

at pass judgment on what your spouse tells you or try to each other advice. Remember that you are simply on a fact-finding mission. Your goal is to listen and learn about your mate.

EXERCISE 1: THE LOVE MAP 20 QUESTIONS GAME

Play this game together in the spirit of laughter and gentle fun. The more you play, the more you'll learn about the love maps concept and how to apply it to your relationship.

STEP 1. Each of you should take a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Together, randomly decide on twenty numbers between 1 and 60.

STEP 2. Below is a list of numbered questions. Beginning with the top of your column, match the numbers you chose with the corresponding question. Each of you should ask your partner this question. If your spouse answers correctly (you be the judge), he or she receives the number of points indicated for that question, and you receive one point. If your spouse answers incorrectly, neither of you receives any points. The same rules apply when you answer. The winner is the person with the higher score after you've both answered all twenty questions.

1. Name my two closest friends. (2)
2. What is my favorite musical group, composer, or instrument? (2)
3. What was I wearing when we first met? (2)
4. Name one of my hobbies. (3)
5. Where was I born? (1)
6. What stresses am I facing right now? (4)
7. Describe in detail what I did today, or yesterday. (4)
8. When is my birthday? (1)
9. What is the date of our anniversary? (1)
10. Who is my favorite relative? (2)
11. What is my fondest unrealized dream? (5)
12. What is my favorite website? (2)

13. What is one of my greatest fears or disaster scenarios? (3)
14. What is my favorite time of day for lovemaking? (3)
15. What makes me feel most competent? (4)
16. What turns me on sexually? (3)
17. What is my favorite meal? (2)
18. What is my favorite way to spend an evening? (2)
19. What is my favorite color? (1)
20. What personal improvements do I want to make in my life? (4)
21. What kind of present would I like best? (2)
22. What was one of my best childhood experiences? (2)
23. What was my favorite vacation? (2)
24. What is one of my favorite ways to relax? (4)
25. Who is my greatest source of support (other than you)? (3)
26. What is my favorite sport? (2)
27. What do I most like to do with time off? (2)
28. What is one of my favorite weekend activities? (2)
29. What is my dream getaway place? (3)
30. What is my favorite movie? (2)
31. What are some of the important events coming up in my life? How do I feel about them? (4)
32. What are some of my favorite ways to work out? (2)
33. Who was my best friend in childhood? (3)
34. What is one of my favorite magazines? (2)
35. Name one of my major rivals or "enemies." (3)
36. What would I consider my ideal job? (4)
37. What do I fear the most? (4)
38. Who is my least favorite relative? (3)
39. What is my favorite holiday? (2)
40. What kinds of books do I most like to read? (3)
41. What is my favorite TV show? (2)
42. Which side of the bed do I prefer? (2)
43. What am I most sad about? (4)
44. Name one of my concerns or worries. (4)
45. What medical problems do I worry about? (2)
46. What was my most embarrassing moment? (3)
47. What was my worst childhood experience? (3)

48. Name two of the people I most admire. (4)
49. Name my major rival or enemy. (3)
50. Of all the people we both know, who do I like the least? (3)
51. What is one of my favorite desserts? (2)
52. What is my social security number? (2)
53. Name one of my favorite novels. (2)
54. What is my favorite restaurant? (2)
55. What are two of my aspirations, hopes, wishes? (4)
56. Do I have a secret ambition? What is it? (4)
57. What foods do I hate? (2)
58. What is my favorite animal? (2)
59. What is my favorite song? (2)
60. Which sports team is my favorite? (2)

Play this game as frequently as you'd like. The more you play, the more you'll come to understand the concept of a love map and the kind of information yours should include about your spouse.

EXERCISE 2: ASKING OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Updating your love map is as important as the map itself. The process entails asking open-ended questions, and then remembering the answers. An open-ended question is one that can't be answered with a quick "yes" or "no." Instead, it invites your partner to offer up his or her experiences, opinions, and emotions. Asking an open-ended question demonstrates genuine interest in your partner's life and inner world.

Instructions: Below is a long list of open-ended questions. Choose four to ask each other. Switch off being the speaker and the listener. After your partner answers your question, follow up with an open-ended question of your own. Then answer that original question you asked your partner. Now it's your partner's turn to ask you an open-ended question and so on. Of course, you don't have to limit yourselves to just four of these questions. Over time, you can go through all of them—it can be entertaining and enlightening.

1. How would you like your life to be different three years from now?
2. Do you see your work changing in the future? How?
3. What is your opinion of our physical home? Would you make changes if you could?
4. How do you think your life would have been different if you lived 100 years ago?
5. How would you compare yourself as a mother (father) to your own mother (father)?
6. What kind of person do you think our child(ren) will become? Any fears? Any hopes?
7. How are you feeling about your job these days?
8. If you could redo a five-year period of your life, which would you choose?
9. How are you feeling right now about being a parent?
10. If you could change one thing in your past, what would it be?
11. What is the most exciting thing happening in your life right now?
12. If you could instantly possess three new skills, which would you choose?
13. When it comes to the future, what do you worry about most?
14. Who do you consider your best friends or closest allies? Has that list changed recently?
15. What qualities do you value most highly in friends right now?
16. What were the best and worst things that happened to you when you were a teen?
17. If you could live during any other time in history, when would you choose and why?
18. If you could choose a different career or vocation, what would it be, and why?
19. What is the one thing you would most like to change about your personality? Why?
20. Do you feel like certain things are missing from your life? What are they?
21. Do you think you've changed in the last year? How so?
22. If you could design the perfect home for us, what would it be like?
23. If you could live another person's life, whose would you choose?
24. Have any of your life goals recently changed?

25. What are some of your life dreams now?
26. What are your goals for us as a family?
27. What goals do you have just for yourself right now?
28. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
29. What have been the highlights and low points of the past year for you?
30. What adventures would you like to have in your life right now?

The love map questions above are useful for creating a broad outline of your current lives. But love maps shouldn't just be broad—they should also be deep. The next exercise will ensure that yours are.

EXERCISE 3: WHO AM I?

The more you know about each other's inner world, the more profound and rewarding your relationship will be. This questionnaire is designed both to guide you through some self-exploration and to help you share this exploration with your partner. Work on this exercise even if you and your spouse consider yourselves open books. There's always more to know about each other. Life changes us, so neither of you may be the same person who spoke those wedding vows five, ten, or thirty years ago.

Many of the questions in this exercise are powerful. Please make sure you have enough time and privacy to do them justice. In fact, it may be best to reserve this exercise for an uninterrupted stretch when you do not have work to do, deadlines to meet, e-mails to send, or children (or anybody else) to look after. Most likely, you won't be able to complete this questionnaire in one sitting, nor should you try. Instead, break it up by section and proceed slowly and together.

Answer the questions in each section as candidly as you can. You don't have to answer every aspect of each question—just respond to the parts that are relevant to your life. Write your answers in a private journal or notebook. If writing so much is hard, you can do it in outline form—but the process of writing this down is important to the success of the exercise. When you're ready, exchange notebooks

and share with each other what you have written. Discuss each other's entries and what this added knowledge implies for your marriage and the deepening of your friendship.

My Triumphs and Strivings

1. What has happened in your life that you are particularly proud of? Write about your psychological triumphs, experiences that exceeded your expectations, periods when you came through trials and tribulations even better off.
2. How have these successes shaped your life? How have they affected the way you think of yourself and your capabilities? How have they influenced your goals and the things you strive for?
3. What role has pride (that is, feeling proud, being praised, expressing praise for others) played in your life? Did your parents show you that they were proud of you when you were a child? How? How have other people responded to your accomplishments?
4. Did your parents show that they loved you? How? Was affection readily expressed in your family? If not, what are the effects and implications of this for your marriage?
5. What role does pride in your accomplishments play in your marriage? What role do your own strivings have in your marriage? What do you want your partner to know and understand about these aspects of yourself, your past, present, and plans for the future? How do you show pride in each other?

Injuries and Healing

1. What difficult events or periods have you gone through? Write about any significant psychological insults and injuries you have sustained, your losses, disappointments, trials, and tribulations. Include periods of stress and duress, as well as any quieter periods of despair, hopelessness, and loneliness.

Also include any deep traumas you have undergone as a child or adult. For example, harmful relationships, humiliating events, even molestation, abuse, rape, or torture.

2. How have you survived these traumas? What are their lasting effects on you?

3. How did you strengthen and heal yourself? How did you redress your grievances? How did you revive and restore yourself?
4. How did you gird and protect yourself against this ever happening again?
5. How do these injuries and the ways you protect and heal yourself affect your marriage today? What do you want your partner to know and understand about these aspects of yourself?

My Emotional World

1. How did your family express the following when you were a child:
 - Anger
 - Sadness
 - Fear
 - Affection
 - Interest in one another
 - Pride in one another
2. During your childhood, did your family have to cope with a particular emotional problem, such as aggression between parents, a depressed parent or a somewhat emotionally wounded one? What implications does this have for your marriage and your other close relationships (friendships, relationships with your parents, siblings, children)?
3. What is your own philosophy about expressing feelings, particularly sadness, anger, fear, pride, and love? Are any of these difficult for you to express or to hear your spouse express? What is the basis of your perspective on this?
4. What differences exist between you and your spouse in the area of expressing emotion? What is behind these differences? What are the implications of these differences for you?

My Mission and Legacy

1. Imagine that you are standing in a graveyard looking at your own tombstone. Now write the epitaph you would like to see there. Begin with the words: "Here lies . . ."
2. Write your own obituary. (It does not have to be brief.) How do you want people to think of your life, to remember you?
3. Now you're ready to write a mission statement for your own life. What is the purpose of your life? What is its meaning? What are you trying to accomplish? What is your larger struggle?
4. What legacy would you like to leave when you die?
5. What significant goals have you yet to realize? This can be creating something or having a particular experience. Minor examples are learning to play the banjo, climbing a mountain, and so on.

Who I Want to Become

Take a moment now to reflect on what you have just written. We are all involved in becoming the person we most want to be. In that struggle, we all have demons to fight and overcome.

1. Describe the person you want to become.
2. How can you best help yourself become that person?
3. What struggles have you already faced in trying to become that person?
4. What demons in yourself have you had to fight? Or still have to fight?
5. What would you most like to change about yourself?
6. What dreams have you denied yourself or failed to develop?
7. What do you want your life to be like in five years?
8. What is the story of the kind of person you would like to be?


The Next Step

All of the above exercises and questions will help you develop greater personal insight and a more detailed map of each other's life and world. Getting to know your spouse better and sharing your inner self with your partner is an ongoing process. In fact, it's a lifelong process. So expect to return to these pages from time to time to update your knowledge about yourselves and each other. Think about questions to ask your partner. One therapist I know has taken to wearing a Bugs Bunny pin and advising couples that the key to sustaining a happy marriage is to ask periodically, "What's up, doc?"

For all of their power, love maps are only a first step. Happily married couples don't "just" know each other. They build on and enhance this knowledge in many important ways. For starters, they use their love maps to express not only their understanding of each other but their fondness and admiration as well—my second principle.

5

Principle 2: Nurture Your Fondness and Admiration

et's turn again to Dr. Rory, the husband whose love map was the size of a postage stamp and who couldn't even remember the name of the family dog. For years, his wife, Lisa, put up with his workaholism. But a turning point in their relationship occurred one year on Christmas Day, when Rory was, of course, working. Lisa decided to pack a Christmas picnic and, kids in tow, surprise her husband at the hospital.

As they ate together in the waiting room, Rory turned on Lisa, his face like an angry mask. He told her he resented being surprised with a picnic. "Why did you do this? It is really embarrassing." Just then, a resident called and as Rory answered his phone, his face softened and his voice became helpful, warm, and friendly. When he hung up, he turned back to Lisa, his face again full of anger. Something snapped inside Lisa. Clearly her husband was capable of kindness—just not toward her. She packed up the picnic and took the kids home.

Soon afterward she began going out in the evenings without him. After a while Rory asked her for a divorce. But in a last-ditch effort to work out their differences, they decided to try marital counseling. At first they got nowhere. When Lisa tried to be