

## **American couples are busy, stressed, and longing for more romance!**

According to new data from the “Bertolli Romance Report<sup>1</sup>,” 8 in 10 people say that sharing a meal plays a primary role in connecting with their partner.

These days, with the reliance on communicating by text messaging and email most of the time, it’s no wonder many of us feel we’ve lost the ability to truly connect with our significant other. New research from TSC, a division of Yankelovich, sponsored by Bertolli, aims to help articulate the distance between couples, as it relates to the clutter in our everyday lives, and why we aren’t making the time to personally connect with each other. The survey, conducted in conjunction with noted relationship guru Logan Levkoff, who has performed extensive research in the area of relationships and sexuality found that three-quarters (76%) of American couples wish that they could add more romance to their relationship.

“Food not only inspires conversation, but also gives couples the quality time needed for a healthy relationship,” said Levkoff. “Its one of the simplest ways couples can revive their romance.”

### **Calling time on romance:**

- American couples admit they are not spending enough time together; with almost 75% wishing they had more time to spend with their significant other.
- Subsequently, three-quarters (76%) of Americans say that they wish they could put the romance back into their relationship

### **Can you hear me now...personal connection getting harder for couples:**

- Almost four in ten (38%) Americans agree that in an age where open lines of communication are literally at our fingertips, people are finding it harder and harder to connect with loved ones on a personal and intimate level.

### **Enjoying a home cooked meal together can be a challenge:**

- 43% agree that “My spouse/significant other and I are too busy to spend as much time as we would like connecting with each other over meals.”
- Over half (55%) of Americans point to barriers that stop them from sharing more home cooked meals with their spouse/significant other.
  - The top three barriers are different schedules (33%), not having time to prepare a meal (21%), and feeling that it is easier to go out at eat (20%).

### **Eating meals together may be the best opportunity to reconnect with someone you love:**

- The vast majority of Americans agree that there is nothing better than connecting with your spouse/significant other over a meal (84%).
- Similarly, two-thirds (65%) agree that eating meals at home promotes intimacy more than eating out.

Bertolli understands that making great-tasting food does not need to be intimidating, complicated or preparation-intensive – it can be done easily and quickly so that you can enjoy what really matters: the company. To help couples reconnect, Bertolli’s Mediterranean Style skillet meals offer the home cook meals that so quick and easy there’s more time to spend enjoying the meal with someone – rather than making it! Check out Bertolli’s “Dinner and Your Movie” contest for a chance to have your story filmed for the big screen at [www.bertollinightsin.com](http://www.bertollinightsin.com). Plus, you’ll get the full star treatment and a genuine movie premiere later this year.

---

<sup>1</sup> The survey was conducted online from February 11-14, 2008, among 1,001 American adults, all of whom are married or have a significant other by The Segmentation Company, a division of Yankelovich.



Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide

---

## **I. Objectives**

On behalf of Ogilvy PR and Bertolli, TSC, a division of Yankelovich conducted an online survey to explore ways of connecting among couples.

## **II. Methodology**

The survey was conducted online from February 11-14, 2008, among 1,001 American adults, all of whom are married or have a significant other.

## **III. Summary**

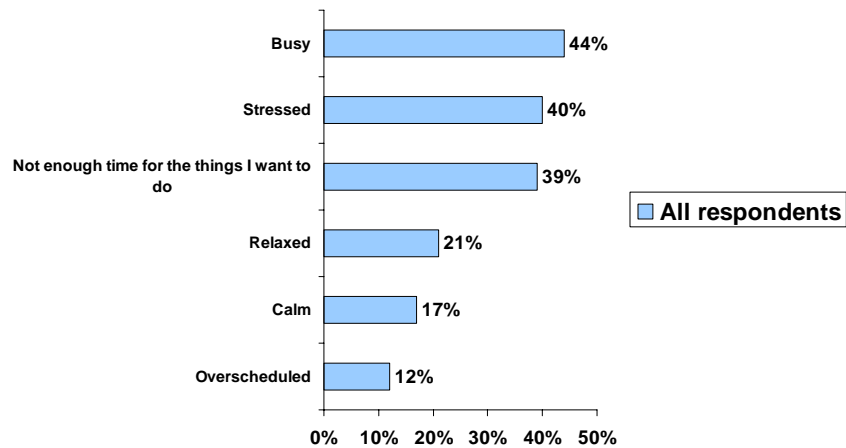
Americans describe their lives as busy and stressful. Many lament a lack of romance and wish they could talk more in person and sit down to a meal more often with their spouse/significant other. Americans name work, lack of time and home and family responsibility as barriers to spending more time with their significant other. There is a strong belief that eating meals together is a means to preserve connections—especially home cooked meals.

#### IV. Results

**Living a busy and stressful life creates a need for more talking in person and sitting down to a meal with one's spouse/significant other.**

- When asked how they would describe their lives these days, a majority of Americans say their lives are busy (44%), stressed (40%) and that they don't have enough time for the things they want to do (39%).
  - Far fewer Americans describe their lives as relaxed (21%) or calm (17%).

How would you describe your life these days?

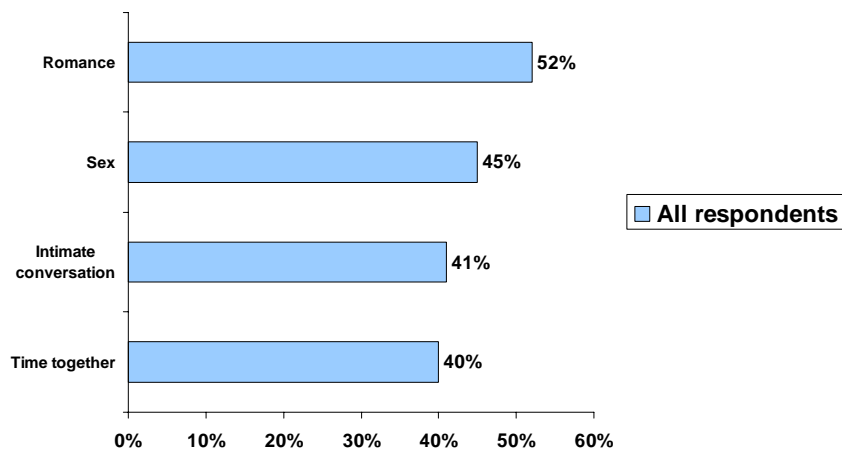


- Women are significantly more likely than men to describe their lives as stressed (47% vs. 32%).

## Couples confess: They want more romance!

- A majority of Americans (76%) wish that they could add more romance to their relationship.
  - Half (52%) of Americans report that romance is lacking in their relationships; this is the most-missed element of relationships.
    - Four in ten Americans named intimate conversations (41%) and time together (40%) as elements that are missing from their relationships, while 45% cited sex.

### Things missing in your relationship

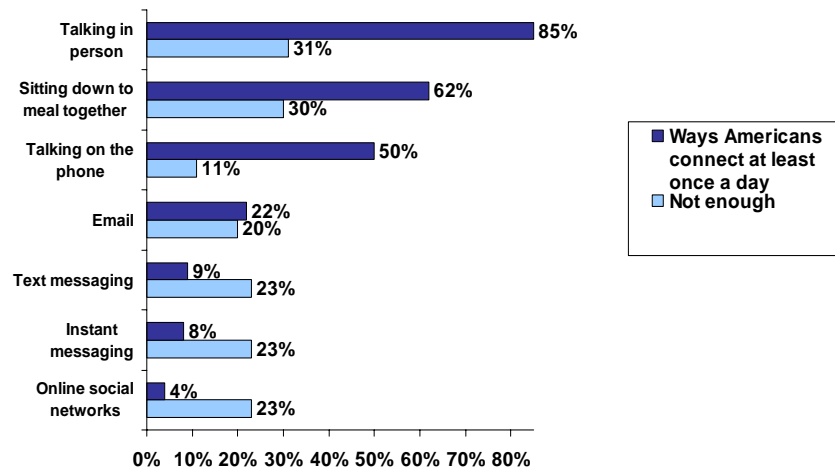


- A majority of respondents (63%) agree that most of their communication with their partners is about the "logistics" or the details of daily living.

## Couples point to a need for more time together

- Half (51%) of Americans admit that they and their significant other do not have time to connect with each other like they once did.
- Most respondents manage to connect with their spouse/significant other at least once a day by talking in person (85%) and sitting down to a meal together (62%).
  - However, one in three believe that they don't talk in person (31%) or sit down to a meal together (30%) with their spouse/significant other often enough.

### Americans Connect in Person - But not Enough!

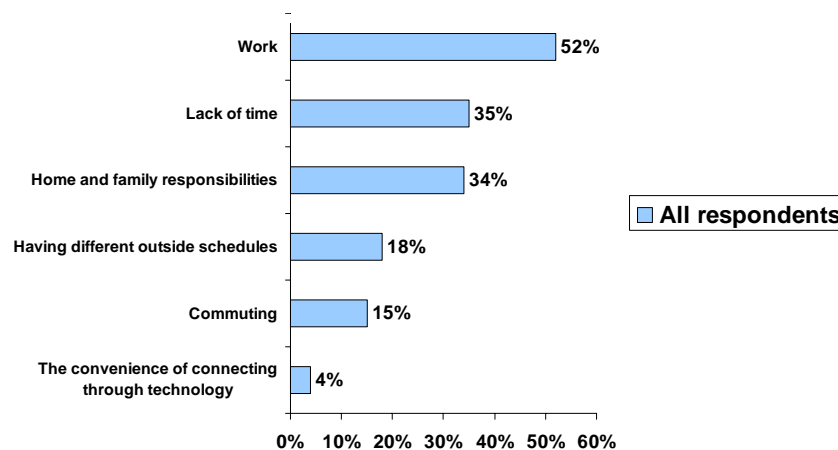


- Almost three-quarters (72%) of Americans wish they had more time to spend with their spouse/significant other.

## What gets in the way of spending time together?

- Three-quarters (76%) of Americans name at least one barrier to connecting in person with their spouse or significant other.
  - Work is the main barrier, cited by half (52%) of Americans.
  - This is followed by lack of time (35%), home and family responsibilities (34%), and having different outside interests (18%).

### Barrier to spending more time together

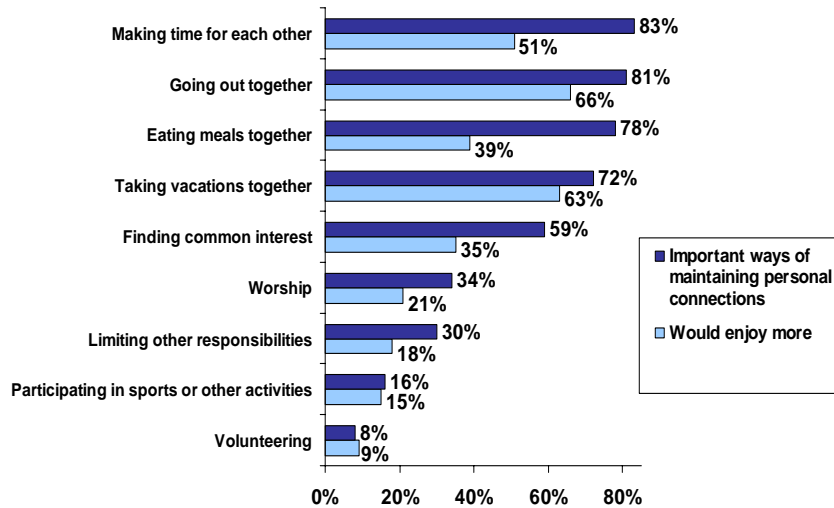


## Eating meals together may be the solution couples need

- The vast majority of Americans agree that there is nothing better than connecting with your spouse/significant other over a meal (84%).
- Similarly, two-thirds (64%) agree that eating meals at home promotes intimacy more than eating out.
- About eight in ten respondents would agree that making time for each other, going out together and eating meals together are ways of maintaining personal connections with their spouse/significant other.
  - Far fewer mention participating in sports or other activities (16%) or volunteering (8%) as ways of maintaining personal connections.

- Large numbers of respondents would enjoy going out with their partner more (66%), taking more vacations together (63%) and making more time for each other (51%).
  - Four in ten (39%) would enjoy eating more meals together.

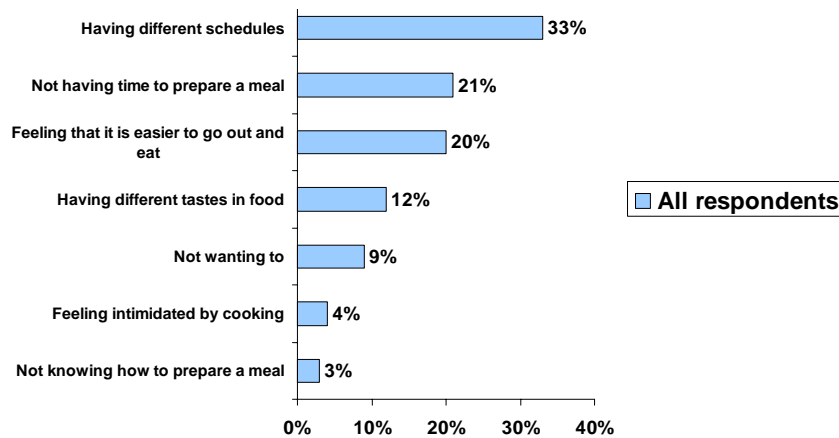
## Americans Crave more Connections



### **Enjoying a home cooked meal together can be a challenge.**

- Over half (55%) of Americans point to barriers that stop them from sharing more home cooked meals with their spouse/significant other.
- These barriers include having different schedules (33%), not having time to prepare a meal (21%) and feeling that it is easier to go out and eat (20%).
  - Fewer respondents name not wanting to share home cooked meals (9%), feeling intimidated by cooking (4%), or not knowing how to cook (3%) as factors preventing them from eating home cooked meals.

### Barriers to sharing a home cooked meal with your spouse/significant other



### Focus on Technology

- Almost four in ten (38%) Americans admit that even with all of our communication technology today, they feel less connected than they would like to be with their spouse/ significant other.
- Half (50%) of couples connect daily by talking on the phone, and a quarter (22%) email daily.
  - Couples also use text messaging (9%) or instant messaging (8%) to connect on a daily basis.
- While they don't feel that they connect in-person enough, Americans are satisfied with the amount of other communication methods:
  - Eight in ten (83%) Americans feel that they use the phone just the right amount to connect with their partner.
  - Three-quarters feel that they use email (75%), instant messaging (75%), text messaging (75%) and online social networks (76%) to connect with their partner just the right amount.

- Among respondents who use email, instant messaging or text messaging 55% report using abbreviations such as LOL, BRB and TTYL.
- One in three (34%) Americans agrees that using abbreviations or shortened communication terms makes it more difficult to connect through intimate conversations with their spouse or significant other.