

Activity

Below are three circles labeled Vital, Important, Casual. Take a few minutes together and think about the different aspects of your life. Write each aspect in the circle you feel they belong in.

VITAL

IMPORTANT

CASUAL

Talk with each other about the boundaries you have in place or believe you should have in place to protect your marriage. Refer to your circles for guidance as you talk. Pay attention to the tension where the two of you may not be in agreement about what belongs in each circle.

DO YOU BELIEVE YOU'RE ON THE SAME *Team?*

When you stop believing you're on the same team, resentment, discontentment, and bitterness can creep into your relationship. These characteristics will wreak havoc on intimacy in your marriage.

**WHEN A PROBLEM ARISES, THEY CREATE A
PLAN FOR _____ THE PROBLEM,
NOT _____ .**

Activity

Habits can be hard to break. It takes a lot of practice and repetition! This activity is here to help.

- *Identify a problem or issue in your marriage.*
- *Allow each person the opportunity to talk about the issue from their perspective.*
- *Brainstorm how to resolve or move through the problem as a team.*
- *Choose one of your problem-solving techniques from your brainstorm and then move toward a solution or resolution together.*

**Now you can use this technique with other issues
in your marriage!**

ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS IN *Alignment?*

It's impossible for your spouse to meet all of your needs in terms of friendship, conversation, and interests.

Activity

Answer these questions together to discuss expectations in your marriage.

- *Are there expectations about your relationship that you assumed but haven't fully communicated with each other? What are they? Be specific.*
- *When it comes to intimacy, what are your expectations?*
- *Who is a part of your world besides your spouse?*

HOW DO YOU EXPRESS *Love?*

If there's conflict between the two of you, how long will you hold on to whatever is bothering you before you say something? How will you discuss the issue? If you can't seem to get to a resolution, who do you have in your life that may be able to help you together?

Activity

Take some time now to individually answer the questions below:

- *What does it mean to cherish the one you love?*
- *What does respect look like in your relationship?*
- *What do you have in place to protect your relationship?*
- *What does trust mean to you and how do you show it/continue to build it in your relationship?*
- *If you feel like one or the other of you is struggling, how do you talk about that?*
- *How do you ask for help when you need it?*
- *How do you encourage each other?*
- *How will you talk about those moments in time when you don't feel valued?*
- *What keeps your devotion to one another alive?*

Now share your answers with each other.

HAS AN ILLNESS IMPACTED THE *Relationship?*

Anything from a pinched nerve, frequent migraines, and depression to a long-term illness can absolutely impact intimacy in your marriage. This is where it is vital that you discuss ways you can still be intimate with each other in spite of whatever is going on.

NOTES

"THE QUALITY OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP IS WHAT DETERMINES THE QUALITY OF YOUR LIFE MORE SO THAN *any other experience* IN YOUR LIFE."

- Esther Perel

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MODULE 5

HOW TO REIGNITE INTIMACY IN YOUR MARRIAGE



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REIGNITE *Intimacy*

Your season of life can greatly influence your level of intimacy. It will also require you to get creative and adapt. What worked 5 years ago when you didn't have children won't work now that you have little ones.

Think about each type of intimacy and be intentional about doing something that stokes the embers in that area:

EMOTIONAL

Do nightly check ins with each other as a way to wrap up the day:

- The best part of my day was _____
- The most challenging part of my day was _____
- One thing I need from you right now is _____

INTELLECTUAL

Find a book you are both interested in and read it together discussing your way through it. Or watch a documentary together and discuss it afterwards.

SPIRITUAL

Pray together, read together, spend quiet moments together. Talk about where you are spiritually and ways your spouse could help you grow in this area. Maybe even participate in a retreat together.

PHYSICAL

Think playful and flirty. Make it a point to hold each other close or cuddle for a few minutes every day. Don't forget to use the private email you created for conversations between just the two of you.

SEXUAL

Grab a cup of coffee and have some conversation about ways you might change things up. Here are some questions to help you enter into the conversation:

Is our relationship physical enough for you?

What would make it better in your eyes?

How and where do you like to be touched?

Where would you like me to kiss you?

Is there anything I have asked you to do that makes you feel uncomfortable?

Is there anything in particular that helps you get “in the mood?”

Do you have any fantasies you would like fulfilled?

Is there anything we haven't tried you'd like to try?

How often would you like for us to make love?

What should the theme word be for our relationship?

What are some things I can do outside of the bedroom to keep the fire burning?

EXPERIENTIAL

Put together a “Fun Bucket List” of things you would like to do together, then start checking off your list. You can also check out **FTF's Date Night** options to experience some fun, new things together in the comfort of your own home.

MORE WAYS TO REIGNITE *Intimacy*

Schedule 15-20 minutes a day where the two of you are together by yourselves. It doesn't matter the time of day. Remove all technology from the scene. Look at each other and talk - not about the kids, bills, and work. Talk about each other.

Here are some conversation starters to get the ball rolling:

- *I think your best quality is...*
- *It turns me on when I see you....*
- *I love it when you....*
- *It makes me feel close to you when we...*
- *What is your most treasured memory of us?*
- *Over the last 5 years how do you think you have changed?*
- *One quality I love about you is...* (Alternate back and forth a minimum of 5 times sharing positive qualities of your spouse)

2

Schedule sex. Yup, you read that right, schedule sex. It's a myth to believe that good sex is always spontaneous. ESPECIALLY when you've intentionally built anticipation around it.

3

The Tech Time Challenge! Take a week or two and track your tech use when you're at home. Pay attention to the times you're actually using technology when you could be connecting with your spouse. For example, in the evening during dinner, after dinner when you're just hanging out, once you crawl into bed... Decide on a few ways you might want to use tech differently to focus more on your marriage and enhance your intimacy.

4

Dreamscape. Create space to dream. Talk about things you would love to do, places you would like to live, maybe even a career change, BUT with the understanding you are just dreaming. You're thinking about the possibilities together. And who knows, maybe at some point you'll decide some of the things you dream about should become reality.

5

Give your bedroom an overhaul. Not necessarily saying go out and buy all new furniture. Spend some time in your bedroom ask yourselves these questions: Is the space inviting? Is there a lot of clutter? Is it romantic? What is the lighting like? When I think about spending time in here, what do I think about? Who is allowed in your room? If you could make some changes to the space, what would you do to make it your "special place?"

6

Write love letters to each other. When's the last time you sat down and wrote a love letter to your spouse? Most people say, "Before we were married." Grab some stationary and a pen. Think about your lover—what comes to your mind? Qualities that make them special to you, things they do that are endearing, sweetest memories, times of laughter, what you want for your future together, etc. *In today's chaotic world, we rarely take the time to write a letter expressing our feelings.*

A variation of this could be purchasing a journal and passing it back and forth throughout the week. Write in it, then leave it on your spouse's pillow for them to read. Then they'll do the same for you.

7

Play "that" song. Maybe it's the song you played for your first dance at your wedding. Or, it's a whole playlist of songs you put together for your marriage intimacy playlist that gets you in the mood, reminds you of why you love the one you're with... Songs you want to dance to together, make love to, *you can take it from here...*

8

Learn to do something new together. Create a garden, learn woodworking, remodel the bathroom, take dance lessons, write a book to give to your family on family history or create a cookbook complete with pictures, stories and memories for the dishes you include, learn to sail, the opportunities are endless.

9

Encourage each other's passions. Believe it or not, your intimacy can be re-kindled by taking an interest in the things your spouse loves. Not that you necessarily do them with them, *but you encourage your spouse to engage with their passions regularly because you know it brings them joy.*

10

Make a list. Write down everything you love about your spouse, things like their character traits, the way they smell/sing/talk, anything that reminds you of why you feel in love with them in the first place. You can use paper and pen or create a document on your computer, just make sure you can easily refer back to it when you need it or want to add to it.

In Conclusion

Every marriage has times where they need to reignite intimacy because work, children, illness, pandemics, tend to snuff out the fire of intimacy. **When you have cultivated trust, commitment and caring AND you're intentional about intimacy, reigniting it is kind of like those trick birthday candles.** Even though they got blown out, they relight—the spark is never truly gone, and the flame of intimacy burns again!