

## HIDDEN OPPORTUNITIES TO FOSTER CONNECTION

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Regarding quality time, we often think we need to carve out a special spot in the day/week/month for time to focus on each other and nurture our relationship. This is partially true. Date nights & daily check-ins are needed to maintain a strong relationship. However, there are hidden ways to foster connection already tucked throughout your day-to-day life. Here are a few:

### **Share your dreams.**

We don't just mean your life goals and ambitions. Whether over breakfast or in those few minutes before you crawl out of bed, tell each other about the dreams you had the night before - what you can remember of them. There is something fun and intimate about sharing the strange things from your dream the night before. You'll have some laughs, and it might lead to conversations about sources of stress, anxiety, or other issues you face.

### **Tackle a chore.**

Pick that thing you've both been dreading and tackle it as a team. You can give each other moral support, commiserate while it's happening, and then feel a sense of accomplishment in completing it together. It might require you to practice your communication and problem-solving skills, but you'll have the opportunity for some good conversation.

### **Sit down for a meal.**

It doesn't have to be anything fancy. Whether it's something from the drive-through or your favorite home-cooked recipe, sitting down to eat together is a perfect time to reconnect. After all, you both must eat – why not make that time meaningful? If mealtimes are chaotic in your household, no worries. Bedtime snacks or “secret” dinner after the kids are in bed works. It's about enjoying some food while enjoying each other's company.

### **Take a detour.**

If you've got somewhere to be together and a few extra minutes, take the long way home. Crank up your favorite music or choose a song that you hold dear as a couple. If time permits, swing into an ice cream shop or local dive for a quick treat.

### **Get fit.**

It's not everyone's cup of tea to work out with their spouse, but it is a great way to build healthy habits while also enjoying time together. Maybe take turns sharing your favorite workout routines or try something that's new to both of you. When you work out together, it's like having a standing date. It's a good motivator when your spouse is there to cheer you on.

While these don't replace setting aside intentional time for each other, they are a way to squeeze in extra moments of connection in our otherwise busy lives. Take full advantage of the time, even if it's short, by being fully engaged and present with each other in those moments.