

# Expert Love Advice: How To Tackle That Nagging Seven-Year Itch



By Amy Osmond Cook for [Divorce Support Center](#)

Can you remember the first time you were in love? Do you remember how the mere image of your partner took control of your thoughts? Your actions? Your view of the world? Life was vibrant and hopeful. Most of us can relate, but fast forward seven years, and the crowd thins a little. The intensity has dimmed or even disappeared long ago. Were we wrong about that person...or are we just incapable of maintaining a lasting [relationship and love](#)?

# Relationship Expert Shares Love Advice On Seven-Year Itch

As a relationship expert, I know that there's some empirical truth behind the matrimonial seven-year itch. According to the US Census Bureau, statistics continually support this behavior pattern and offer a theory showing that, after seven years of marriage, most couples have raised their children and have realized they don't want to be around each other anymore.

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In an article for *PsychologyToday*, author Dario Maestripieri, Ph.D., referred to the findings of anthropologist Helen Fisher. She theorized that humans may have a predisposition to being serial monogamists. This means that "people are socially bonded to one partner at a time but don't stick to the same partner their whole life." Instead, they switch from partner to partner. This often follows a four- to seven-year pattern.

So how do you explain those couples who defy the odds of statistics and anthropological patterns? What is it about the pair that remains together for 30-plus years that we could emulate in our own love life? Here is some expert love advice about what those enduring relationships have that yours may not:

**1. The relationship is flexible:** Most long-term goals need to adapt to endure, and the same holds true for long-term relationships. An article for eharmony.com warns of adhering to patterns that don't work or weaken a partnership. For example, if one or both of you start taking the other one for granted, if either or both of you adopt a condescending tone in communicating with your spouse, or if you start seeking comfort and support from someone other than your spouse, the healthy relationship can break down. "To help avoid long-term unhealthy side effects that can lead to the seven-year itch,

it's important to change those relationship-weakening patterns and habits," the article reads. "In doing so, you may discover what you love about each other and ultimately deepen the bond you share."

In an article for *PsychologyToday*, author Robert Taibbi, LCSW, stresses the importance of updating your vision. "What do you both envision in the next year, five years, or ten years? It's not so important what you say as you both have the ability to say it," he explains. "This is what will help you both narrow the gap between your daily life and your inner needs."

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**2. Communication, communication, communication:** Communication is a habit that should emerge during the early dating stages and continue throughout a marriage. Make it a habit to express your needs. Moreover, be sure to ask your partner what his or her needs consist of as well. This doesn't mean you'll always agree, but it will teach you how to handle conflicting views. In the eharmony.com article, we are reminded to expect bumps in the road. "The goal is not to avoid them at all costs but to understand how to navigate them in healthy, effective, loving ways," it says.

**3. Partners choose happiness over the need to be right:** It often comes down to choosing one or the other. Are you drawn to having the last word? Do you relish those opportunities when you have proven your partner wrong? Is defending your point of view worth taking it to the mat at every opportunity? If so, you may win the battle, but you are destined to be alone at the end of the war. "By letting go of the desire to always be right at any cost, you give yourself and your partner permission to enjoy life again," says eharmony.com. "A happy relationship AND less stress? Sounds like a win-win."

Problems will certainly make a regular appearance in your

relationship, whether motivated by self-serving strategies or not. In this case, long-term couples understand the importance of solving problems when they arise. They know that unresolved problems or unchecked behavior creates an unhappy environment. "It just becomes another land mine that you have to carefully walk around," writes Taibbi. "If you're always looking down at where you are stepping, you never can really look at each other."

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So how can one scratch that dreaded seven-year itch? Our relationship advice is to make sure your partnership is important to you. Expert love advice shows that, by maintaining flexibility, communicating, showing respect for your partner's opinions, and handling conflict openly and with fairness, you can uphold the value of your relationship and enjoy an itchy-free future with the one you love.

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