

Love that lasts

Romance doesn't have to die after marriage or with the arrival of the little ones, if you know how to keep the flame burning. Lilian Oon has the perfect solution – she dates her husband!

Married for 18 years and parents to three adorable children, Lilian and Jeff still feel like a courting couple who are very much in love.

"We give each other little surprises every now and then. One of the biggest surprises he's given me was a diamond pendant for my birthday. I'd been eyeing it for months, but it was out of my budget. It's not so much about the gift – I was touched by his thoughtfulness," says Lilian.

Lilian says it is important for married couples to make a conscious effort to keep the romance going, which is why the couple goes on dates often. "Once, we went to the movies while the children were at school. We practically had the whole theatre to ourselves! That kind of couple time was great. Now, we even go dancing and dining when we are able to get someone to look after the children.

"We also think of special ways to celebrate our birthdays and anniversaries. On our 15th wedding anniversary, Jeff surprised me with a romantic candlelit dinner."

The couple also go on holidays so they can spend quality time with each other. "We bring the children along, but we always find time for each other. My most memorable trip was this cruise we went on. While the children were sleeping, we sneaked out for an early breakfast and watched the sunrise on the deck. It was a beautiful and unforgettable experience."

THE EXPERT SAYS:

- While your children are important, make time for your spouse too. Shower him or her with attention and make sure your conversations don't just revolve around the kids.

- Date your spouse. Leave the children in the care of someone you trust and enjoy some private time with your spouse.

- The master bedroom is your private space, so reserve it for couple activities. Try not to let your children sleep in your room.

Our expert, Simon Sim, is a Family Life Coach and author of *The Family CEO – Building a Happy and Successful Family*.

Lilian is the mother of Jermaine, an I Love Children ambassador. This is the final instalment in a six-part series. For more parenthood stories and tips, visit www.ilovechildren.org.sg.

Jeff, Lilian and their three adorable children, Jerome, Joshua and Jermaine.

