



fully human
the special call of special needs

Parents expend much energy raising their children, especially when children are young and require greater levels of nurturing. For families with special needs, the energy needed may be intensified and extended, depending on their children's needs for medical, cognitive, and/or physical supports. Caregivers may lose sight of the need to nurture other relationships, especially the marriage relationship, in the face of such a reality. Add to that the unavailability of quality respite care, differing parenting styles, and a lack of uninterrupted time together, and couples can sometimes grow apart.

This Valentine's Day, take some time to reconnect with your spouse in intentional ways. Here are some ideas that are doable in any family circumstance: Leave a "love note" for your spouse expressing your gratitude for a quality you admire in him/her, watch your wedding video together or look at wedding pictures, take turns sharing one of your favorite memories of your courting days, hug each other for at least one minute before going on to other activities, make your beloved her/his favorite meal or dessert. It doesn't take a big date out on the town or expensive gestures to rekindle a flame, but it does take a little effort to "light a match."