

Relationships First

The 36 Questions That Lead to Love Workbook



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A Brief History

Arthur Aron, Ph.D., and Elaine Aaron, Ph.D., the creators compiled a set of 36 questions to aid strangers into finding love and intimacy. The original study was published as an article in the *Personality And Social Psychology Bulletin* in 1997. In 2015 it gained main-stream popularity when Mandy Len Catron published it in an article where she personally experimented with the 36 questions to a man she eventually married.

Rules of Engagement

Step 1: Find a partner

Makes sense that in order to get through the questions you have someone to ask the questions to. Find someone you'd like to have a deeper connection with.

Step 2: Ask for consent

It's important for your partner to have an idea of what you're both about to embark on, so ask them if they're alright with taking the time to both share and get to know you.

Step 3: Set aside 45 – 60 minutes

The estimated time-frame is 45 minutes to get through all the questions. There are 3 sets of questions each taking around 15 minutes to answer however, it's recommended not to rush through the process.

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Step 4: Alternate question asking

You can ask the questions from top to bottom, each getting a turn to answer the next question first. (ie, you ask your partner, they answer the question then you answer that same question. The next question then your partner asks you and then they answer the same question and so on)

Step 5: Be real and authentic

Sometimes we don't want to offend or hurt the feelings of another person so we curb our opinions, thoughts, and ideas. The point of this exercise is to build, strengthen, deepen, and create intimacy with our partner, however, by not sharing our authentic selves we reduce the chances of that intimacy. So, allow your emotions to be present with you and your answers during this process, this will only deepen your connection.

Step 6: Be present for their answers

When we listen to others we often get caught up in what we want to say while they're still sharing their opinions, thoughts, and ideas. The purpose is to be fully present in the moment with your partner, so in order to accomplish this you must place aside your want and desire to interrupt them when they are speaking. Listen fully and even provide them feedback of what you're hearing them tell you, this will only deepen your connection.

Step 7: Give them space and respect

Some questions may be difficult to answer for either you or your partner. You wouldn't want them to force you to answer a question you'd feel uncomfortable with so you should allow them the space and respect to do the same if they so choose.

Along with having difficulty answering, some answers might not be what you thought you'd hear – or even come across as offensive to you. Remember the purpose here is understanding and intimacy. Allow your partner's opinions, thoughts, and ideas to be heard and not judged.

The 36 Questions

Set I

1. Given the choice of anyone in the world, whom would you want as a dinner guest?
2. Would you like to be famous? In what way?
3. Before making a telephone call, do you ever rehearse what you are going to say? Why?
4. What would constitute a “perfect” day for you?
5. When did you last sing to yourself? To someone else?
6. If you were able to live to the age of 90 and retain either the mind or body of a 30-year-old for the last 60 years of your life, which would you want?
7. Do you have a secret hunch about how you will die?
8. Name three things you and your partner appear to have in common.
9. For what in your life do you feel most grateful?
10. If you could change anything about the way you were raised, what would it be?
11. Take four minutes and tell your partner your life story in as much detail as possible.
12. If you could wake up tomorrow having gained any one quality or ability, what would it be?

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Set II

13. If a crystal ball could tell you the truth about yourself, your life, the future, or anything else, what would you want to know?
14. Is there something that you've dreamed of doing for a long time? Why haven't you done it?
15. What is the greatest accomplishment of your life?
16. What do you value most in a friendship?
17. What is your most treasured memory?
18. What is your most terrible memory?
19. If you knew that in one year you would die suddenly, would you change anything about the way you are now living? Why?
20. What does friendship mean to you?
21. What roles do love and affection play in your life?
22. Alternate sharing something you consider a positive characteristic of your partner. Share a total of five items.
23. How close and warm is your family? Do you feel your childhood was happier than most other people's?
24. How do you feel about your relationship with your mother?

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Set III

25. Make three true "we" statements each. For instance, "We are both in this room feeling..."
26. Complete this sentence: "I wish I had someone with whom I could share..."
27. If you were going to become a close friend with your partner, please share what would be important for him or her to know.
28. Tell your partner what you like about them; be very honest this time, saying things that you might not say to someone you've just met.
29. Share with your partner an embarrassing moment in your life.
30. When did you last cry in front of another person? By yourself?
31. Tell your partner something that you like about them already.
32. What, if anything, is too serious to be joked about?
33. If you were to die this evening with no opportunity to communicate with anyone, what would you most regret not having told someone? Why haven't you told them yet?
34. Your house, containing everything you own, catches fire. After saving your loved ones and pets, you have time to safely make a final dash to save any one item. What would it be? Why?
35. Of all the people in your family, whose death would you find most disturbing? Why?
36. Share a personal problem and ask your partner's advice on how he or she might handle it. Also, ask your partner to reflect to you how you seem to be feeling about the problem you have chosen.