

Long Distance Relationships

Loving from long distance can be a difficult endeavor, but not impossible! As the old adage goes, "absence can make the heart grow fonder." If you are considering long distance love, it might be a good idea to weigh the pros and cons.

Some things to think about are:

Barriers/Cons	Barriers/Pros
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Expense of transportation, long distance phone calls, stamps, etc.- Trust may become more difficult between partners who don't see each other as often and insecurity in a relationship can result.- Communication can take more effort- Partners do not get to share in physical closeness as often.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Partners have more diverse experiences to share.- It may be more exciting and "special" to see one another- Partners can develop a greater trust in one another and become more confident/secure in the relationship- Partners can become more independent

If you are currently in a long distance relationship and having a difficult time, consider these things to work on:

- 1) Build a support group. This can involve friends, roommates, and co-workers who can help to fill the void.
- 2) Set individual and couple goals. Examples might include "How long is this separation going to last?" or "What sorts of things will I do for myself on weekends when we cannot get together?"
- 3) Define the relationship: Is this relationship exclusive or not?
- 4) Trust one another: unfounded anxiety puts stress on the relationship.

Phone Conversations

Another important component of long distance relationships involves talking on the phone. Because the use of cell phones has become so popular, you may not have an issue of paying large phone bills. You may, however, be dealing with the issue of time management. When one is tied up on the phone for hours, it is difficult to get much else done! Try one of these phone conversation tips to get more out of your phone calls:

- Have a specific night to talk; this will help avoid the proverbial phone tag syndrome.
 - Screen out all other distractions; turn off the T.V. and lock yourself in your room.
 - Just as you need to screen out distractions, so does the other person. If he/she is in the middle of something when you call, ask if you can call back and when.
 - Close your eyes and imagine the other person.
 - Listen for pauses, sighs, and breathing patterns.
 - Listen to how you are coming across (sad, happy, frustrated). Is this how you want to sound?
 - Let the other person finish: don't jump to conclusions about what is going to be said.
 - Try to keep the conversation as light as possible; save the deep stuff for when you're together.
 - Discuss in advance how you're going to handle arguments over the phone.
 - Overall, remember that communication is important. Ask questions, actively listen, and be open.
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Creative Ways to Communicate

- Send a care package.
- Make a CD of "your songs"
- E-mail each day with one thing you love about your partner or with a "question of the day" to get to know your partner better
- Send them a stuffed animal to keep them company until you see them again
- Send letters with your perfume/cologne all over them
- How about a video of yourself telling your partner how much you love him/her?
- Send them a video tape from your childhood
- Write a poem or a song
- Make homemade cards
- Assemble a collage of photos
- Send a free e card.
- Send flowers or cookie/candy bouquets
- Send a movie rental coupon with instructions to rent a particular movie and time to watch it. You can rent the same movie, call each other, and start watching it "together." You'll have yourselves a virtual date.