

# SUN LIFE



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# Love detox

## 5 ways to improve your relationship

LISA EVANS, Special to QMI Agency

While spring cleaning rituals have us cleaning out old boxes from the attic, experts say our love lives can also benefit from a little dusting off. Follow these tips to spring clean your way to romance:



### 16 minutes of connection:

Life may be busy, but Gordon says devoting only 16 minutes a day to connect can breathe new life into your relationship. "There are four important times of the day when couples come together and separate; in the morning when you wake up, when you leave for work, when you come back from work, and when you go to sleep," says Gordon. Creating four-minute rituals during these four moments can help regenerate the relationship.



### Spend time together without discussing problems:

Spring is a great time of year to get outdoors and enjoy time together. Calgary-based relationship therapist Sig Taylor recommends scheduling a weekly date to reconnect. Although it may be tempting to take advantage of the alone time to discuss all that plagues your relationship, Taylor advises against it. "You have to connect first. Have some fun together, start enjoying each other's company and then, when you feel more connected, you can begin to deal with some of the issues that have built up," he says.

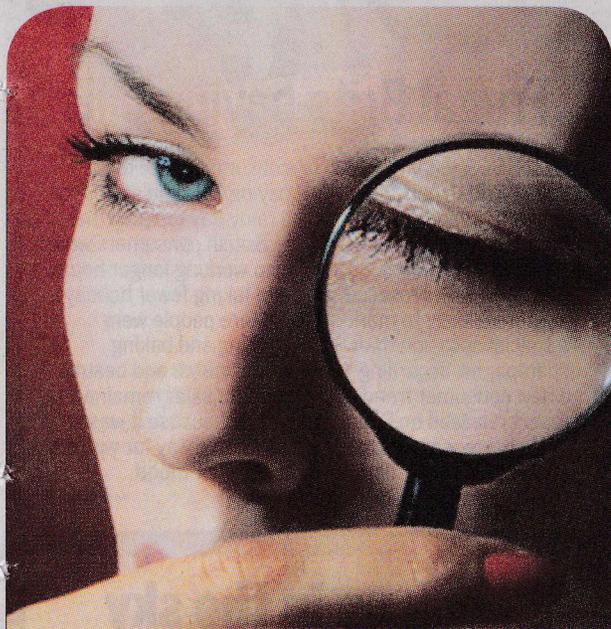


# detox

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### View your partner through a positive lens:

The stress of daily life can make it easy to forget how much you love your partner. "When we start getting disappointed and frustrated in the relationship, we start focusing on what isn't working and the lens through which we view the relationship is negative and critical," says Vancouver-based relationship therapist Shelley Gordon. Focus on the things that attracted you to your partner, appreciating and validating them on a regular basis.



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### Reduce technology:

Dr. Wendy Walsh, author of *The 30 Day Love Detox* says technology is a barrier to intimacy. "If you want to grow emotional intimacy, you have to be unafraid of voice time and face time," she says. Her new book even contains tips on training a man not to text.



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### Learn your partner's love language:

"You need to know how your partner feels love," says Taylor. Everyone experiences the feeling of being loved in different ways; either through gifts, verbal affirmations, touch, spending time together or acts of service such as taking out the trash without being asked. Talking with your partner about how he or she feels love can make a lasting impact on your relationship.