



Our Passion Faded Away: Where Do We Go From Here?

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Passion can go dormant in a long-term relationship, AND, the flames can be rekindled.

Many couples in long-term relationships realize after a few years that the honeymoon has ended and the initial passion and magic has faded.

It is totally normal. Almost everyone has to find a way, at some point, to get back to the passion and thrill of being in love. The everyday challenges of life can slowly consume all the fuel and oxygen we need to keep our passion burning strong.

Passion catches fire once again when we start talking, heart to heart, with each other.

Many days, both partners come home tired and just don't have the energy required to do the most important thing required to rekindle our fire – and that is to simply talk. We find an overwhelming amount of necessities to take care of the moment we walk in the door.

We can't just open a bottle of wine or run a bath before having some hot, sultry sex like in the old days. No. There are pets to feed, groceries to put away, dinner to cook, dishes to clean up, showers to take, and much more.

There ARE ways to find the time and the energy to bring passion back into our lives if that is what we really want to do.

Passion will return once we make our relationship our #1 priority, again.

In the early days of a relationship, couples are excited to discover and connect with each other, both sexually and conversationally. There are so many things to try when it comes to sex and all the fun and pleasure that is possible.

Many evenings or weekends are spent having sex, intimate meals, and talking about every subject imaginable. What's important to you? What were life-changing, pivotal moments in your life? Where have you traveled? What's your family like? How many siblings? And on and on!

Time flies by. The seasons come and go, and we find less and less time or energy for our long, fun conversations and fun, rollicking sex! We find ourselves watching TV or scrolling instead, not noticing that our passion is slipping away.

Where can we find the time to talk again?

Our relationship is worth putting time to *just talk*, back on the calendar! Bring back Date Nights or Date Saturday afternoons!

We need time, an open-ended schedule, and a safe space in order to bare our souls and get to *really know* one another again. And that is where we are at – we need to have some honest, genuine communication.

It's time to talk and share things important to our individual needs and our own destiny and see how we can weave them into our relationship.

For so many of us, we have been too protective of our relationship, so it has taken precedence over being true to our individual needs and dreams. The faded passion we feel now is partly a result of not nourishing those important parts of ourselves and not talking about them any longer with our partner.

We can't tiptoe around each other anymore. We have to make a date and sit down and have our first of a few heart-to-heart talks with each other.

The ground rules for these discussions are that both partners promise to be calm, civil, and kind to each other. No blaming. Everyone must express their truth in ways which are not hurtful or disrespectful. And the listener gets to confirm what they heard, to make SURE they heard things correctly.

This is your chance to rekindle passion! Go deep in these Date Night conversations.

Look back at what you wanted when you first got together – did you want to have kids? Did you want to focus on a career in marine biology, or becoming a doctor? Or do you just want to have more friends over for dinner? These things may still be drifting around inside you and may need to be addressed on both sides of the relationship.

It is ok to bring up things that are scary.

The truth will be liberating in the end. Once both of your authentic selves are out in the open, you can talk about finding ways to incorporate each other's important desires and make your lives together blossom even more – if that's what you both want.

A pause in the marriage may be helpful when there's an impasse.

Despite the presence of love, the differences in how you both want to live your lives may create a clear divide. There may be no way to reconcile the differences at this precise moment.

After ten years of marriage, you have both grown, discovered new things and developed new tastes. It may be time to take some space from each other. Explore some of these new things on your own. Focus on your own individual growth and needs.

The surprise may be that you both rediscover the love and friendship that brought you together initially. Over time you will find a balance between maintaining your individuality and nurturing the relationship.

But the whole process begins with talking to one another.

Couples experiencing an impasse, ask, "Which way do we go from here?"

They probably need to take a lot of space for a while. Maybe not try to live together for a six-month period or so. Try living in a *holy sacred friendship*.

My advice to a couple in this situation would be to let go.

Let go of this thing called relationship that you're trying to fit into.

Not bitterly or resentfully, but with understanding.

We need a restart and reboot. The old relationship doesn't fit anymore.

Come back to being the individuals that you are – the individuals who initially found each other.

Come back to the place where you both had great respect and love for each other. Give each other the space to be all that again. Then you might just find each other once more, with a deeper love and friendship than the relationship began in.

Your relationship is born from the energy of who you both are when you meet, and you say, "Yes, this is someone I would like to go deeper with. Someone I would like to become physical with and have sex with. Someone I can talk throughout the night with, go out to romantic dinners with, travel with – explore and create an amazing life with!"

These were the things that you had in the beginning. And now, all these years later, you have lived together, and it's been very successful – until recently. Now it appears something is missing. Something important has slipped away.

My observation is that *you don't have to give up who you are* for someone else. That's NOT how happy relationships are designed.

Yes, you really can be All You in your relationship. How can either of you be happy any other way?

A revitalizing ritual I have performed to assist in making a fresh start in the past is to take the vows and promises from the past that no longer nourish the relationship and put them into an imaginary bag.

You can also put the expectations of each other that have grown over the years and throw them into the bag; what's expected of me and what's expected of you as my partner. Here's what I expect you to say, here's how I expect you to love me, or here's how many nights a week I expect you to think of dinner or take out the trash.

Go ahead and load the bag up with all the expectations and useless old promises and throw them into the make-believe deep water to disappear.

Watch the old expectations and vows sink so you don't have to! Start fresh with a clean, open slate.

I have seen many relationships rekindle the spark of passion and fall deeply in love again. The process is not complicated – but we MUST talk to each other again.

We have to put date nights on the calendar, relax with a nice cup of tea, and discover each other's important needs and desires that have been put on the bottom shelf gathering dust. Let's reclaim the parts of ourselves we mistakenly sacrificed on the *altar of relationship*.

You may become excited to find that, yes, there is a way to rekindle our passion. Or you may realize that the differences are too deep to overcome.

Either way, the gift of authentic communication will always be a plus. You can part ways as a couple who remain best friends, with hearts full of love for each other, knowing that separating for six months or longer really is the best thing.

Or, you can fall in love again, with passion and a deeper appreciation of each other.

The bottom line is that now, your life and future will be based on authentic choices which nourish you and any potential partners as whole, dynamic individuals.



Conversation with Caroline adaption and writing by Wordsmith – Peter D. Black