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life advice

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Taking Action With Love

This Valentine's Day, make love an action and benefit from its rewards.

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Take control of the romance and love in your marriage and don't let it slip away.

Oh, that sweet feeling of falling in love! That dizzying magical enchanted feeling that all is right with the world, and certainly with you as you feel swept off your feet. Then of course, reality sets in. He snores, leaves his clothes on the floor of the closet, and wet towels—well, that too. He comes home tired and spends the weekend asleep on the couch or buried in work. You feel abandoned, neglected and, although you love him, you hardly feel in love.

You've had the conversations... you know the, "We need to talk" type, where he gets this look like, "Now what have I done." You've told him you feel neglected, abandoned and that he needs to do something to put the romance back in your life. He manages flowers for a week or two, and then it's back to same-

ole, same-ole.

You sigh. "Oh, well, I guess this is life," and resign yourself to a life of half-baked love, with the occasional soar into being-in-love that happens only on Valentine's Day (and maybe your anniversary). This is most unfortunate because you could have that full rich wonderful feeling of being in love—that marvelous Valentine's Day experience—if you would just remember that love is an action, not just a feeling.

Love is a doing. To love is an active verb. Too often we treat love as something that befalls us, instead of something we nurture, grow and develop. It's by taking the actions of love that you grow the feeling of love.

When, for example, was the last time you greeted your spouse at the door after his day with a big smile, loving arms and a "Hey, it's so great to see you. What can I do for you? How can I help you relax?" When was the last time you left your spouse a note in his wallet that says, "You are more precious to me than all the gold in the world," or a Post-It on their side of the bathroom mirror that says, "Hi, my love!" When was the last time you rubbed your mate's feet, handed over the remote, or said "I'll do the dishes tonight, you relax."

Love is an action, and it is by doing the actions of love, those gestures and behaviors that say, "You are valuable to me, your well-being, your happiness, matter to me" louder than any words could, that you nurture the feelings of love.

Love is dynamic: as you give freely of your appreciation of your partner, you open yourself to receiving love and appreciation in return. Your sweetheart can look at you with new eyes, for you are no longer trying to get from him,

you are unreservedly giving to him. Oddly enough, the most powerful way to receive love is to give it.

So give generously, joyously, fully of those wonderful actions of love and rejoice in the sweet feeling of "in love" that stirs your soul again and again, your personal Valentine's Day (just about) every day of the year.

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