

Date night

FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Topic: Family Rituals

Family rituals are special things you do regularly as a family. Rituals are different from routines in that rituals have symbolic meaning and are done at special occasions. (Family dinner is a routine, a special dinner celebration is a ritual.) In addition to being something to look forward to, these rituals and traditions also establish a foundation for family values and serve as special bonding experiences. These rituals can be as unique and special as the family itself.



Prepare for the date:

Read these prompts and think about the rituals you experienced as a family. Think about the backstory; how and when did the ritual start? Who was there? What did you and the others in the family think about it then? Now?

Setting for the date:

Try to recreate one of your family rituals. As applicable, bring the relevant materials. Bring photos, props, cards, song sheets, whatever.

The date:

- Take turns sharing the rituals.
- As applicable, also talk about how you felt then, what you learned about yourself and your family's values.
- Talk about how you feel now as you recall those. What do your memories tell you about creating family rituals and if and how you want to continue those particular rituals. What might you tweak? What do you not want for your family?

Conversation starters:

- What are some family rituals during the holidays** (think of each holiday separately)? Who was there? Where did it take place? How did you feel? How do you feel now as you are remembering those?
- What are some rituals around births?** For the new baby? For the siblings? For the extended family? How did you feel? How do you feel now as you are remembering those?
- What are some rituals around weddings?** For the new couple? For the extended family? How did you feel? How do you feel now as you are remembering those?
- What are some rituals around birthdays?** For the person having the birthday? For the siblings? For the parents? For the extended family/ friends? How did you feel? How do you feel now as you are remembering those?
- What are some rituals your family had around different times of the school year** – shopping for school supplies, first day of school, school break, last day of school, entering and/ or completing different school milestones, etc. How did you feel? How do you feel now as you are remembering those?
- What are some rituals your family may have had during different times of the year** – fall, first snow, spring, summer. How did you feel? How do you feel now as you are remembering those?
- What are some rituals your family may have done that helped you feel more confident in the world?** How do you feel now as you are remembering those?
- What are some rituals your family had on Shabbos or Motzei Shabbos?** How do you feel now as you are remembering those?
- What are some rituals or traditions your family has in service of others** – Chesed, your Shul, neighbors and friends, helping an organization? How did you feel? How do you feel now as you are remembering those?