



# How to Create Space for Quality Time with Your Partner

*Real Tips from Real Mums*



*More to Mum*

# Hello!

Hi there lovely!

So, you're looking for some ideas about how to create space in your very full life, to spend some focused, quality time with your partner.

It's wonderful that you want to invest in your relationship and have taken steps towards finding out how to make quality time work for you.

## **It was much easier before you had children, wasn't it?**

You could sit and talk for hours, go out for dinner, go on holidays or long drives, have lazy mornings in bed, and do the things you love together. There were lots of opportunities for connecting and you were each other's priority.

Now, as parents, you're exhausted most of the time, the children always need you, your conversations are constantly interrupted, and you're trying to work and keep your lives in some sort of order. There just doesn't seem to be enough hours in the day to get everything done, let alone make time for romance, intimacy and really connecting.

Dr John and Julie Gottman (The Gottman Institute) have been studying relationship health for over 40 years, and found that 67% of couples report a decline in relationship happiness for up to three years after the birth of their first child. And of course, adding more children to your family increases the pressure on your time.

But, we love our children beyond measure and wouldn't want a life without them. So, we have to learn how to make space for quality time in the midst of it all.

My husband and I found it hard to find focused, quality time, just like many couples. But I'm here to tell you, **it IS possible.**

**Time is the currency of relationships.  
There's no way to invest in a relationship without investing your time.**

# What is Quality Time?

Let's first get clear on what quality time actually means.

**Quality time is time spent together where you give each other your full attention.**

Proximity is not enough. Attention is the key.

Ideally, that means no TV, no mobile devices and preferably no significant interruptions. It means you are both physically, mentally and emotionally present, because the relationship is valuable to you.

Of course, you don't have to just sit and stare at each other. That could get awkward! Quality time involves **talking and / or finding activities to do together, that allow you to focus on a shared experience and on each other.**

When you do talk, it's about giving **eye contact, listening for how your partner feels and what they aren't saying with words, and letting them speak without interrupting.**

Often, women count family time as quality time with their partner, and this type of time spent together is so valuable in addition to alone time. While you can't give each other 100% of your attention all the time when the kids are with you, you can still connect and enjoy your family together.

If you've ever read the book "*The Five Love Languages*" by Gary Chapman, you will know that quality time is actually one of the five ways that people can prefer to receive love. They *feel loved* when their partner spends quality time with them.

There are also 4 other love languages, which means that not everyone is so focused on having quality time to feel loved. But, regardless of your love language, **every relationship needs quality time to stay strong and to nurture that deep connection that we all desire in our relationships.**



## *Some Tips From Me...*

### **First, some tips from me...**

With 4 children, our house has been very busy over the years. My step children are now young adults, and were teenagers when I became part of their family.

My husband and I have used lots of different strategies to create our quality time over the years, as our lives evolved and the children grew. With younger kids, you mostly have evenings to yourself (if they stay in bed!), but with older kids, they stay up later and want to connect with you at the end of the day. Of course, we welcome and desire those connections too, but it does mean we have to get really smart about creating time for us as a couple.

Here are some of the things we have found have worked for us:

- One dedicated connecting night a week. This happens on the same night every week, and if needed, can be swapped to a different night, but is never skipped. On this night, we have no technology and we just sit down and chat. Sometimes we do yoga, or another activity that we both enjoy, but there is always time to share what's on our minds and hearts, and we expect to go deeper during that conversation.
- At least 2 other nights per week we would spend at least a couple of hours doing things together or chatting.
- Going to bed at the same time and spending some time talking and cuddling before we go to sleep (tricky now when our son is in our bed).
- Scheduling regular family activities with our little boy, where we get time to be together and talk, while we are having fun together. (If it's the whole family, we don't usually get to spend that much time connecting so that would purely be family time).
- Dates (not frequent, but we schedule them when we can) - usually dinner at a nearby restaurant after our little boy has gone to bed. Recently, we even managed a daytime date, while my son was at kindergarten.
- Exercise together - when we have grandparents around, we take the opportunity to run together and chat.
- We try to keep one day on the weekend relatively free to just hang out at home. On these days we can find 5 mins, or 30 mins or even more to be together.

On the following pages, you will find tips from real mums, just like you, on how they create space in their life for quality time with their partner. It's not always easy, but these women have found a way to make it work in whatever their situation is right now. And as life changes, so do the ways we create space for quality time.

I hope this inspires you, helps you feel less alone in your challenges and prompts you to try something new.

## Real Tips From Real Mums

Quality time alone with my partner is hard as we have a 13 week old and 3 year old daughters, and no extended family or assistance to help care for them. So, any alone time has to be early morning or late night. Our girls are our world, so we don't mind one bit, and we have adapted. Our favourite thing to do is to **get up early in the morning and have a coffee / chat together in the quiet house** before the children wake! If we can steal away (if my mother is visiting from interstate) then it is certainly a **quiet meal at a local restaurant or cafe**. It is as simple as that!

### Kathryn

Mum of two, Dietitian / Nutritionist, volunteer at Mums for Mums.  
[www.instagram.com/kathrynhawkins\\_nutrition/](http://www.instagram.com/kathrynhawkins_nutrition/)



Recently, we have been making a concerted effort to spend quality time as a couple. Our first 5 or so years with twins was more about survival (theirs and ours!). They are now nearly 8 years old and we are trying to make more time for us. Going out to dinner, etc, is great, but only if you have a babysitter available, which we don't. Dave works long hours, so we have learned to just **grab opportunities as we see them**. Some Sunday afternoons you will find us **hiding in the tree house** for example. We will take a beer and a pillow up and lay and watch the clouds go by and chat. Other days we will go and **sit on the deck (and make sure we leave our phones inside!) and chat** while the kids kick the soccer ball around outside. Somedays, we just take the opportunity to **do a boring chore together** (like sorting the linen cupboard or cleaning out the garage), so we can catch up on each other's week. We find that the kids don't bother us as much if it looks like we are working on something they may get roped into helping us with!! We don't watch a lot of TV, but we have started **finding a series we both like** and trying to watch an episode together once the kids go to bed. For us, it is more about quality over quantity. And now our twins are a bit older its easier to **grab 5 minutes together here and there**.

### Naomi

Twin mum, business owner, volunteer at both my local multiple birth association and at the school P&C.  
[www.twinfo.com.au](http://www.twinfo.com.au)

## Real Tips From Real Mums

We've realised over the years that **it is more about 'time'** rather than 'alone time'. Our current schedules and location does not allow for regular date nights or time without the children, so we've made a conscious effort to **stop and sit together after a busy work day with a drink and have a chat**. It's simple and doesn't involve babysitters. **Reconnecting daily** for us really is key.

### Emma

Mum of three, farmers wife, business owner, volunteer  
[www.facebook.com/lowtoxmummabyemmacurulli/](http://www.facebook.com/lowtoxmummabyemmacurulli/)



When my husband and I first met, it was so easy to focus on each other and spend quality time together eating out, travelling, or even just enjoying the quiet! When our kids came along, things were different. Good different, but still different. We found that it is quite easy to become disconnected when every day is filled with the same shared routine of nappies, school commitments, cooking, cleaning, work and business and general "busyness". There's nothing really romantic about dirty nappies and dishes. Of course, I wouldn't change a thing, but I think it is still really important to find time for each other amongst the chaos.

We will **schedule the odd "date night"** where we find a friend or family member to babysit while we go out for a nice dinner together. We book it in a diary and plan it ahead of time to make sure it happens! More frequently though, it is **spending time together at home**. We put our **phones away and talk** when the kids are in bed, **watch a good show on Netflix or go for a walk together**. If we have a weekday off together, we will **go out for coffee and cake with our two little ones**.

I genuinely enjoy my husband's company. We try to find little moments to connect with each other, like **putting music on and silly dancing in front of the kids, stealing a kiss or having a laugh**. We text each other during the day and try to do nice things for each other. After all, when our kids are grown - we will still need to like each other!

### Andrea

Mum of four (6 months, 3, 5 and 9), part time government employee, owner of two online businesses.  
[www.thecookingcollective.com.au](http://www.thecookingcollective.com.au)

## Real Tips From Real Mums

It's often challenging to find quality time with your partner when you are a parent. For us, it's definitely about **ensuring we have good communication whenever we can throughout the day!** Sometimes it might be a quick call during a break to say hello or chat via text. We enjoy **cooking together** at times and we really value our time together once our son has gone to bed. We **chat, we unwind, maybe even have a movie night!** The small moments really do count the most but we do also try and have a date night when we can, often it will be **going out for dinner.** Yum!

### Amanda

Mum and Anxiety Coach

[www.theanxietywellnessqueen.com](http://www.theanxietywellnessqueen.com)



As we have no family living nearby, I often struggle to find enough quality time with my husband but I cherish it so much more when we do get it!

On a daily basis, we try to **give each other at least 5 proper hugs** - apparently humans need hugs every day for emotional survival! Once the kids are in bed, we **hang out together at home**, often just chilling out and watching something on TV that we both like. I try not to spend the whole evening working, although I do usually slip in an hour or two.

When we've got my parents staying (they live in New Zealand), we book in a **night out** together. We'll always **try somewhere new and go exploring** as we're both travellers at heart and love to discover new spots.

I'm a mum of two and I run my own business, working from home as a marketing coach for small business owners. My kids are one of the reasons I started working for myself - needing that flexibility to suit short school hours and be around for the little ones while they're still little. I have to be very organised with my daily schedule, I dedicate set work hours and allocate other time for gym workouts, kids' activities and keeping the house running. Fitting in quality time with my hubby is always a challenge!

### Jessica

Mum of two, Marketing Coach for small business owners

<https://jessicaosborn.com>

## Real Tips from Real Mums

My husband and I have only recently found the right balance for us, our kids, and our family life! When we started our family nearly 6 years ago, we were both working stressful jobs with long hours. Getting paid good money, but we soon realised that we could either continue on this track, having a crazy lifestyle with great income, or we could **better position our family time by finding a suitable work life balance.**

We chose the latter. Yes, it did mean that we would drastically reduce our household income, but it meant that **we could have the time together with one another** and most importantly with our kids.

My husband now has the flexibility to be able to drop and collect the kids from school when I work, plus have evenings and weekends off work. And I have a job where I have all school holidays off to spend with our kids. This was what was important to us, and we now have the balance we want.

My husband and I ensure we take time out for the two of us and have a **date night**, with the babysitting help of family. Time together is so important for us, our relationship, and our role as parents.

### Nicole

Mum of two girls aged 5 1/2 and 3 1/2, a side hustler girl boss, working a part-time job, all whilst maintaining the day to day franticness (Not a word, but now I've made it one!) of running a household.

[www.creativemumlife.com](http://www.creativemumlife.com)



Kids need a regular bedtime. This is so important to us. I have three at home under 10 and they are all in bed by 7:30pm ( other then the occasional night out). This gives us **great quality time every single night!** Also, we are really intentional about not just **going out for dinner occasionally**, but also **every three months or so we go away for the night.** Its exciting and gives us something to look forward to. Your partner is just as important as your children if not more so , investing into time together will result in a beautiful happy life. Its worth it!

### Adelle

Mum of three under 10, step mum to two young adults, business owner and NFP Director for She The Change and The Welcome To Paradise Foundation.

[www.shethechange.com.au](http://www.shethechange.com.au)



## Real Tips From Real Mums

Like most families with young children, we are a very busy household. We have no family nearby, so hubby and I don't really go out on date nights. What we do, is **sharing short moments of connection, a hug, a cuddle, a kiss, quick breakfast in bed etc, and even just sharing the housework**. Connection doesn't always need to be big gestures, or a specially set aside time. It can occur **spontaneously**.

Since I am so busy, I try to find hacks to save time. I don't ever walk to take public transportation, running saves me time but also means I get my exercise at the same time! I rarely wear clothes that need ironing, and I don't really do make-up (sleep is more important). I work while I am commuting, as I have a long commute.

On days where my kids go to childcare early in the morning, I dress them in the shirts they are going to wear the next day. Unless clothes look dirty or smell bad, they get re-worn at least once (think of the water savings!). I bulk cook, and love one-pot cooking or slow cooker cooking. I direct debit my bills. I also try generally not to let negativity bother me, I feel I have better things to do with my time, as negative situations and people expend a lot of mental energy!

And don't be guilty of putting your kids in front of educational TV programs at times - they learn a lot and you need the break!

Don't overestimate the **power of a couple of minutes saved here and there** - they make a difference when you add all of them up and takes some mental load away!

### Suk-yi

Mum of two, engineer, business owner, household COO and CFO. And also chief finder of stuff - no one seems to be able to look for anything in our household, even if they are the ones who put them away in the first place, LOL! :)

<https://www.thecaffeinetrifecta.com>



My husband and I **make sure our children are in bed at a set time** then we spend it **playing board games, talking, binging Netflix** or the ultimate, go to bed earlier than normal! Very occasionally we will **get a babysitter and we will go out**.

### Jodi

Mum of four fabulous (not perfect by any means) kids aged 15-2, part time marketer in a school and devoted happy wife, I love my crazy, busy life.

## Real Tips From Real Mums

Early on in our marriage, Ken and I decided that quality time with one another would always be a priority in our home no matter what.

Over the last 16 years, 8 children later, that has changed a lot and looks different, but what has remained the same is a **minimum 1 hour of intentional time put aside for the two of us to check in, listen, share and connect.**

When we had our firstborn and then second child not long after, **park time** was a family favourite. Ken and I would both sit on the swings and just talk & talk and talk, That's how our **swing time** (what we call our quality time) came about haha...

How does it work? We have a **family daily schedule**. I call it our skeleton schedule - kind of like our non-negotiables. Everything else works into & around this schedule. It includes worship times, meal times, family time and quality time.

Quality time isn't always at the same time. Sometimes it's scheduled **after the children have gone to bed**, it could be **during a family outing** (the older ones help us here by minding the children while mum and dad have our swing time), It could be on a morning that hubby has leaving later for work, or before the kids get up we **go for a early morning walk** (older ones mind them while we do this). Ken takes **one day off work every week** so we get swing time while kids are at school and we spend the day together.

Our quality time also consists of **speaking one another's love language** - my primary language is acts of service, while his is words of affirmation. You'll often find him on his day off or during our swing time, doing things around the house that I didn't get to or fixing things out of place, and me showering him with love notes and expressions of powerful words. This for us is quality time well spent.

Whichever way we do it, because of the challenges to find help and support with a big family, we make it work. Scheduling it into our daily schedules, as an everyday non-negotiable, helps us be able to do that.

**Jen**

Wife, mum of 8 and business owner  
<https://www.letlightinyou.com/>

## Real Tips From Real Mums

There's not much time in the week, that's for sure and now that our teens are staying up later and with the longer hours we work there is very little time for just us two. We always have a **cup of tea in bed together every weekend morning**. Sometimes, that tea lasts an hour and sometimes twenty minutes before there's a yell. But we never miss it, we check in with each other and start the weekend together. We laugh, we cuddle up, we reconnect!

### Trish

Mum of two teens, with a husband who works away 2-3 nights a week, a full time nurse and a new business owner.  
[www.raisinggreatteens.com](http://www.raisinggreatteens.com)



On top of building a business, being a momma and a wife, I'm also working three days a week in the CBD at a tech startup. As all busy mums can attest to, it's hard enough trying to find enough time in the day to do all the things that we do. It's easy to neglect your other half whilst all of our attention is focused on the kids, running the household and or working/building businesses!

My husband runs his own business as well, so it's non-stop for us. The one thing which we've found that's working really well for us is to **pick one weekday evening (Wednesdays) to re-connect**. This means we switch off from all technology (telly included!) to have a **lovely dinner together, over a glass of wine or two, and just enjoy each other's company in the comforts of our own home**. We also try and do a **date night out every month**, but this often falls through, so Wednesday nights are our date nights at home.

### Ali

Momma to two little ladies, 2.5 years old and 6 years old, wife to my bestie and founder of [home.cook.love](http://home.cook.love).  
[www.homecooklove.com](http://www.homecooklove.com)

## Real Tips From Real Mums

This is an area we are making a conscious effort to become better at. With no family support locally, we have made the effort to simply **watch a TV show together a couple of times a week**, or more depending on my schedule. We are **super structured with our children's bedtime routine** and have them in bed sleeping soundly by 7:30pm most nights. This gives us a chance to unwind and just be together. Often with a sneaky ice-cream and some junky mindless TV.

Bigger couple outings are for **concerts**. Being a Muso's wife these are a must. For this, I had to let go and trust outside help. We have recently been blessed with some amazing young babysitters. If you are unsure, I encourage you to do it. This has been amazing for us to reconnect outside of parenting.

### Jacque

Mum to 3 Wildlings, 5 and under, Lifestyle and Mindset Coach.  
<https://www.facebook.com/inspiredmummies/>



Quality time together is a priority for us. It's our top love language and we know we need that intentional time. **We've learnt to do 'us time' with kids in tow**. That might mean **going for a coffee at our fave cafe or to a winery and giving the kids an iPad, so we can talk for half an hour uninterrupted**. We also **prioritise time together over other engagements** and ensure that time for the two of us is built into the week.

Date nights aren't really a thing for us in this season, but **taking time after the kids are in bed to talk about our days and encourage each other in the challenges** is a key part of our evening. It's also important for us to be intentional about **regularly sharing visions and dreams**, for us personally, for our family and for the future too.

### Lauren

Stay at home mum of 2  
[www.instagram.com/somuchlots](http://www.instagram.com/somuchlots)



## Now Over To You

So, lovely, I hope you found some inspiration in these stories from real mums, who are also trying to nurture their connection with their partner, while managing all the different parts of their lives.

Now, it's your turn. What are three ways you can create space for quality time with your partner?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Remember, even when things feel difficult, you are amazing and you do have enough time for the things that are important. You just have to work out what those things are and focus your time and energy on them. I know your relationship is important to you. And you and your partner both deserve to be in a loving, supportive and deeply connected relationship.

Thank you so much for downloading this e-book. If you'd like more support, encouragement and inspiration in your motherhood journey, I'd love you to join my beautiful, heartfelt Facebook community for mums. In this positive space, we share, learn and help each other. We'd love welcome you!

Find us at:

[www.facebook.com/groups/theresmoretomum/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/theresmoretomum/)

With love,

*Louise*

