

# Date night

FOR MARRIED COUPLES

## Topic: Money

Money has meaning, beyond the expenses and the budgets and the arithmetic involved with saving and spending. The goal is to find out what money means to you, and understand what money means to your spouse.

Based on John Gottman's Eight Dates



Date night with your finest

### Prepare for the date:

Before the date, think about what money means to you, where you got those ideas from, what your financial dreams are. Think about what you consider a necessity and a luxury (Corona may be giving you some new perspectives about all that).

- Check through the accompanying list for some thoughts about money. How do these resonate with you?
- If, as you prepare for this conversation, you notice any triggers, come up with a plan to keep it in check.

### Setting for the date:

Go to any place that makes you feel comfortable, wealthy, or rich in some way, however you define those things. Be creative. But, don't actually spend money; just surround yourself in that atmosphere. *Modified for quarantine:* Try to recreate a luxury spot (hey, pick Dubai!). Use your best dishes and cloth napkins. Dress up. Put on a tie. Dim the lights, ambient music.

### The date:

- Listen to each other's stories around money. With genuine, open curiosity; no judgment.
- What would you consider is your money style? Take a money quiz together.
- **IMPORTANT:** This conversation should not be about creating budgets, money making/saving ideas or harping on money mistakes of the past or current.

### Conversation starters:

#### How did your parents handle money?

Spend money? Save money? Talk about money?  
Deal with allowances?

#### What are your childhood memories around money?

Your parents? Siblings and relatives? Peers?  
School? What emotions do these memories evoke?

#### What messages did you receive about money and materialism?

From school? family? peers?  
community? culture at large?

#### What did money symbolize in your family and community?

Some possibilities...  
Tzedakah • Love • Power • Control • Luxury  
Independence • Dependency • Self worth  
Security • Freedom • Corruption • Other ...

#### How did you react to those memories and messages?

/ What did you tell yourself about money?

- I want to be just like \_\_\_\_\_?  
In what way?
- I want to never be like \_\_\_\_\_?  
In what way?
- How I want to deal with money?
- What is your biggest fear around money?
- What do you need to feel safe about the future, at least from the finances perspective?
- How often do you think about money? How can I help you feel secure when you are worried about money?

## Money

What does having enough money mean to you?

Rate each of this statements: 5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

Add comments to explain your response.

Notice where your higher numbers are? What have you learned about how you think about money.

For me, having enough money means...	1	2	3	4	5	comment
1 ...having power.						
2 ...being independent.						
3 ...being strong.						
4 ...not having to rely on anyone else.						
5 ...being responsible.						
6 ...being able to relax and not worry.						
7 ...being able to have time to do what I like.						
8 ...being able to have luxury.						
9 ...being able to create.						
10 ...being able to give some of it to other people.						
11 ...love, caring, and affection.						
12 ...safety, security, and stability.						
13 ...feeling competent.						
14 ...having control.						
15 ...allows me to feel positive self - esteem.						
16 ...being acceptable to myself and others.						
17 ...a reward for a lot of effort.						
18 ...being a successful adult.						
19 ...avoiding stress.						
20 ...deserved self - indulgence.						
21 ...feeling respected.						
22 ...taking responsibility as an adult.						
23 ...great freedom.						
24 ...I can have companionship.						
25 ...feeling rich and comfortable.						
26 ...filling a void in my life.						
27 ...I can be happy.						