

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER!



Find Hidden Treasure
In *YOUR* Relationship!



DIG A LITTLE DEEPER!

(FIND HIDDEN TREASURE IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP)



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FORWARD

"Dig a Little Deeper" (Find hidden treasure in your relationship)

"A fun and revealing handbook for the love-impaired couple"

Did you ever play "20 questions" when you were a kid? Didn't you just love it? "Inquiring minds want to know".

Well, why not play "questions" with your mate? We have compiled here a fun and clever workbook with **104** essential questions everyone should ask their mate! Here's your chance to find out all the important things you really need to know about your partner. This is your life you're talking about!

Take the time to think carefully about each question and answer honestly. There's no need to divulge vivid details of your past life that really won't matter to your future. But this exercise is useless if you only give answers that you think your mate wants to hear! It is important to reveal your true self, and thus find out what your partner is really like, too. Better to challenge your relationship with honesty and thought now, than answer to irreconcilable differences in the lawyer's office later.

Although we have constructed most of the questions so they are easy and fun to work with, take them seriously, answer honestly, and thereby get the most out of this useful couple's handbook.

Try not to avoid questions just because they are uncomfortable or embarrassing to you. The goal is to "dig a little deeper". But if any question does not pertain to you, or you just don't want to answer it, leave it blank. This may raise a red flag to your partner, but perhaps that's a good thing. Not answering a question can be quite revealing in itself, and could well start a conversation between you that needs to be started.



How to use this handbook:

Print out two complete copies, including these instructions. Staple each book together, grab a pen or pencil, and get started! If more than one response to a question is right for you, indicate all answers that apply. **You can have more than one correct answer for each question.** You should be able to complete the questionnaire in one or two sittings. Then... exchange completed books... and let the games begin...

Have fun, you guys, and good luck with your treasure hunt!

Oh, yeah, and we've also got some great sections in our website to help you guys "Keep Love Alive":

For some excellent new ways to enrich your love relationship:

www.findlove-keeplove.com/keep-love-alive.html

And don't forget your all-important intimate life together:

www.findlove-keeplove.com/sensuous-woman.html

We feel that humor & play is crucial to any successful union:

www.findlove-keeplove.com/naughty-playroom.html

Click here for some of the best advice from long-termers we've ever heard:

www.findlove-keeplove.com/love-wisdom.html

Or just give a visit to our homepage, to see what we're all about!

www.findlove-keeplove.com





GREEN LIGHT: "Getting to Know You"

This is me! (Personality, likes & dislikes, communication, habits)

1. Is there one thing your partner does that really annoys you? _____

2. Do you feel he/she is "anal" or obsessed about anything? _____

3. Do you think it is ever okay to express anger in a physical manner (hitting, slapping)? _____

4. Do you think you have a bad temper? _____

What do you do when you lose your temper? _____

5. I am: A morning person (cheerful and chipper when I wake up).
 A night person (& grouchy when I wake up in the morning).
 Neither, pretty much the same both morning and night.

6. I am: Almost always neat, clean and organized.
 Pretty clean but not always so neat.
 Casual and cluttered.
 Being neat and organized is just not that important to me.
 Messy, but willing to clean up my act for a roommate.
 A slob around the house and I don't really care.

7. I think it is important for a couple to:

- Have sit-down talks fairly often to clear the air.
- Have serious discussions only when things get too edgy.
- I don't like to have serious discussions at all, but I will if my mate insists.
- I prefer to deal with things by NOT having lengthy discussions.



8. I:
- Am a hugger and kisser, often very affectionate.
 - Will hold hands and kiss in public.
 - Generally only give hugs or kisses if my mate initiates it.
 - Don't feel real comfortable with hugging and kissing spontaneously.
 - Am very private and do not like such intimacy unless we are making love.

9. I feel that:

- Everyone deserves some privacy, and emails, letters and passwords should be kept private.
- I will respect my partners privacy and will not snoop in their mail, wallet, cellphone, computer, etc.
- I will respect their privacy if they want it that way, but I don't think it should be necessary.
- There should be no secrets; privacy rules like this should not be necessary or adhered to in a good relationship.

10. What do you like most about your partner's personality?

Least: _____

11. If you could change one thing about your partner's appearance, what would make them more attractive to you? _____

12. Does your partner take baths, brush teeth and groom often enough for your taste? _____

13. Name the 2 things you love most about your partner:

1) _____

2) _____

14. What are your favorites?

Favorite type of music: _____

Band: _____

Favorite food: _____

Restaurant: _____

Favorite actor: _____

Movie: _____

15. What are your least favorites:

Least favorite music: _____

Foods you hate: _____

Least favorite type of movie: _____

16. How often do you drink alcohol?

- More than 2 drinks daily
- 1-2 drinks a day
- 3-4 drinks a week
- Monthly, on occasion/socially
- Rarely, on special occasions only.
- I do not drink alcohol, but it's okay in moderation in my mate.
- How much alcohol use could you tolerate in a mate? _____

17. Smoking:

- I smoke, and do so in my house.
- I smoke, but not in the house.
- I smoke, but seriously plan to quit soon.
- I do not smoke, but can tolerate it in my house.
- I do not smoke, and don't want to smell it in my house.
- I wish my mate would quit smoking.
- I could not live with or have a long-term relationship with a smoker

18. What topics do you think you two need to talk about more? _____

19. Is there one question you have wanted to ask your mate but just didn't have the nerve (now's the time)? _____



My interests (Pets, hobbies, travel, entertainment)

20. As far as travel, I would like to:

- See most of my country.
- Take a cruise to Alaska or the Caribbean.
- Tour Europe or the Orient.
- I have always wanted to go: _____
- Travel to a new state or country every year.
- Stick close to home and save the money.

21. My idea of a good vacation is:

- Tent camping and fishing trip.
- Gamble in Vegas.
- Rent a motor home and hit the road.
- Rent a cabin in the mountains.
- Stay in a bungalow on the beach.
- Experience cultural events and fancy restaurants in the big city.
- Tour an amusement park like Disney.
- Backpack across Europe.
- I want to do them all before I die.

22. The best vacation I ever took was: _____

23. I am:

- Mechanically inclined and enjoy fixing things.
- Able to figure out how to fix it with the manual.
- Not very handy with mechanical things.
- More apt to pay someone to fix it than get involved.
- Hopelessly NON-mechanical.

24. Sports:

- I will watch anything on TV with a ball involved. I love sports.
- It is important to me to see sporting events in person sometimes.
- I enjoy watching sports every weekend.
- I spend about _____ hours per week watching sports.
- I love my: Monday Night football, Nascar, March Madness (circle) other_____.
- I will occasionally watch a game on TV, but not weekly.
- I do not have much interest in sports, and rarely watch it on TV.
- I hate the sound of squeaking basketball shoes, the crack of a bat, or revving engines, but will tolerate my mate watching in moderation.
- I don't think I could tolerate more than very occasional watching of sports by my mate.

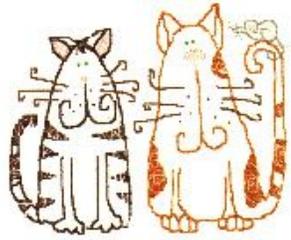
25. Television:

- I think it's pretty much a waste of time and a curse on mankind.
- I don't care for it that much, but don't care if others want to watch.
- I might watch 4-5 hours per week.
- I watch daytime TV every day.
- I enjoy watching at least 2 hours most nights.
- I'll be honest, I love watching TV, and it's on a lot.
- I find it hard to give up control of the clicker.
- I would insist on "equal clicker time".

26. Computer time:

- I hardly ever go online.
- I go online daily to check email and do a few basic tasks.
- I spend more than 2 hours per day online (outside of work).
- I enjoy online games and often play them.
- I am online for hours at night.
- I go to chatrooms and talk with members of the opposite sex.
- I would not approve if my mate chatted online with members of the opposite sex.
- I visit explicit adult websites.
- My computer travels are my own business and should stay private.

27. I have a talent or skill that my mate doesn't know about and this is it: _____



28. Pets: I am a:

- Total animal lover, and must have a pet in my life.
- Circle all that apply: small yappy dog person, big slobbery dog person, cat person, bird lover, reptile-maniac, aquarium lover.
- Not that interested, but I would tolerate if my mate wanted them.
- I would be willing to help care for my mate's pets.
- I hate having animals in the house.
- I am allergic to animals: _____

29. Cooking:

- I mostly eat out.
- I can: Boil eggs and microwave popcorn, and mostly eat pre-packaged foods.
- I can make several homemade dishes and don't mind cooking them occasionally.
- I cook almost daily because I feel like I should.
- I enjoy cooking most every day and like to try new dishes.
- I can cook a gourmet meal and love to treat others to great food.

30. How do you most like to spend a weekend off?

- Lazing around the house, reading or watching TV or rented movies.
- Catching up on chores, home improvement, yard work.
- Spending some time alone with my favorite hobbies, which are:

- Taking my mate out to dinner and a movie.
- I love to get out and party!

31. Art and culture (art galleries, symphony/opera, ballet, live theater):

- Are important in my life, and I spend time enjoying it.
- Not really very interested, but I would go if my mate wanted to.
- Honestly, it bores me.
- Frankly, I'd rather have a root canal.



Relationships (dating, friends, family, holidays)

32. As far as socializing, I enjoy:

- Staying home mostly.
- Going out to eat occasionally with my mate.
- Seeing one or two close friends every week or two.
- Getting together often with small groups of friends.
- Big parties and social events.
- Going out to clubs/dancing.

33. Gifts to you from your honey:

- It is important to me that my mate spend time thinking of a gift for me, and figure it out on his/her own, even if it's not perfect.
- I enjoy receiving: flowers, jewelry, clothes, chocolates, surprise me.
- Honestly, I have been disappointed with most of the gifts I have ever received, and would rather give hints than be disappointed.

34. Now it's your turn to give:

- I like to spend time figuring out exactly what my partner wants and enjoy delighting him/her with it.
- We should decide on a gift spending limit of \$_____
- My partner should not be disappointed with my gift, it's the thought that counts.
- Just tell me what you want and I'll get it!
- I would like to be given some hints or several desirable choices so I won't disappoint.

35. What is the best gift you ever received, and why was it so special? _____



36. How do you like to celebrate the holiday season?

- Decorate the house and yard.
- Plan a big meal and invite the whole family over.
- Quiet time alone with mate and the kids, exchanging gifts.
- Travel somewhere special for the holidays.
- Donate some time volunteering for charitable causes.
- Church is important to me during the holidays.

37. What types of "dates" do you enjoy most? _____

What was the best date you two have ever been on together? _____

38. Do you find it hard to say "I love you"? _____

Is it important to you to hear "I love you" often from your mate? _____

39. What do you think of your mate's parents/family?

- I think they are great, and like to see them often.
- I enjoy them for an occasional evening.
- They really are not my type of people, but I want to keep the peace.
- Honestly, I don't feel comfortable and would rather not spend much time with them.

40. Name something positive you have learned from your mate: _____

41. Do you think you have a great relationship, or do you feel like you two need to work on things? _____



42. Do you think you could live the rest of your life with your mate just the way he/she is now? _____ Or what would they have to change in order for you to possibly commit to them? _____

43. Do you think you or your mate should bail out adult children by giving them money or letting them live at home? _____
Would you have a problem with it if your spouse ever did that? _____

44. What is the best relationship advice you have ever heard? _____

45. Your past dating history:

- I didn't really date that much.
- Fairly pleasant dating past.
- I was pretty much a "player", successful dater.
- Hits 'n misses with romance.
- Hurt a couple of times.
- I have been hurt badly and I'm not really over it yet.



YELLOW LIGHT: "We're an item"

Home & homelife, chores

46. Ugh! The chores!

For each one listed, rate how you feel about doing them:
(1- hate and refuse to do it, 2- dislike but will take my turn at it,
3-neutral about this one, 4-don't really mind doing that,
5-enjoy this one and don't mind at all):

- Vacuuming and dusting_____
- Mopping the floor_____
- Cleaning the bathroom_____
- Take out the garbage_____
- Dish washing chores_____
- Cooking_____
- Laundry_____
- Ironing (What?)_____
- Grocery shopping_____
- Yard maintenance_____
- Washing the car_____
- Minor car maintenance/oil change_____
- Help kids with homework_____
- Discipline children_____
- Walk the dog_____
- Clean the litter box_____

47. Are you willing to sit down with your partner and work out a chore schedule that splits these tasks in half?_____
- Or do you feel that the woman should do most of the domestic chores, and men most of the outside work? (Be honest,now)_____
- Or is there another solution that will work for your partnership?_____
- _____



48. Pick two:

- The toilet paper should come out over the top of the roll.
- The paper should come out from the bottom.
- Doesn't matter, as long as there's some hanging there.
- The man should lower the toilet seat after use.
- The woman should raise the toilet seat after use.
- This is not important to me. I always check before sitting down.

49. Who should clean the toilet?

- Take turns, absolutely, once or twice weekly.
- It's the woman's job; she cleans the toilet, I change the oil.
- I don't mind it, and would be willing to do it most of the time.
- Let it stay dirty.
- Hire someone else to do it.

50. As far as interior decorating:

- I really have no interest and pretty much leave it up to my mate.
- I would like to be in on major decorating decisions.
- Let's plan the decorating scheme together.
- I enjoy home decoration and have some great ideas for it.
- I hope to pretty much have free reign with this by myself.

51. How do you like to see your house kept:

- Dishes put away every night, counters wiped down, beds made daily; pretty much always clean and neat.
- Okay to occasionally have dishes in the sink and unmade beds.
- We tend to these things every 2-3 days; we are busy people.
- Big cleanup when we can't stand it anymore.
- Our house looks *much* different when company's coming over.
- So who makes beds anymore?
- We should hire a housecleaner to come in once or twice a week.
- Kids should be made to help out with household chores daily.



Career, education and dreams for the future

52. Is there a skill or talent you wished you had learned or developed, that you never got around to (ie: play golf, learn to ski, write a book, play a musical instrument, take up painting)? _____

53. If your partner wanted to quit work to go back to school or pursue a dream (like writing a book), how long would you be willing to support them? _____
54. If your mate received a better job offer in another locale, would you be willing to move? _____
55. Would it be okay or preferred if your mate did not work (outside the home)? _____
56. Are you happy with your current job or career? _____
What plans do you have for your career in the future? _____

57. What is your biggest disappointment in your intellectual life? _____

Do you plan to fix that? _____ If so, how and when? _____

58. What do you enjoy most about your current job? _____

What do you dislike most about it? _____



Religion and politics, philosophy of life

59. Religion: What best describes you?

- I am very religious, attend services more than once per week, and I donate money to my church regularly. I tithe _____% of my income to the cause.
- I am very religious, and go to church weekly; I donate modest amounts of money to the church.
- I am religious, and attend services on occasion.
- My religion is: _____
- I consider myself religious, but do not belong to a church.
- I consider myself spiritual, but do not follow specific religious beliefs or customs.
- I do not consider myself to be very spiritual or religious, I guess I'm neutral.
- I am an agnostic (believe in a higher power, but unsure what it is).
- I do not believe in a God. I am an atheist.

60. Could you marry and/or be happy with someone who did not share your basic religious beliefs? _____ It doesn't matter to me what religion my mate believes in/practices? _____

61. I feel that:

- Most things are pre-destined to happen, and I have little power over my true destiny.
- Some things are pre-destined, but I also have the power to change some of what happens.
- Nothing is pre-destined, everything happens by chance, and I am the sole master of my future.
- I look to the stars for guidance in my life (horoscopes).

62. I believe in: (circle all that apply): angels, ghosts, the Devil, Feng Shui, heaven & hell, UFOs, ESP, horoscopes, Tarot, love at first sight.

63. Regarding giving to charity:

- I give often, and this is my favorite charity _____
- I sometimes give to United Way, local shelter or the Salvation Army guy at holidays.
- I rarely give to charities, but if I did I would give to: (circle all desired): NRA, United Way, American Cancer Society, NAACP, NOW, Political party, PETA, SPCA, ACLU, YMCA, Boys/Girls Clubs or Scouts, Big Brothers/Sisters
- I almost never give to charity because I need the money more.

64. Have you ever done any volunteer work? For who and when? _____

65. In what ways do you feel really lucky or blessed? _____

66. Politics: (Circle all that apply)

I am a: republican, democrat, independent, not a registered voter, liberal, conservative, middle of road, don't label me

67. I believe:

- I am very political, and would volunteer time for my party.
- It is important to stay informed on political issues.
- I try to keep up with politics, but it is not a high priority for me.
- I am with a particular party mainly because my parents were.
- I am almost entirely non-political and couldn't care less.

68. Other cultures:

- I am tolerant of other races/religions/cultures; and my friends are diverse.
- I don't think I'm a racist, but I do stick mainly to my own kind.
- I'll be honest, I have my prejudices.
- I believe that people should stick with their own kind.
- Deep down inside, I'm pretty much a racist.



69. Hot button issues:

(1-strongly opposed to, 2-disapprove, 3-neutral, 4-tolerate,
5-strongly in favor of)

Capital punishment_____

Abortion_____

Gay rights_____

Same sex marriage_____

Gun control_____

Having guns in my house_____

Animal rights activism_____

Pornography in my house_____

Environmental conservation_____

Fur coats_____

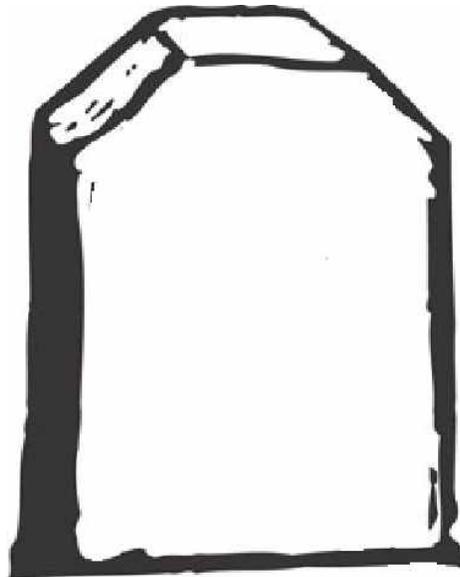
The War in Iraq_____

The current president_____

Racial/cultural equality_____

Women's rights_____

70. What saying would you like to see engraved on your headstone?





RED LIGHT: "Should we take the plunge?"

Children and family traditions

71. Do you want children?_____ How many?_____ Does it matter if they are boys or girls?_____
- Honestly, I don't want any. Kids are great, but not for me.
72. If you find you can't have children, would you be liable to adopt?_____
73. If your partner doesn't want children, could you live with that?_____ Or do you feel you must have kids in order to complete your life?_____
74. (If you already have kids): What are the custody arrangements?_____
- _____
- _____
- Do you pay child support?_____ How much and when will it end?_____
- _____
- How about alimony?_____ How much and when will it end?_____
- _____
75. Do you have strong feelings about raising your children in a certain faith or family tradition?_____ (Explain)_____
- _____
76. Was your childhood happy and secure or not?_____ Share thoughts on this if you want to_____
- _____
77. What is the most traumatic thing that ever happened to you?_____
- _____
- _____
- _____



The "F" word (finances)

78. If we ever live together, as far as money, I think we should:
- Keep separate checking accounts.
 - Plus a mutual checking account for household expenses.
 - Each handle our own income as we wish.
 - Throw it all in together, let it be "ours" and go for it!
79. Do you think your mate should be free to spend "his" or "her" money however they want to? _____ Or do you think any purchase over a certain amount should involve a joint decision? _____
What amount? _____
80. Do you have any other ideas about how you two should handle money in the future as a couple? _____

81. How often do you spend money on clothes? _____
82. How much do you owe on credit cards & other loans (aside from house and car payments)? _____
Do you have realistic plans to pay them off fairly soon? _____
How? _____
83. If you won millions in the lottery, how would you spend it? _____

What would you buy first? _____
84. Have you ever declared bankruptcy? _____ When? _____
85. Do you think your mate spends too much money? _____ On what? _____

86. Do you think you spend too much money? _____ On what? _____
_____ Do you plan to curb your spending? _____

87. How do you think you could better manage your money together? _____

88. Your savings habits:

- I save money from every paycheck: \$ _____
- I want to save but rarely can do it, always seem to spend any excess.
- I find it hard to make ends meet, well enough save.
- I am in significant debt; there is nothing to save.



Wedding & honeymoon thoughts:

89. If we ever got married, the perfect wedding for us would be:

- I don't intend to ever get (re)married.
- Justice of the Peace at City Hall.
- Elope to Vegas.
- A few family members and close friends at a casual place (beach, outside in a park, etc).
- Modest ceremony in a church, followed by a small reception (\$4,000 tops)
- Moderately expensive church wedding and reception (\$4,000-10,000)
- Formal church wedding & all the trimmings ("pull out all the stops")

90. Who would pay for your wedding? _____

91. My idea of an appropriate honeymoon:

- We don't really need one, and/or can't afford it.
- Weekend getaway at the Honeymoon suite of a hotel in town.
- 3-5 days at a location not too far from home (Driving distance).
- Fly there, rent a car, stay a week in Hawaii, Jamaica, New York...
- Trip of a lifetime... Europe, the Orient, exotic faraway destination.

Skeletons in the closet (confession time)



92. Have you ever had a DUI? _____ (How many and when)? _____

93. Have you ever been arrested? _____ What for? _____
Did you go to jail? _____ Have you ever served jail time? _____
How long and when? _____

94. Have you ever physically assaulted someone since you became an adult?
(Hitting, slapping, throwing things at them) _____

95. In the last five years, have you used illegal drugs or medication not
prescribed for you? _____
Do you currently use them? (Come clean) _____

96. Have you ever "stalked" someone? _____ Has anyone ever taken out a
restraining order out on you? _____ Why? _____

97. Have you ever seen a psychiatrist or counselor? _____ When and for
how long? _____
Why? _____

98. Do you have any true phobias of anything? _____ What of? _____

99. Have you ever had a nervous breakdown or been diagnosed with a
mental illness? _____

100. Do you have any serious health problems you haven't told your mate
about? (Like high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, chronic illness) _____

Are you on any chronic medications? _____

101. Do you have problems limiting your gambling? _____

102. As an adult, have you ever stolen anything of value from someone, or shoplifted?_____ Were you caught?_____ What were the repercussions?_____
103. Have you ever been pregnant/ or fathered a child?_____ Had an abortion?_____ Are you legally and/or financially obligated to care for any children?_____
104. Is there anything else in your past that you know should really tell your mate?_____
-

Well, that's it (except for the bonus *sexual compatibility test* which follows). How'd you do? Bet you can't wait to exchange this with your Honey and see what he/she wrote!

Our hope is that these questionnaires will open up a friendly dialog between you two. Some of the issues may make you a little uneasy initially, but hopefully, as you get to know each other better, intimate discussions will become commonplace and comfortable for you both. We hope our workbook facilitates this.

Can I ask a small favor of you? After the dust settles, if you find that "Dig A Little Deeper" helped you guys, won't you drop me a quick line telling me how?

I have two reasons for asking for feedback:

1. I honestly want to know if my effort was worth it. It would help me to know if this workbook helped your relationship in a significant way.
2. I need a good testimonial or two to help promote the book . 😊
But only if you found it to be an outstanding resource.

How can you help? Click the link below (or type it into your browser address box). Tell your story briefly, and how you feel about our ebook. Include your name and profession. I will not use your last name if you desire to remain anonymous. Many thanks!

LINK: www.findlove-keeplove.com/contact-us.html

SEX & INTIMACY

"A sexual compatibility test"

Bonus #1



There are few things that can cause such grief... or joy... in a relationship than SEX. A mutually satisfying intimate life can help forge an enduring and special long-term bond. But a serious mismatch of sexual interests and/or drive can cause simmering resentments that may well tear a couple apart.

These questions may not be easy for you to answer... but remember, only the two of you ever have to see your responses. Open communication about sex can only help!

-
1. Have you ever cheated on a partner? _____ Did they find out? _____
What happened then? _____
 2. If your mate had an affair, do you think you could forgive them? _____
Continue the relationship? _____
 3. Do you look at pornographic magazines or movies? _____
Would you tolerate it if your mate wanted to? _____
 4. Do you use or would you be agreeable to trying "sex toys"? _____
 5. Do you approve of oral sex? _____ Do you like it or would you be
interested in trying it? _____
Would you be willing to perform it on your mate if they wanted? _____
 6. Do you feel it would be okay to include an outside person in your sex life
together? _____
 7. Can you tell your mate your sexual preferences, likes and dislikes? _____
 8. Is there any sexual fantasy you would like to act on? _____

9. Do you have any chronic STDs?_____ Have you ever been tested for HIV/AIDS?_____ What were the results?_____ Would you be willing to be tested if your partner asked you to?_____
10. How often do you think is the minimum necessary for a satisfactory intimate life together?_____ Ideally, how often would you prefer to have sex?_____
11. What turns you on sexually?_____
12. What turns you off sexually?_____
13. What, sexually, do you find offensive, wrong or demeaning?_____
14. Do you like to "talk dirty" during sex?_____ Do you like it when your mate talks dirty to you?_____
15. What gives you the most sexual pleasure?_____
- What is your favorite sex position?_____
16. What type of nighttime attire do you like to see your mate wear to bed?_____
17. Do you prefer to make the first move?_____ Or do you like your mate to act first?_____ Or do you like it when you take turns?_____
18. Do you like to cuddle and talk after sex?_____
19. Do you prefer sex at night, in the morning or afternoon delight?_____
20. What do you think you could try that would improve your sex life together?_____

Romance Report:
"How to tell if it's really true love..."
Bonus #2

4 quick essays to help you decide if this is "the one":

Does true love really exist?

"Let the people who never find true love believe that there is no such thing. Their faith will make it easier for them to live and die." ~Poet Wislawa Szymborska

There is such a thing as true love. Just because you haven't found it yet doesn't mean it doesn't exist. I do not believe that there is only one true love meant for you in this universe. I think that true love probably passes right under your nose many times during your life. You just have to be receptive to it, recognize it when it comes, and be willing to nurture it as the delicate and fragile treasure it is.

~Stella Larue

The Real Thing... Love should feel good!

As we grasp for what we think we want, true love, and fail to find it, we may suffer and bring suffering to others. When this is the case, when we suffer more than we feel healed, we can be fairly certain that what we have found is not love but something else... infatuation, passion, lust, or romantic intrigue.

When we feel anxious, excited, nervous, and thrilled, we are probably experiencing romance, not love. Romance can be a lot of fun as long as we don't try to make too much of it. If we try to make more of it than it is, the romance then becomes painful.

Romance may eventually lead to love, but it may also fade without maturing into anything more. If we cling to it and try to make it more than it is, we might find ourselves pining for a fantasy, or worse, stuck in a relationship that was never meant to last. Wasted time and broken hearts.

Real love is identifiable by the way it makes us feel. Love should feel good. There is a

peaceful quality to an authentic love experience that penetrates to our core, touching a part of ourselves that has always been there. True love activates this inner being, filling us with warmth and light. True love feels calm and safe.

True love does not ask us to look a certain way, drive a certain car, or have a certain job. It takes us as we are, no changes required. When people truly love us, their love for us awakens our love for ourselves. The end result... true love never makes us feel needy or lacking or anxious. Instead, true love empowers us with its implicit message that we are, always have been, and always will be, made of love.

How Do I Know If He Really Loves Me?

The only real, accurate test for true love is the test of time. If you've only been dating a matter of weeks or months, it's far too soon to get serious and try to nail your new partner down about his feelings. Let things unfold in their own good time. Love should never be rushed.

Women are known to be impatient about this, just "gotta know"... and most have learned the hard way that pressing the "love issue" too hard and fast can quickly destroy a potentially wonderful matchup.

The smart approach is to wait and see. After the first magical glow of infatuation fades, what is left? Do you find him less and less attentive; less and less affectionate, missing in action more often than not? Those are classic signs that he may be losing interest, and therefore is not truly in love with you.

Now, then, have you two been together a year or two, or even more? Then it's time to do some soul searching. At this point, the "infatuation" stage has surely passed. The relationship should have gelled and matured somewhat by now. Do an honest appraisal of it now:

- ◆ Have you two turned into best friends?
- ◆ Are you comfortable together, not having to put on a front with each other?
- ◆ Have you created a cozy intimacy & understanding that no one else is allowed to enter?

- ◆ Does he prefer to just hang around with you at home, more and more?
- ◆ Does he treat you with respect and confide in you some of his secrets and fears?
- ◆ Does he trust you with some of his most tender and sensitive thoughts?
- ◆ Does he ask you for advice?
- ◆ Do you laugh together?
- ◆ Does he show you affection and thoughtfulness IN HIS OWN WAY? (Not your way)?

If you can honestly say yes to most of these probing questions, then this is probably TRUE LOVE. And yes, he really loves you.

Love or Infatuation?

This is an old classic column from the "queen of advice for the lovelorn", Ann Landers. It is one of her best essays, quietly timeless advice for a couple at any stage of relationship.

"Infatuation is instant desire - one set of glands calling to another. Love is friendship that has caught fire. It takes root and grows, one day at a time.

Infatuation is marked by a feeling of insecurity. You are excited and eager but not genuinely happy. There are nagging doubts, unanswered questions, little bits and pieces about your beloved that you would just as soon not examine too closely. It might spoil the dream.

Love is the quiet understanding and mature acceptance of imperfection. It is real. It gives you strength and grows beyond you - to bolster your beloved. You are warmed by his presence, even when he is away. Miles do not separate you. You have so many wonderful little films in your head that you keep replaying. But near or far, you know he is yours and you can wait.

Infatuation says, "We must get married right away. I can't risk losing him." Love says, "Be patient. Don't panic. Plan your future with confidence."

Infatuation has an element of sexual excitement. Whenever you are together you hope it will end in intimacy. Love is not based on sex. It is the maturation of friendship that

makes sex so much sweeter. You must be friends before you can be lovers.

Infatuation lacks confidence. When he's away, you wonder if he is cheating. Sometimes you check.

Love means trust. You are calm, secure and unthreatened. He feels your trust, and it makes him even more trustworthy.

Infatuation might lead you to do things you will regret, but love never steers you in the wrong direction.

Love is elevating. It lifts you up. It makes you look up. It makes you think up. It makes you a better person than you were before."

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Inside every swaggering, confident adult is a scared child,
just wanting to love and be loved.

~Stella

Romance Report: **Telltale Signs of a Cheating Mate** **Bonus #3**

Is (s)he having an affair?

There you are, all street-smart and savvy. You are always aware and alert for danger while out and about, for safety's sake. So where do you let your guard down? At home, of course.

Most people with an S.O. (significant other) claim that their mate would never cheat on them. But the sad truth is that infidelity DOES occur, only too often, by men and women alike. You need to stay alert and "street-wise" in your emotional life, too.

We sincerely hope that you have nothing to worry about. BUT, if you do have some doubts, just a gut feeling that things don't "feel right", then it's time to stop and take stock of the situation. Do not bury your head in the sand. Look for these cardinal red flags:

Signs of a cheating mate:

- ◆ Changes in sexual conduct:
 - ~Less desire for sex with you (getting it elsewhere)
 - ~Suddenly more adventurous with sexual desires, new positions or requests (learned elsewhere)

- ◆ Changes in attitude:
 - ~More attentive, "nicer" to you than usual, gifts, etc. (guilt; divert suspicion; usually early in the affair)
 - ~Gradually starts finding more faults in you; is more critical; definite change in attitude (justify the cheating in their mind; usually later in the affair)
 - ~Losing interest in the old homestead; no longer as attentive to house repairs, gardening, spending time with the children (pre-occupied)
 - ~Accuses YOU of cheating (divert suspicion)

- ◆ Changes in grooming habits:
 - ~Suddenly starts taking more care with her appearance than usual; new clothes, new perfume/cologne, makeup style, new hairstyle (to impress the new lover)
 - ~Frequent bathing, takes a shower as soon as he gets home (destroy the evidence)

- ◆ Telltale physical signs:
 - ~Smell of perfume on them; long blond hairs when you're a short, curly redhead; classic lipstick on the collar
 - ~You find strange receipts, unexplained credit card bills, scribbled phone numbers, condoms or birth control products you two don't use (uh-oh)

- ◆ Red Flag activity:
 - ~"Gotta work late again"
 - ~Mysterious phone calls, (s)he hangs up phone when you enter room, whispers on the phone, abrupt "hang-ups" when YOU answer the phone
 - ~Gets angry, defensive, or secretive when you look at her cell phone or computer
 - ~You catch him staring off into space with a smile on his face, a new and unexplained "glow" or excitement about them (infatuated)

Use your common sense with this. He may have a temporarily decreased sex drive due to illness or work stresses. She may change the hairstyle just because she needs a change. That "hang-up" may just be an impatient telemarketer.

Use this list of factors "in context". You will likely find something here that he/she does on occasion. The key is: Is it new and unexpected behavior? Is it just a one-time occurrence, or are there new patterns emerging? Are you finding more than one or two red flags?

If you have run through our checklist here, and find no evidence of these strange behaviors, then relax, you're probably safe. Enjoy the relationship. But, if your investigation has given you more cause for alarm, it is time to take a more pro-active approach to the situation. But first a caution:

WARNING: DO NOT CONFRONT OR ACCUSE YOUR LOVER YET!!!

Okay, you've thought this over, and it looks suspiciously like he or she may really be having an affair. In your anger and hurt, you may be tempted to lash out, confront, accuse the dirty dog! That is the worst thing you could do at this point, and here's why:

- ◆ You have no evidence. If you have no proof, the offending party can deny, deny, deny, and may really be convincing, to boot. Where does that leave you? With lots of doubts and no answers.
- ◆ She has been alerted. If indeed, she is cheating, she will be much more careful now. She will clean up her act, and may even end the affair for now. You may never get to the truth.
- ◆ You might be wrong! If you accuse him of infidelity without any proof, and he's innocent, you can do serious damage to the relationship. The trust will be broken, both ways. And broken trust is almost impossible to restore.
- ◆ What you need now is proof. Normally, we advocate strict respect for the privacy of your mate. This means no snooping in their personal affairs, emails, pockets, snail mail, or voice messages. If you have no reason to suspect him/her, then back off, and show them this basic respect.
- ◆ But, if things have gotten to the point that you are pretty sure he is having an affair, nothing is to be gained by turning your back on the situation. You will just be suspicious and miserable. This is no way to deal with the situation. You must find out the truth, for peace of mind, and the future of your relationship. Privacy rules no longer apply. Time to dig deeper...
- ◆ You will now become an amateur detective. Keep strict track of your mate's activities for the next 2-3 weeks. Get a calendar book.
- ◆ Out On the Prowl:
 - ~Record the mileage on his car and compare it to where he says he went. How far is work? Find out. Record the time he leaves for work, and the time he returns. Is he working late? Check his paycheck stubs to see if the OT is in there. Match up your record with the stub hours.

◆ Cell Phone Use:

~Many cheaters use a cell phone to communicate with their lovers. Get the detailed bill of her calls. Is there a strange number that is called frequently? Do a "reverse cell phone number lookup" online. If there is a small fee, pay it. Match up times called to that number. A good place to start is the first number called when your mate first leaves for work and the same number called again right before they return home.

◆ Money:

~They have to pay to play. Look for some evidence of increased spending, check stubs, bank statements, credit card bills, motel, restaurant and gift receipts.

◆ Snooping:

~Now is the time to do a thorough search for clues. Look in his/her wallet, purse, glove compartment, briefcase. If you can, look at their emails. Get ahold of her cell phone and check out her contacts list. Nothing is sacred now. Once again, the ONLY time we advocate this is when you are trying to get to the truth, and save your relationship.

Came up empty handed? Still have strong suspicions? Not sure enough to let it go? Get professional help. Fork over the bucks to have a private investigator do a little surveillance on your partner. They are in the yellow pages under "Detective Agencies" or "Private Investigator". You might not like what you find out, but the money will be well worth the peace of mind. A quality relationship can not thrive under a cloud of suspicion and mistrust.

We wish you the best of luck with this, and hope things come up smelling roses for you guys! But realistically, this is such a pervasive problem that we felt this little "heads up" article may well hit home and be most useful for some of you.

DISCLAIMER

It's a sad state of affairs when we have to include a legal disclaimer with a fun and creative workbook like this. But in today's litigious (sue-happy) environment, this, apparently, is necessary to protect us from potential financial ruin by litigation. So here goes...

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Translation: If you are having serious relationship problems or emotional difficulties, use your common-sense instead of this guide. See an attorney and/ or mental health professional or marriage counselor without delay.