

How to Get Your Spouse To Want To Spend More Time With You: Improve Your Communication

By Peggy L. Ferguson, Ph.D.

Do you complain that your partner doesn't seem eager to spend time with you? One spouse's desire to spend more time together is a common concern among couples, and there can be various underlying reasons. Partners can intentionally and unintentionally distance themselves from their loved ones, while others genuinely want to connect but face obstacles. Logistical challenges, mental health issues, or overwhelming stressors can cause the disconnect.

One significant factor that can deter partners from spending time together is relationship distress. Lingering unresolved conflicts can drive a wedge between partners. While one spouse may wish to address these issues through open discussions, the other prefers to avoid conflict. This dynamic creates a destructive cycle of pursuit and distancing within the relationship. The pursuing partner comes across as "critical" when they use counterproductive communication strategies like:

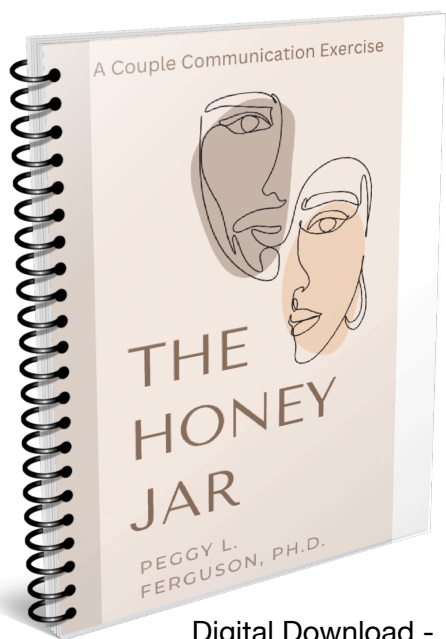
1. Making accusatory statements: "You never want to spend time with me. You don't love me!"
2. Pointing out perceived neglect: "You always seem more interested in what your mom/brother/secretary is saying than in me."
3. Complaining about shared activities: "You never want to do anything I enjoy. It's always about what you like."
4. Nagging about chores: "It's frustrating when I have to keep reminding you to take out the trash."
5. Expressing dissatisfaction with shared experiences: "We never take vacations or go to the movies. You're so cheap."

Either spouse can take on the role of pursuer or distancer in a relationship, and these roles can shift, often amid increased distress. The shift becomes evident when it appears that one of the spouses is on the way out of the relationship. Pursuing and distancing behavior is communication. You may not be communicating what you intend with these behaviors, but you are, nevertheless, conveying

information. These indirect communication behaviors are often masked requests for quality time together.

Indirect requests for time together can seem less intimidating than being open, honest, and direct. For example, when one partner says, "I miss you, and I'd love to spend more time with you. I need to feel reassured of your love," the other partner is free to respond with brutal honesty, like, "I don't want to spend time with you." Although the undesired response feels hurtful, it minimizes the potential for miscommunication. Vulnerability can be intimidating and disappointing.

However, when a spouse is more forthright about their desires for time and attention, they are more likely to have their request granted. When you act on your feelings and convey your wishes directly, it becomes easier for your partner to understand your needs. By being open and honest, you build a bridge to a stronger connection and a deeper relationship.



Digital Download -
Available Immediately

As you explore ways to strengthen your bond with your spouse and encourage quality time together, consider complementing these strategies with "The Honey Jar: A Couple Communication Exercise."

"The Honey Jar" is a treasure trove of 250 thoughtfully crafted sentence stems, each serving as a gateway to meaningful conversations on various individual and couple-related topics.

By using "The Honey Jar," couples can enhance their ability to communicate openly, deepen their connection, and reaffirm their commitment. This exercise provides a safe and non-threatening space to share their thoughts and feelings, allowing each person to bring their unique perspective to every sentence.

By dedicating time and energy to "The Honey Jar," you can rekindle trust, reawaken positive regard, and rediscover the love beneath the surface. So, why not invest in your relationship with "The Honey Jar" and nurture the love and intimacy that initially brought you together? Take the first step on this transformative journey towards deeper connection and understanding. Click below to explore "The Honey Jar" and invigorate your relationship today.

\$19.95