Powerful Bonding Behaviors

From Marni Robinson, *Cupid's Poisoned Arrow*

Easy

1. Smiling, with eye contact
2. Skin-to-skin contact
3. Providing a service or treat without being asked
4. Giving unsolicited approval, via smiles or compliments
5. Preparing your partner something to eat
6. Making time together at bedtime a priority
7. Holding, or spooning, each other in stillness
8. Stroking with intent to comfort

More Intimate

9. Gazing into each other's eyes
10. Listening intently, and restating what you hear
11. Forgiving or overlooking an error or thoughtless remark, past or present
12. Synchronized breathing
13. Wordless sounds of contentment and pleasure
14. Massaging with intent to comfort, especially feet, shoulders and head
15. Hugging with intent to comfort
16. Cradling, or gently rocking, your partner's head and torso (works well on a couch, or with lots of pillows)
17. Lying with your ear over your partner's heart and listening to the heart beat

Most Intimate

18. Kissing with lips and tongues
19. Touching and sucking of nipples/breasts
20. Gently placing your palm over your lover's genitals with intent to comfort rather than arouse
21. Gentle intercourse

Daily and Unselfishly

There are some curious aspects to bonding behaviors.

First, to sustain the sparkle in a relationship these behaviors need to occur *daily*, or almost daily.

Second, they need not occur for long, or be particularly effortful, but they must be genuinely selfless. Even holding each other in stillness at the end of a long, busy day can be enough to exchange the subconscious signals that your relationship is rewarding.

Third, there's evidence that the more you use bonding behaviors, the more sensitive your brain becomes to the neurochemicals that help you feel relaxed and loving.

Fourth, some items on the list above may sound like foreplay, but in one important sense they are not. Foreplay is geared toward building sexual *tension* and climax. In contrast, bonding behaviors are geared toward *relaxation*.