

An Imagery Tool To Reignite Passion In Relationships

Jaqueline Lapa Sussman M.S., LPC, 4/25/16



Recently, a client complained to me about her husband...

“I am so irritated by Sam. When I talk to him he always interrupts and makes comments that don't connect to what I am saying. He thinks he is being helpful, but he is not! I used to feel so in love with him that my heart would skip a beat every time he came into a room. Now I seem to be finding fault with everything he does, such as the way he talks to his mom on the phone and the way he does that little snort when he laughs—things I used to find so endearing. What happened?” My client's experience is commonly felt by couples in long-term relationships. Even in the most loving and faithful partnerships, the pressures of daily life such as paying bills, cleaning the house, work stress, caring for the kids, etc., can cause that erotic desire for one's partner to easily fade. What's more, the emotional disagreements that naturally arise in close relationships often get in the way of sexual passion. In some sense, this loss is inevitable. As relationships progress, we begin to see the more unappealing sides of our partners. This can create misunderstandings, frustrations, and hurt feelings. When we feel criticized, not fully accepted, or when our needs are not being met, the partner we were once so crazy about suddenly looks so much more unappealing.

Falling in love is full of mystery. It is as if we suddenly see the person in a new and enticing light. Through the lens of that first “hit” of love, we see our partner's pure

essence—his or her most intrinsic positive traits, such as their generous heart, brilliance, amazing creativity, or their inner light. As we find ourselves inexorably drawn to them, we soften and feel happier, more resilient, and sometimes even giddy with love. Yet this magical time is only the first phase of love—at this stage, our partner is still mysterious, enigmatic and as yet not fully known. This very mystery about the object or our desire serves as a powerful erotic and magnetic force that compels us to merge more deeply with them and know their depths.

The Greek myth of Psyche and Cupid speaks to the mystery that accompanies falling in love.

When Cupid fell for Psyche, she was alone on a solitary rock. He struck her with his arrow, and immediately she felt herself lifted on the wind, which carried her to a magnificent palace. That night Cupid joined her, telling her that he was destined to be her husband, but that she could never see his face. Entranced, Psyche agreed to his request, but one day, while he was sleeping, she lit a lamp and brought it close to his face. As she did so, some of the lamp oil spilled and burnt his wing. Injured and furious at her lack of faith, Cupid fled and Psyche found herself once more on a lonely rock, terrifyingly desolate and alone. This tale describes our very human experience of the unavoidable loss of that first blissful feeling of being struck by love, when we get an up-close, realistic view of our partners' faults and imperfections.

But as familiarity with our loved one sets in, we can actually learn to love in a deeper, wiser and more enduring way, which cultivates a long-lasting and sustaining bond. The knowledge that our partner isn't perfect—but still totally lovable—is the key to a fulfilling and long lasting relationship. This is only possible when we accept all of who they are—both the beauty and the imperfections.

When the first sparks of love have been dampened by familiarity, responsibility or disagreements, we can re-experience in our minds the vision of that first moment when we were suddenly struck by love. This allows us to re-open our hearts and see his or her pure essence once more, and remember what we once loved so much.

Some couples spend time together away from the daily pressures of their lives to rediscover one another in order to renew their bond. When returning home to the

demands of their normal lives, however, the good feelings between them can't always be maintained.

The following powerful imagery exercise, “Cupid: The Idol Of Love,” can be used anytime when one has lost the passion and magic in her relationship.

It uses the power of the imagination to bring back one's original feelings of love and passion, transforming the way one views their partner.

CUPID: THE IDOL OF LOVE IMAGE

Find a quiet spot. Read each instruction below and, with your eyes open or closed, allow the images to be formed in your mind's eye. As you do so, notice any feelings, bodily sensations, and meanings that arise.

1. Remember the first moment you fell in love with that special person and realized you were in love with them.
2. Remember the first time you touched. Now see that person before you again. This is an early image of love. All other images are later images of love between the two of you. In this early image of love, it is as if Cupid is present.
3. See the image of the first touch. You have bodily feelings and sensations, as if the god of love is near you. Keep seeing this early image. Do not bring later images of this person to your mind. All later images of love with that person may only contain the problems between you.
4. Feel your body relaxing, your bones and muscles relaxing. The presence of Cupid, the god of love is in the image.
5. See, feel and enjoy this early image of love.

As you visualize the image of the first moment you were struck by love, and as you experience the feelings and bodily sensations of the initial attraction to your partner, you will naturally see them in a positive light. In this positive light of love, the problems between you can be more easily resolved, allowing closeness, intimacy and love to come forth.

Here is a story of how the image impacted Ellen, a woman who felt distant from her husband.

Ellen was hurt because her husband Jeff had stopped spending time with her, as they once used to. He had become obsessed with golf and was spending all his free time with his buddies at the course. Ellen spoke to him several times about it, but her words fell on deaf ears. Soon Ellen was finding fault with everything Jeff did. She began to nag him constantly, which only created more distance between them.

Frustrated, she took herself through the “Cupid: The Idol Of Love Image.” She reported: “As I see the image, I see the first time I fell in love with him. I see him walk into my office, lean over my desk, reach for my hand. This was the first touch. As I look into his eyes, I see this intensity, an aura of confidence and deep warmth. As I look more at the image, I melt inside and feel my heart beat faster. I am getting turned on by him.”

Once Ellen recalled what first drew her to Jeff—his confidence, the intensity that emanated from him, and his warmth—her attitude naturally shifted. She started seeing him through adoring eyes, just like when they first met. Ted naturally picked up on her attitude towards him and responded positively in kind. Suddenly, he wanted to spend more time with her, because he felt so good being around her.

By taking herself through the image instructions, Ellen was able to positively impact her marriage. She discovered that by changing her inner negative perceptions of Jeff, she naturally became a powerful agent of positive change in her relationship. This brought more joy and intimacy to them both.