

MARRIAGE MAGIC

things that make your marriage work

It's the Little Things

One morning, the kids kept asking me if I was ready to do my makeup. After awhile, I started to get suspicious – especially when they began to giggle and whisper to Daniel. Daniel further increased my suspicion when he tried to get them to be quiet. I knew without a doubt something was up, but I couldn't get any of them to tell me what. Finally, I gave up and went back to my morning routine. When I went into the bathroom, where I usually do my makeup, I was pleasantly surprised when I looked into the mirror. Daniel had used a red, dry-erase marker to write the words "Picture Perfect" and then drew a big square in the middle of the mirror – right where my face's reflection was. Delighted, I laughed out loud and called Daniel. He and the kids came into the bathroom and laughed with me. I kissed Daniel and hugged him and thanked him for the message. I loved the sentiment so much, I left it on the mirror. Months later, it's still there!

Debra White Smith & Daniel W. Smith, *ROMANCING YOUR WIFE*,
Harvest House Publishers.

Red-Hot Monogamy

- Buy a bearskin rug-or put in a fireplace. Add something to your room that says "Red-hot monogamy is a priority!"
- Have a tickle fight, a pillow fight, or wrestling match.
- Take a ballroom dance class or private dance lessons. Learn to two-step, tango or swing dance. (Dancing is like foreplay to most women.)
- Wrap a book or teaching video on romance, sex or marriage in a provocative piece of lingerie. Add a note, "I want to keep the fire of our love red-hot."
- Draw a masterpiece – with body paint on your mate.

Bill & Pam Farrel, *RED-HOT MONOGAMY*,
Harvest House Publishers

Compliment Your Man

Everywhere in your relationship, that is! When you tell your man he looks good in that shirt, or he makes the fluffiest pancakes on the planet, it charges the atmosphere around you with good stuff. You may be in the kitchen when you tell him he's a great dad, or he's sweet or funny or smart, but whatever humdrum place you're standing in is transformed. The air clears and the vibe changes. Make sure your accolades are sincere, but do make it a point of training your brain to pick up on his pros whenever you can. *Why?* Focusing on and noticing the good qualities in the world around you gives your mood a boost all by itself. Also, couples who talked about positive aspects of their relationships reduced stress by 15%, while those who talked about the negatives increased their stress by 48%, in a study conducted by the *Journal of Family Psychology*.

Experts also say that paying little tributes to your mate pays off for you too. People benefit from being the objects of compliments, but you also benefit being givers of them. Recipients benefit from knowing that you notice and learn that you value them. So compliments are powerful in motivating continued efforts. People strive to do more of what brings praise from others.

Lorilee Craker, *DATE NIGHT IN A MINIVAN*,
Revell, a Division of Baker
Publishing Group

Love Notes

Your love is to me what going to McDonald's is to the kids – especially when they get to order all the chocolate shakes and French fries they can eat!

Dianna Booher, *LOVE NOTES*,
Word Publishing