

Long Distance Love...

Despite the tales of horror you may have heard about long-distance relationship, it is possible for a marriage to survive the ravages of distance and time. But in order to do so, it's going to take some time, effort and creativity! It's also going to require a great deal of trust, understanding and communication.

Lots of couples are forced to endure the hardship of separation. Military spouses endure weeks, months, maybe even years apart from one another. Some husbands and wives are called away to foreign countries for educational, diplomatic or professional reasons. Others are in jobs that require a great deal of traveling, such as salesmen, technicians or truck drivers. Whichever of these categories you and your mate fall into, you can make a long-distance relationship work. But only if you're willing to work at it.

Thankfully, advances in technology and the advent of the "global community" have made it easier for you and your lover to keep in touch. Be sure to take full advantage of all of these tools:

Letters

Don't underestimate the power of a personal, handwritten letter. While emails and telephones are great, there's something really special about reading a letter written in love. Looking forward to the next letter is a great way to distract your mate from the seemingly slow passage of time. While you don't have to write lengthy letters, be sure to send at least one hand written letter every week that you must be apart.

Phone Calls

Long-distance and overseas calling rates continue to drop. Take advantage of this trend by seizing every opportunity you have to hear the sound of your lover's voice. As great as a handwritten letter is, sometimes a homesick heart longs to listen to the sounds of your voice, your laughter and all of your little quirks and quotes.

Email

The Internet has revolutionized the world. With only a simple free email account, you can communicate with your mate at nearly the speed of

light. With a little learning, you can also add audio files, photos, videos and other flashy frills to really make your messages warm and special. If you're a little technologically challenged, spend the time you need to feel comfortable implementing these tools.

Video Chat

Web conferences and video chat are another great spiff that the Internet has provided. It's the next best thing to actually being together. You can speak and see each other in real-time. You can show your spouse pictures the kids have drawn, let them tell your babies a bedtime story and so much more. And - if you're uninhibited - live video chat can also help keep your sexual intimacy alive. You can pick up a Web-Cam for under \$50.00, and many of them work seamlessly with internet messaging services like Yahoo! and MSN.

It goes without saying that spending time apart from your soul-mate is hard. There *is* stress, loneliness and heartache involved. But keeping in touch with your lover will serve as an insurance policy against betrayal or divorce. Just because you're spending some time apart doesn't mean your communication or intimacy have to suffer. If you take advantage of all of the many communication tools at your disposal you'll no longer have to dismiss that old cliché:

Absence makes the heart grow fonder.

With a little work, it truly can!

Kathy Stafford, Relationship Coach

"I show singles how to get married and couples how to STAY married"

Do you want more from your relationship? Go to <http://www.dearkathy.com> for relationship articles, advice, and programs.

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