

Foundations of Love

Maintaining a love house that's built to last a lifetime

Just like the variety of houses built, so too are romantic relationships. Some will be able to weather the storms, others will slowly fall apart, and a few will get their rooves ripped off from wild winds. Houses and relationships alike will require strong foundational work and ongoing maintenance to stand the test of time.

For a moment, consider all the bits and bobs that your house needs over the years. There's a paint job here, new fence there, bathroom reno, small crack in the ceiling and an annoying leaky tap. When was the last time you took inventory and action of your relational world to improve your overall quality of life?

Firstly, let's talk about the foundation. Just as a house needs a robust base to endure earthquakes and storms, a relationship relies on a foundation of trust, respect, and open communication. These values underpin the structural integrity of the relationship to make sure it can withstand cracks and instability.

Then we have general maintenance. If you don't work on your house for 10 years, it would be easy to feel overwhelmed by the to do list if you ever wanted to get going. Regular check-ins, heartfelt conversations, and shared experiences are the equivalent of routine house inspections. You want to be fixing as you go. Identifying and addressing issues early prevents them from escalating into more significant problems.

Now we move into the plumbing. Think of communication as the plumbing system of your relationship. Just as pipes carry water to various parts of the house, effective communication allows emotions, thoughts, and concerns to flow freely between partners. Clogs and leaks in the communication pipeline can lead to misunderstandings and resentment, much like a plumbing issue can result in water damage. Make sure there are no blocks, no gunk building up and channels. This also prevents unexpected emotional outbursts and flooding.

Resolving conflicts in a relationship is just like fixing a leaky roof. You can ignore it, but the problem won't go away. In fact, it will only cause more damage in the long run. The carpet will become damp, mould with start to grow, it



Remember elbow grease and a reliable drill

will become smelly and potentially hazardous. Justifying a leak in the ceiling because "it's always been that way" is an immature and avoidant method of dealing with the issue. Perhaps you don't have the skills to repair it yourself. You can always reach out to a professional to get the help you need and improve your situation before it does further damage.

Just as the sun dulls the paint on your house, monotony and routine can dull the intimacy in your love lives. Spruce up your relationship with date nights, shared adventures, and spontaneous moments of joy as they act as the relationship's paintbrush, adding color and vitality. At any stage you can decide to renovate, build up, change, or re-organize things. Creating shared goals, doing personal development, starting a new hobby or travel are examples of ways you can keep your relationship dynamic.

Maintaining a relationship is a lot like maintaining a house. Both require a solid foundation, routine maintenance, effective communication, conflict resolution, and periodic rejuvenation. By investing time, effort, and care into your relationship, you can build a resilient connection that can weather the storms of life. Just like a house, a well-maintained relationship is a place where both partners can find comfort, security, and unwavering support. The new year is the perfect time to inventory what we want to get done and plan for the year to come. So, when was the last time you did a bit of love house renos?

Words: **Scout Smith-O'Leary**

Scout is a Relationship Therapist providing counselling to couples & individuals. Based in Manly. Telehealth available. Visit thelovescout.com or call **0410 030 463** for more info or to book a session.

PHOTO: THAYRAN-MELO- UNSPLASH

The Body Clock

Buried deep in the body far below the chatter and haste is a clock. It beats time for as long as we do, short and lingering, following its own withheld schedule. Its increments are uneven, carved of bone and trailing ivy around an archway whose threshold grants entry to secret chambers.

The map room is first, and vast. Charts of our geography and outer reaches, the hidden crevasses that we will navigate and the rivers we must cross. There are no signs or bridges marked, only milestones oriented to catch the light. A trail winds across it like a sigil, whose final form defines our living but not our breaths.

Beyond is an ancient library whose musty pages and curios speak from other times. Lives and loves won and lost, promises broken and vows made, simple pleasures tucked inside worn sleeves waiting patiently for rediscovery. Courage beats a soft drum in the corner, steady even when the different drummer isn't. Faith hangs garlands from the high ceiling without looking down. Hope keeps the keys to the hidden door at the back of the room. Light slips under its boundary like an invitation.

At the end of the year the noise begins far beyond the gates. We move as one outside our lives and peer long out to the horizon. Some years slumping on the bench, great griefs barely holding us to the threshold. Some years mute and wondering, bewildered by this life. Leaving the ones we call by name leaning far out over the soft worn stones with shining eyes.

The faintest sliver of a moon sweeps us towards the dark unknown. The hopeful set golden intentions and press them to their breast. The foolish cast long lists gorging unapproved demands on life. The world wags its fingers and chases its tail as the sun and moon play with tides, and time.

Silence waits content on the worn stones, watches the light play with the wind. Listens to the whispers stir blood and marrow. Nods finally to the timekeeper and slowly rises from her seat.

Words: **Kerrie Basha**

Kerrie is a writer and reader who publishes under the moniker **Bohomofu**. Her first book **Morsel** is out now and available at www.bohomofu.com



Relationship Therapist

Singles & Couples

Helping you reduce tension, enhance communication & compassion and improve overall relationship quality

Located in Manly

CALL 0410 030 463

www.thelovescout.com

BOTTOMLESS

SCAN THE QR CODE TO BOOK NOW

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL

AVAILABLE SATURDAYS FROM 12PM

SPONSORED BY

2 Park Street Manly NSW 2103 (02) 8998 3000

Don't miss out

\$18 LUNCHES

Monday - Friday 12pm - 3pm
T&C's Apply