

Absence Makes the Heart (and Body) Grow Fonder

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With my husband away on a business trip last week, I had an experience that reminded me of relationship advice I received several years ago. The first couple of days he was gone, I was very busy with lots of tasks and goals to meet. Then that night, we couldn't say "Good-night" to each other. I missed his call because I was in the shower and then he missed mine because his phone didn't ring and we both had this idea that we were each tired and ready to go to sleep. With the loss of that "Good-night," sadness filled my body and took up residence. Although we had wonderful conversations following that night, the sadness wouldn't leave until I saw him again when I picked him up at the airport three days later.

Fair warning, the relationship advice this experience reminded me of is kind of morbid. Basically, the advice is to be fully present when your spouse has to be away for any reason because one of these days, one of you will die, leaving the other behind. When that happens, the sadness will take up residence in such a way that you'll feel as if it will never leave. If you have had the opportunity before that day comes to allow yourself to experience physical separation, it will not necessarily make the grieving any easier, but you might understand that 1) you will survive it and 2) that sadness that fills your body is a testimony to the depth of the love you shared.

In the meantime, there are other uses for the experience of being fully present for how absence makes the heart and the body grow fonder! Here are five.

1. When your spouse is out of town and you have the house to yourself, you can appreciate him or her more as you stumble upon the things he or she usually takes care of that you, perhaps, have come to take for granted. Particularly if you have a list of complaints about what he or she doesn't do, being reminded of what you don't have to attend to because your spouse does can open your heart more.
2. In the mental space created by his or her absence, recall past loving events and feel your whole body open. Recall some of the humorous and quirky things that happened when you fell in love. When was the last time he or she did something especially thoughtful? Recall that and let it make you happy! What was your favorite thing that happened the last time you made love? Let that memory warm your heart!
3. Take the time to anticipate and plan for reunion sex! Reunion sex can be even better than make-up sex! The longing that has built up in your body can fully express itself once you've come back together.
4. Allowing the longing to fill your body can make you hunger for your spouse in a way that is very flattering to him or her. So figure out how to express that in some of those phone calls you exchange during the time apart.
5. Speaking of phone calls, there is always phone sex! It will not be as satisfying as reunion sex, but it will do in the meantime as well as create a reminder of how special and sacred the intimacy between you is.

So, the next time you have to be separated by business trips, sickness, family demands, etc. use the time to feel the longing, appreciate the sadness, and deepen the love. It will fill the empty spaces in your hearts and minds until you have the chance to fill the empty spaces in each other's arms.

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There is a secret to relationship success that is direct, simple, and effective. We and others have used it to transform marriages that felt burdensome and hurtful into marriages filled with love and satisfaction.

You can discover this secret for yourself in the e-workbook called *Creating the Love You Want: Five Unique Steps to Improve Your Marriage*. Go to <http://www.CreateTheLoveYouWant.com> and order your copy right now. With it, you can begin making a difference for yourself tonight!