

The Love Doctor®



November is the month where we often take a moment to give thanks – for our health and the health of our loved ones, for good friends and family and for the comforts of home. But when was the last time you said “thanks” to your spouse or partner? How often do you show your partner that you value him or her? When we’re busy and stressed out, we often forget to thank the very person we chose to share our life with!

DO AND SAY SIMPLE THINGS TO SHOW GRATITUDE

By Dr. Terri Orbuch

If thanking your partner is something you only do once a year, I would encourage you to change your ways. Why? Because saying and showing gratitude will improve your relationship. Happy and healthy relationships require communication, realistic expectations and trust. Another very important factor in happy relationships is gratitude – making your partner feel valued, loved, appreciated, respected and supported with simple acts and behaviors. Business managers know that employees perform best when they receive frequent positive feedback. The same holds true for your love partner.

My research shows that couples who expressed frequent generosity to each other were the happiest in their relationships. In fact, 74 percent

of the happy couples in my study said that their partners “often” were especially caring toward them and showed appreciation for them, compared to only 46 percent of the other couples. For these happy couples, gratitude came in the form of words, gestures or acts that showed the partner that he or she was noticed, appreciated, respected, loved or desired.

It may sound difficult, but it’s easy to say “thanks” and to show that you’re thankful by following this simple three-step process.



Step #1: Name what you’re thankful for.

Thank you is maybe the most crucial word you can say to your partner, and the word your partner most wants to hear. But instead of lightly flinging the word around, you can give the sentiment more oomph if you can truly say it like you mean it. To do this, you need to understand why you value and appreciate your partner so much. This holiday season, take a few minutes and write down five things you are most thankful for when it comes to your partner. For example, he lets you vent. She knows just what you love most to eat. He pays the bills without complaining. She makes your parents feel welcome. He makes you laugh. She is an amazing listener. I guarantee doing this little exercise will make you smile to yourself.

Step #2: Now, genuinely thank your partner.

There are countless ways to tell your partner you care about him or her. The most obvious is simply to read your list out loud. You can also “thank” your partner indirectly with a heartfelt compliment: “You’re so handsome.” “Good morning, Gorgeous.” “You’re the best dad/mom.” You can express this type of gratitude over the phone, in email or in person. Or, mailing a thank you card to your partner can be a surprisingly simple way to make him or her feel appreciated and noticed.

Step #3: Don’t just say thanks; show it.

It is not that hard to show your partner regularly through small acts that he or she matters to you, and that you are thankful she or he is in your life. When I say simple gestures, I mean it. The key to showing gratitude to your partner is to see the world through his or her eyes. What does your partner need or want? Kiss and hug your partner. Pick up her favorite coffee drink or his favorite dessert. Whisper something romantic. Spontaneously grab his or her hand when you are walking somewhere.

The best part of that magic word and concept – thanks – is that if you take the time to say it and show it to your partner, you’ll receive appreciation in kind.



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