

Glam

The Relationship Resolutions All Couples Should Make



by [Jenn Sinrich](#) 7 January 2019



It's around this time of year when we start to get all introspective. We actually stop and think about the ways in which we'd like to change for the better, whether it's going to the gym more or making a big career change. But one area of our lives that we rarely consider during the season of new intent, is how we could improve our relationships. Especially if you've been with your significant other for a while now, you can fall into a sort of routine where you no longer feel the need to switch things up or try anything new.

But experts urge couples to take this opportunity to consider [relationship resolutions](#), or ways in which you can make your relationship happier, more exciting, and more loving.

“A good way to get started is to find a cozy spot and, without a lot of fanfare, let your partner know you want to make some resolutions to make your relationship better in the coming year,” says **Elizabeth Sloan**, couples therapist and owner of [Caring Couples, Happy Lives](#). “Your conversation should be about positives, not about problems, since savoring the positives, as we say in positive psychology, builds intimacy, reduces defensiveness, and brings people closer.” It also opens the door to making joint resolutions for the coming year, she adds.

Here are some of the relationship resolutions that experts say should top your list this year.

To spend more quality time together

If you live with your significant other, you probably think that you spend more than enough time together. But is that time spent together *quality* time, or merely just sitting side by side on the couch on while scrolling through your phones or binge-watching TV? “Life is not going to slow down so you can connect — you have to be forceful and consistent in making time for each other,” says Sloan. She recommends making a resolution to create rituals of connection, things you do to reconnect and find each other again. “You might decide on a date night once a week or you might want a night each week when you have an early dinner, then hit the sheets for some erotic time,” she says. “The only rules are ‘no friends and no kids,’ since couple’s time means just the two of you.”

To check in during the day

Wendi L. Dumbroff, a licensed professional counselor, often finds that when she asks couples how they communicate throughout the day, the answer is “we don’t.” While she acknowledges that each partner likely has a busy work schedule, a quick phone call or a text to say something kind, even if it’s just once a day, is significant in relationships. If, for whatever reason, the day gets away from you, she urges couples to reconnect at the end of the day. “You have not seen each other for 10 to 12 hours and had many experiences during that time, so even if it’s only for 15 minutes, sit across from each other, put your phones and all other technology away, and give each other your full attention and presence,” she says. “Share what happened in your

life with your partner, listen to their stories, and be curious about the events of each other's day."



To take your sex life to the next level

"Because of the business of life, the lack of time, the fatigue at the end of the day and, of course, the presence of kids, physical intimacy might be the last thing on your mind," notes Dumbroff. "In fact, it can be all too common for days to become weeks, even months." But no matter how long you've been with your partner, or how comfortable you are with respecting each other's space, it's still important to make time for intimacy. As unsexy as it sounds, this may involve some scheduling, but even after a week of planning for more sex, you will be amazed at how much closer you feel.

To learn how to fight well

If you argue with your significant other, great — that's normal! All couples fight. But it's *how* you fight that makes all the difference. As a resolution, Sloan recommends committing to improve the way you argue. "Instead of making your partner wrong for not handling conflict the way you do, resolve

to accept your partner's reaction to conflict," she says. "Learn to take a timeout, regroup, and come back to the conversation."

To be your partner's "go-to" person

Are you the first person your partner calls when something good or bad happens? If not, you should strive to be. "Resolve to stay interested in how your partner's life is going and how he or she feels about it," advises Sloan. "Take the time to ask, to pay attention, and to listen." One of the most effective ways to support your significant other through challenges and/or changes is by offering words of encouragement.

To create a shared vision for the new year

Even though the two of you likely have your own set of solitary goals, Paulette Sherman, PsyD, psychologist and director of My Dating & Relationship School and author of *Dating from the Inside Out*, suggests creating a shared vision for 2019 that includes trips, goals, and larger objectives to do as a couple. "Create a list and then take magazines and cut out pictures that represent your joint vision and bring you both joy," she says. "Glue them on a large poster board with photos and phrases, then hang it in your bedroom."

