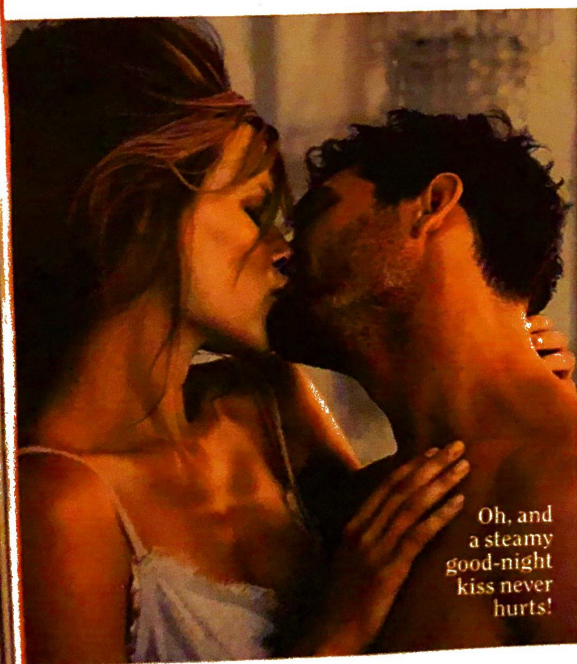


Love PSA: You and your significant other may consider that juicy true-crime TV series the welcome third wheel in your relationship...but your nightly screen habit could be robbing you of prime emotional bonding.

The time you have with boo before you go to sleep is a great opportunity to focus on just each other, says relationship expert Susan Winter, who coaches people on their love lives. People tend to be less stressed during the pre-zzz's wind-down than they do during their rushed morning routines. But many also get sucked into a show. A recent study confirms that streaming activity peaks between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m., right in the middle of what could be ideal QT.

Using the hour or so before bed to actually interact instead can help you both relax, sleep better, and wake up feeling way closer. So ditch the tech a few nights a week in favor of one of these activities, which have the potential to spark major intimacy.



Oh, and a steamy good-night kiss never hurts!

As You're Winding Down...

Have a Li'l Nightcap

Pour yourselves something (wine, tea, whatever), and sit down at the kitchen table as if it's the new, most exclusive date spot in town. "At first, you might think, This is awkward. What are we going to talk about?" says psychotherapist Jean Fitzpatrick, a marriage counselor and couples therapist. But this is an ideal time to have each other's undivided attention, and research shows that when you and your partner open up to each other, it can make you feel more connected. Although you don't need to rehash *everything*. Just start with a 10-minute chat-and-sip to share one upbeat thing each (such as a work win or a great phone call with your BFF). Before you know it, you'll both be craving this special catch-up over bevs... and lingering longer.

Say "You're Cute...I Like You"

That smirk babe gave you when you left for the gym this morning was so sexy. And now look at them taking out the garbage in the pouring rain.... What a dime! When you're getting ready to call it a night, make sure to say something like "Thank you for doing that earlier," to let them know you appreciate the small things they do. "This does two things: One, it makes you happier because you're seeing the good," says Winter, "and two, it makes them feel appreciated." Both create good vibes to hit the sheets with.

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Choosing Sides... Does It Matter?