

## 5 mistakes good couples make that silently lower desire, mistake # 2

### Being a team player

If there is a particular quality that frum couples are *especially* good at, it is being excellent team players.



Think: Shared responsibility, mutual reliability, decent divisions of labor; and, of course... stepping in when the other is tired. In other words, running a household like a well-oiled machine.

Without a doubt, this team-player work-ethic is as tremendous a virtue as it is a valuable asset. After all, a marriage without teamwork is going to be hard-pressed to successfully navigate the pressures of real life.

That said, there can often surface an uncomfortable truth within this teamwork ethos. Marriage assuming a lopsided teamwork character can, for some people, be antithetical to sustained desire.

In teamwork mode, spouses may tend to relate to each other primarily as:

- Logistics partners
- Problem-solvers
- Task-completers

In that framework, the focus tends to loom large on:

- Efficiency
- Predictability
- Getting things done

Once again, all good and necessary things.

But desire can have a finicky way of going dry in systems that are uber-engineered for streamlined efficiency.

Desire tends to respond to something else entirely. The very behaviors that make couples excellent teammates may slowly flatten eros.

Why?

Because teams are built to function smoothly. A system whose character and function is largely static.

And desire often requires movement, polarity... a sense of dynamic vitality which is largely unpredictable.

If you find yourselves struggling with desire, it may be worthwhile to take pause and consider the nature of your interactions. Do they tend to revolve almost exclusively around schedules, responsibilities, and logistics?

If that's the case, then it shouldn't be all that surprising if the relationship begins feeling more like a work project than a romantic encounter.

It's not as if anything dramatic has to happen to bring about this silent desire deflation. Nothing like betrayal, cruelty, or neglect... It's just that there is a slow, subconscious shift from *relating* to *operating*. And for many people, desire will struggle mightily to survive that shift. Couples may find themselves thinking, "We work so well together... but why don't I feel that spark anymore...?"

It may simply be a function of living almost exclusively in team mode. Because, almost by design, team mode minimizes exactly the things that desire often needs such as anticipation, playfulness, emotional risk, and an ongoing sense of being chosen rather than assumed.

So what's the solution? To halt all teamwork?

Obviously not.

The solution is to recognize the mistake in assuming that teamwork will automatically carry desire along with it. To recognize that **teamwork fulfills only one aspect of this great tapestry called marriage.**

For desire, something else is needed. Moments that are slightly unnecessary from a getting-things-done perspective. Moments that are **not** optimized, **not** efficient, and **not** “productive”.

**Desire needs moments that foster and embrace curiosity, tension, surprise, and wanting.** Moments that are playful, perhaps “pointless”, and even slightly “selfish”. Moments that serve no purpose other than *being alive together*.

*(stay tuned for **Mistake #1**, the most surprising one of all)*



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