

Date night

FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Make time together a priority

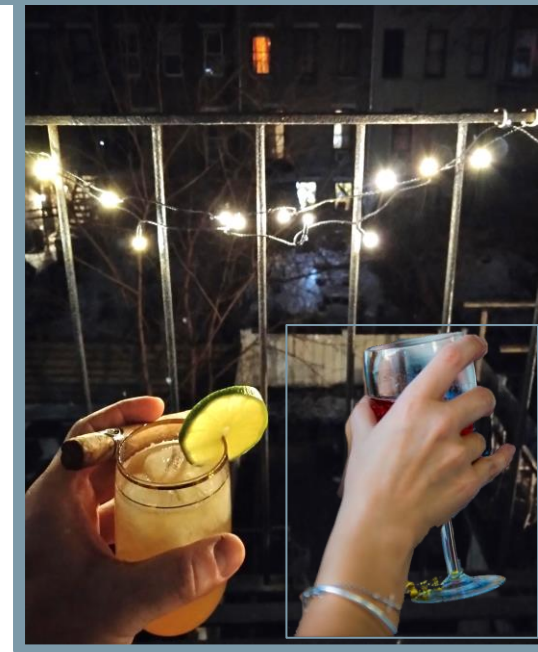
Schedule a date night or day often. Put it on your calendar. Keep that time sacred.

Create a list of things that you would like to do when you can go out. (Ideally on a shared Google document so you can each add to it as a new idea comes to you.)

By just having this list, you will be more excited about going out together. Review the list often. This will inspire you to figure out how to make time for just the two of you.

Make a list of date ideas

1. Each of you make a list of activities that you would like to do with your spouse. Come up with at least 20, even if some are not so exciting to you. Do this alone.
Start with places and activities that you know you both enjoy. Add in some recommendations from friends that you are interested in trying. You might look through websites such as TimeOut to get ideas of what is available locally. Include activities in different realms:
 - Energy level: exciting, high-energy, fun, relaxing, stimulating, playful.
 - Location: At home, local, one-tank trips, long distance.
 - Time: Few minutes, few hours, few days.
 - Cost: No cost, special times, luxury/splurge.
 - Personal: related to hobbies, interests.
 - Think of ways you remember having fun with others when you were a kid.
2. One at a time, read your list aloud to each other. At this point, don't discuss what you think of the ideas. You might ask clarifying questions to better understand the activity, but don't rate or judge the ideas at this point.
3. Review the lists and talk about how you became interested in that activity or why you added it to the list. Such conversations might help you get to know each other even better; you may find out about childhood memories, interesting experiences and people in each other's lives, dreams, adventure levels, etc.
4. Together, come up with a mutual list of activities that combines your ideas.
 - a. Start with what is on both of your lists.
 - b. Then, think of ways to merge your ideas (ex: Hiking might be something on one list and culture might on the others. You might merge the two with a hike in historical ruins.)
 - c. Add some activities that each of you are willing to try. Be prepared to stretch into new experiences. (You might have thought that you wouldn't like visiting museums, but after a visit to a museum, you may find you like it a bit more than you originally thought.)
5. Schedule one thing from the list to do today, or at least during this upcoming week.



Date night on the fire escape

Date night

FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Topic: Fun & Adventure

How do you each like to have fun? What is the role of play and adventure in your lives?

Based on John Gottman's Eight Dates

Prepare for the date:

Before the date, each of you separately should prepare for a productive and engaging conversation: Think about your own personal ideas of what is fun to you.

- Check through the accompanying list for ideas. Make a star near those that you would really like to include in your life and a check beside those that seem interesting.
- Think about what role fun and adventure plays in your life. What messages did you get about recreation – from your family, schooling, community, media.
- Find pictures of ideas that you would like to try together.
- Think about the levels of fun and adventure you have together. If it is not as much as you would like, think about how you will bring that up.

Setting for the date:

Choose someplace you've never been before. *Modified for quarantine:* Try something novel in your own home. A picnic on the living room floor. The roof or fire escape. Climb a tree in your backyard. Move furniture around. Pull up an image of an exotic location. Order in some food you've never tried before. Put on foreign music.

The date:

- Look through each other's lists. With genuine, open curiosity; no judgment. Review those that you both starred and/or circled.
- Discuss what about those you enjoy and how you might bring more of those into your life.
- What would you consider is your playfulness style? Take a playfulness quiz together.
- Plan your next adventure. Also plan for something novel that you can do at home in the next days.

Conversation starters:

- What does adventure/play mean to you?
- How did you like to play as a child?
- What's the most fun you had in the last few years?
- How do you think we can have more fun?
- Share a story of adventure that you did before you met me.
- What is something you would like to try (bucket list)?
- What is a one-day (reasonably priced) adventure you picture us doing in the near future?
- What messages did you get about play from your parents? Do you agree? What adaptations would you like to make?
- What role does adrenaline/ dopamine rush play in choosing your adventures?



Fun & Adventure

What do you consider fun and recreational?

Make a star near those that you would really like to include in your life and a check beside those that seem interesting.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Hiking | 19. Art Museum |
| 2. Walking on the Beach/Boardwalk | 20. Hands-on Museums |
| 3. Window shopping | 21. Concerts |
| 4. People watching | 22. Lectures on an interest of yours |
| 5. Picnic | 23. Wildlife – birdwatching, whalewatching, zoos, aquariums |
| 6. Boardgames | 24. Jokes |
| 7. Learn a new videogame | 25. Fishing |
| 8. Fooding. Try new food | 26. Jamming. Playing music. |
| 9. Long drive to nowhere | 27. Spa, manicure. |
| 10. Antiquing | 28. Sing silly songs |
| 11. Apple Store | 29. Rock climbing |
| 12. Plan a meal together | 30. Water sports |
| 13. Learn a new language | 31. Winter sports |
| 14. Armchair travel | 32. Paragliding |
| 15. Bicycling | 33. Creating pottery |
| 16. Boating/ canoeing/ rafting | 34. Strike up conversations with strangers |
| 17. Amusement Parks | 35. Watch home videos |
| 18. Peruse the shelves at a book store | |

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

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.



Date night with your finest

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.						

Date night

FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Topic: Purim

Our earlier experiences around the holidays impact how we celebrate them as adults. Sharing your Purim memories can help you both better understand why you feel certain ways about different aspects of Purim. You may also decide together about creating new family traditions and experiences.



Prepare for the date:

Before the date, think about your Purim experiences as a child and young adult. Think about some of your more recent Purims. Find the old albums. Print pictures from your phone. (If you were introduced to Purim as an adult, think about your first Purim and subsequent ones.)

Setting for the date:

Get yourself in the Purim mode. Go to a place that makes you think about Purim (candy store, bakery, costume store, Judaica store). Purchase something or just browse. Then, building on that experience have your conversations about Purim celebrations.

The date:

- Listen to each other's stories about Purim. With genuine, open curiosity; no judgment.
- **IMPORTANT:** This conversation should not be about creating plans or budgets for Purim.

Conversation starters:

What are your earliest Purim memories? Did you do anything interesting/ crazy during high school/yeshiva years? Have you ever spent Purim in a culture different from your own? Did you celebrate Purim as a community; what were celebrations like?

How far in advance did you prepare for or begin to celebrate Purim? What did you do?

What is a favorite costume that you wore as a child? A cute or funny costume you have seen? As a child, did you enjoy getting dressed up? What do you think about that now?

What are your thoughts about the way your family celebrated Purim? What traditions would you like to continue? What might you tweak? What might you want to not do?

Are there Purim customs that you would like to learn more about or experience? What about those are intriguing?

What are some Purim songs you remember singing as a child? What are some Purim songs you sang at the Purim seuda?

What are your memories about the type of Mishloach Manos you gave to your friends as a child? What are your thoughts around that now?

What are your memories about the type of Mishloach Manos your family gave? What are your thoughts around that now?

Where did you usually hear the Megillah? What was the setting and experience? Any unusual experiences?

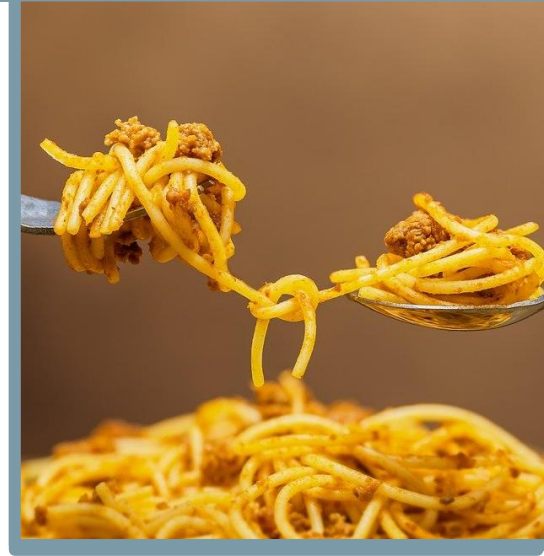
Where did you celebrate the Purim Seuda as a child? Were there any signature Purim foods or drinks? Any memorable incidents?

What are some Purim experiences in married life that stand out? What was so memorable about those?

What Purim experiences and memories do you want your children to have? What can you do to make that happen?

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Topic: Food

Food is fuel. But food offers so much more beyond being an essential requirement for life. We all have experiences with food. Everyone has a different attitude to food and mealtime, and it will mean different things to different people.

Prepare for the date:

Before the date, think about your experiences with food and your food preferences.

Setting for the date:

Cook a meal together.
Bring in take-out.
Go to a favorite restaurant.
Go to the supermarket together.
Prepare a smorgasbord of food to taste.

The date:

- Listen to each other's ideas about food. With genuine, open curiosity; no judgment.
- Be brave, try new food.
- **IMPORTANT:** Just have fun!

Conversation starters:

What was the general attitude about food and mealtime in your childhood? Was mealtime a family occasion, or more about eating to satiate hunger, or something in between? Was food a topic of discussion (sharing recipes, family traditions)?

What were typical foods that you ate as a child? What were typical snacks you brought to school? What was your typical breakfast? What did you have for dinner?

What were Shabbos and Yom Tov meals like? What types of food were served? Did you have guests? How were Shabbos meals with guests different from a family-only Shabbos?

Who prepared the food? Menu planning, shopping, cooking, serving, cleaning after?

Were there any special foods served at different occasions? Birthdays? Summer? Holidays? When someone was sick? Specific Shabbos? **What special family recipes were served throughout the year?** The Yomim Tovim, in general. What family traditions were experienced?

What do you want to be your family's experiences around food? Breakfast, snacks, dinners, Shabbos, Yom Tov, parties, restaurants. How do you want to celebrate special occasions/ parties?

Do you like to try new foods or do you like to eat foods that you know you like? What are some foods that you tried and now like? Where do you like to try new foods – new recipes at home? At a restaurant? At a party, wedding? What might be behind your choice?

What is a favorite comfort food? When was the first time you ate that? What would be an occasion that you would like to eat that food? Does food impact your mood, how? How do you feel after eating your comfort food?

What are your thoughts about healthful eating? What do you consider healthful, what is too much? Are you prepared to buy more expensive foods because it is more healthful? Where do you get your information about what is healthful?

How do you feel after eating food you wish you didn't? What might be better ways to think about that?

What is the relationship between food and different cultures? Have you experienced food and mealtime in other cultures or countries. What might you like to incorporate into your life?

Date night

FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Topic: Pesach

Our earlier experiences around the holidays impact how we celebrate them as adults. Sharing your Pesach memories can help you both better understand why you feel certain ways about different aspects of Pesach. You may also decide together about creating new family traditions and experiences.



Prepare for the date:

Before the date, think about your Pesach experiences as a child and young adult. Think about some of your more recent Pesachs. Find the old albums. Print pictures from your phone. (If you were introduced to Pesach as an adult, think about your first Purim and subsequent ones.)

Setting for the date:

Get yourself in the Pesach mode. Go to a place that makes you think about Pesach (Passover aisle, Judaica store). Purchase something or just browse. Then, building on that experience have your conversations about Pesach experiences.

The date:

- Listen to each other's stories about Pesach. With genuine, open curiosity; no judgment.
- **IMPORTANT:** This conversation should not be about creating plans or budgets for Pesach.

Conversation starters:

What are your earliest Pesach memories? Did you prepare in school for Pesach? What kinds of projects did you bring home?

How far in advance did you prepare for or begin to celebrate Pesach? What did you do? What was that like for you?

What is a favorite food that you ate only on Pesach? Was it homemade or purchased? Who made it? Do you have the recipe? Where did you buy it?

What are your thoughts about the way your family celebrated Pesach? What traditions would you like to continue? What might you tweak? What might you want to not do?

Are there Pesach customs that you would like to learn more about or experience? What about those are intriguing?

What are some Pesach songs you remember singing as a child? What are some Pesach songs you sang at the seder?

How long was the seder? What did the children do during the seder? What did the adults do? Did you do anything specifically to keep the children engaged?

Did you celebrate Pesach with extended family? Who? Where? Any special family memories?

What was the day(s) before Pesach like? What was your role? What were the adults doing? What did you eat during those days?

What was the typical Pesach menu? Did that change over the years? Did your family cook all meals at home? Did you invite guests? Did you go to others as guests?

What did you do for Chol Hamoed? Were both your parents involved in Chol Hamoed activities? Any memorable incidents?

What are some Pesach experiences in married life that stand out? What was so memorable about those?

What Pesach experiences and memories do you want your children to have? What can you do to make that happen?