



# *Live your Inspired Life*

Low FODMAP Diet Coaching

## Week 3 - Time for Family

*Today, marriages and families suffer from a lack of time*

As we pursue the material gods, our desire for more and more money eats up our time. We want the big house with the mortgage, the flash car to show off to our friends, the possessions that end up possessing us. And that leaves us with little time for each other. We are too busy amassing money and maintaining all those possessions. They truly do possess us. This all exhausts us and takes the attention away from what really matters in life – family. When you are on your death bed, you won't think about all those things you owned, you will think about the relationships you have had and whether you gave your all to them or to your material wealth. Don't live with regrets about how you neglected those nearest and dearest to you. They won't necessarily always be there for you. Spouses leave, having found someone who values and listens to them, and children grow up and leave, having learned the lesson about not spending time on the family and so they don't. In fact, you seldom see them again. Take action now while you have your family intact. Spend not only quality time with them, just spend time with them. Quantity as well as quality.

## *How children learn*

If you have children, they learn whether they matter in this world of ours through whether you spend time with them or not. And not just time, but time interacting with them. Make special moments out of all the routine parts of the day – helping them dress, bathing them, reading to them at night, helping them with their homework. Be there to capture those moments that you would miss otherwise. Those are the times, they might open up and tell you something that you mightn't otherwise hear, especially as they grow older. Much of the child's basic learning takes place in the many informal situations that occur daily in the life of the family. Children learn from us and if we always have one eye on the clock and an ear to our cellphone, they will learn that is how to conduct life – with half their focus on something else.



## *Love your partner*

If you have a partner, how much time do you spend together actively engaged in each other with no interruptions like the TV, the phone, the kids, the computer? Probably very little. It is very easy for couples to grow apart and live parallel lives which seldom connect. Giving time is an important way of showing love and appreciation. Love needs to be nurtured. And children learn to bring balance to their lives when they see their parents setting aside time for each other and for what truly matters.

Researcher John Gottman found that couples who continued to improve their relationship following his marriage workshops were devoting an extra five hours a week to their relationship. He calls this time “The Magic Five Hours.” Each day, the couples learned one thing about each other’s life that day, had a relaxing conversation, and did something specific to show affection and appreciation.

Each week they went out on a date. A weekly date for just the two of you, no children allowed and no friends either. This will help you remember why you liked each other so much in the beginning. I bet you have moved along way from those early days.



## *Ideas for spending time with children:*

- Make a special breakfast all together on Sunday for the family.
- Instead of splitting up and sharing out the chores, how about tackling them together as a team? You all clean up one bedroom and then you all do the next one together. The work seems a lot less like work if you have companions to natter to. Don't chase the children away because you are so busy with household chores. Include them from when they are small and soon they will be competent helpers.
- Popping corn and watching a movie which has been pre-selected together.
- Art projects – they may be messy but it's a great chance to talk and to learn about what is happening in a child's life.
- Sporting activities like fishing, watching a football game, rollerblading, playing with a ball in the backyard.
- Game nights with no TV and phones turned off.
- Attend a concert or show together.
- Outdoor activities such as hiking, walks, bicycling, picnics, or camping.
- Meal times all together once a day for talking and sharing but no disciplinary matters during the meal. That causes indigestion and gives meals a negative association.

And remember that even activities like buying a new pair of shoes or singing songs in the car on the way to school will be great learning moments for the kids as long as you participate and are truly present in those moments. You are teaching them you care and that they matter.

## *Ideas for your date with your partner*

- A restaurant night – cocktails at one, main meal at another and finish up with dessert at your favourite chocolate spot.
- Pack a lunch one Saturday and go for a hike in the nearest national park.
- Rent a boat or kayak (if you are feeling energetic) and tootle around the coast or up a river.
- Go to the planetarium and gaze at the stars.
- How about a moonlight dinner cruise. It's romantic.
- A picnic in the backyard with wine, candlelight and gourmet food.
- Learn a new activity together – dancing, tennis, photography.
- Be adventurous and go parachuting (tandem), bungee jumping, rock climbing.
- Play Monopoly or Cluedo or cards.
- One can plan a mystery date for the other.
- Go to an amusement park and ride the rollercoaster together.
- Attend a concert, go to the theatre



## *Once a Week*

### *Your exercise this week*

#### Families with children:

- Block out family time once a week to participate in one of the above suggestions or any other idea you all agree upon.
- Write it in your and your partner's diaries - it can not be changed.
- Dedicate that period of time solely to the family. Phones off.

#### Partners/husbands:

- Plan a date night for some special activity that you both choose or use one of the above ideas.
- Write it in your and your partner's diaries - it can not be changed.
- Dedicate that period of time solely to the him/her.

## *Once a Month*

#### Families with children:

- Make a date with each child once a month.
- Write it in your diary - it can not be changed.
- Discuss in advance what that date is going to entail.
- Dedicate that time solely to that child. No cell phones allowed.