

feeling. Too often when a new baby comes, the husband gets left behind. (More on this and ways of dealing with it in chapter 10.) He can't keep up with his wife's metamorphosis, which he may not understand or be happy about. Knowing Maggie had always been a priority to Ken, so he didn't do what too many new fathers do—he didn't back away from this new charmed circle of mother and child. As a result, they went through the transformation to parenthood together, without losing sight of each other or their marriage.

Having a baby is just one life event that can cause couples to lose their way if they don't have a detailed love map. Any major change—from a job shift to a move to illness or retirement—can have the same effect. Just the passage of time can do it as well. The more you know and understand about each other, the easier it is to keep connected as life swirls around you.

LOVE MAPS QUESTIONNAIRE

By giving honest answers to the following questions, you will get a sense of the quality of your current love maps. For the most accurate reading of how your marriage is doing on this first principle, both of you should complete the following.

Read each statement, and circle T for "true" or F for "false."

1. I can name my partner's best friends. **TF**
2. I can tell you what stresses my partner is currently facing. **TF**
3. I know the names of some of the people who have been irritating my partner lately. **TF**
4. I can tell you some of my partner's life dreams. **TF**
5. I am very familiar with my partner's religious beliefs and ideas. **TF**
6. I can tell you about my partner's basic philosophy of life. **TF**
7. I can list the relatives my partner likes the least. **TF**
8. I know my partner's favorite music. **TF**
9. I can list my partner's three favorite movies. **TF**
10. My spouse is familiar with my current stresses. **TF**
11. I know the three most special times in my partner's life. **TF**

12. I can tell you the most stressful thing that happened to my partner as a child. **TF**
13. I can list my partner's major aspirations and hopes in life. **TF**
14. I know my partner's major current worries. **TF**
15. My spouse knows who my friends are. **TF**
16. I know what my partner would want to do if he or she suddenly won the lottery. **TF**
17. I can tell you in detail my first impressions of my partner. **TF**
18. Periodically I ask my partner about his or her world right now. **TF**
19. I feel that my partner knows me pretty well. **TF**
20. My spouse is familiar with my hopes and aspirations. **TF**

Scoring: Give yourself 1 point for each "true" answer.
10 or higher: This is an area of strength for your marriage. You have a fairly detailed map of your spouse's everyday life, hopes, fears, and dreams. You know what makes your spouse "tick." Based on your score, you'll probably find the love map exercises that follow easy and gratifying. They will serve as a reminder of how connected you and your partner are. Try not to take for granted this knowledge and understanding of each other. Keeping in touch in this way ensures you'll be well equipped to handle any problem areas that crop up in your relationship.

Below 10: Your marriage could stand some improvement in this area. Perhaps you never had the time or the tools to really get to know each other. Or perhaps your love maps have become outdated as your lives have changed over the years. In either case, by taking the time to learn more about your spouse now, you'll find your relationship becomes stronger.

There are few greater gifts a couple can give each other than the joy that comes from feeling known and understood. Getting to know each other shouldn't be a chore. That's why the first love map exercise below is actually a game! While you're having fun playing, you'll also be expanding and deepening your knowledge of each other. By the time you complete all of the exercises in this chapter, you'll know there's truth in that old song "To Know You Is to Love You."

Don't pass judgment on what your spouse tells you or try to give each other advice. Remember that you are simply on a fact-finding mission. Your goal is to listen and learn about your mate.

EXERCISE 1: THE LOVE MAP 20 QUESTIONS GAME

Play this game together in the spirit of laughter and gentle fun. The more you play, the more you'll learn about the love maps concept and how to apply it to your relationship.

STEP 1. Each of you should take a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Together, randomly decide on twenty numbers between 1 and 60.

STEP 2. Below is a list of numbered questions. Beginning with the top of your column, match the numbers you chose with the corresponding question. Each of you should ask your partner this question. If your spouse answers correctly (you be the judge), he or she receives the number of points indicated for that question, and you receive one point. If your spouse answers incorrectly, neither of you receives any points. The same rules apply when you answer. The winner is the person with the higher score after you've both answered all twenty questions.

1. Name my two closest friends. (2)
2. What is my favorite musical group, composer, or instrument? (2)
3. What was I wearing when we first met? (2)
4. Name one of my hobbies. (3)
5. Where was I born? (1)
6. What stresses am I facing right now? (4)
7. Describe in detail what I did today, or yesterday. (4)
8. When is my birthday? (1)
9. What is the date of our anniversary? (1)
10. Who is my favorite relative? (2)
11. What is my fondest unrealized dream? (5)
12. What is my favorite website? (2)

13. What is one of my greatest fears or disaster scenarios? (3)
14. What is my favorite time of day for lovemaking? (3)
15. What makes me feel most competent? (4)
16. What turns me on sexually? (3)
17. What is my favorite meal? (2)
18. What is my favorite way to spend an evening? (2)
19. What is my favorite color? (1)
20. What personal improvements do I want to make in my life? (4)
21. What kind of present would I like best? (2)
22. What was one of my best childhood experiences? (2)
23. What was my favorite vacation? (2)
24. What is one of my favorite ways to relax? (4)
25. Who is my greatest source of support (other than you)? (3)
26. What is my favorite sport? (2)
27. What do I most like to do with time off? (2)
28. What is one of my favorite weekend activities? (2)
29. What is my dream getaway place? (3)
30. What is my favorite movie? (2)
31. What are some of the important events coming up in my life? How do I feel about them? (4)
32. What are some of my favorite ways to work out? (2)
33. Who was my best friend in childhood? (3)
34. What is one of my favorite magazines? (2)
35. Name one of my major rivals or "enemies." (3)
36. What would I consider my ideal job? (4)
37. What do I fear the most? (4)
38. Who is my least favorite relative? (3)
39. What is my favorite holiday? (2)
40. What kinds of books do I most like to read? (3)
41. What is my favorite TV show? (2)
42. Which side of the bed do I prefer? (2)
43. What am I most sad about? (4)
44. Name one of my concerns or worries. (4)
45. What medical problems do I worry about? (2)
46. What was my most embarrassing moment? (3)
47. What was my worst childhood experience? (3)

48. Name two of the people I most admire. (4)
49. Name my major rival or enemy. (3)
50. Of all the people we both know, who do I like the least? (3)
51. What is one of my favorite desserts? (2)
52. What is my social security number? (2)
53. Name one of my favorite novels. (2)
54. What is my favorite restaurant? (2)
55. What are two of my aspirations, hopes, wishes? (4)
56. Do I have a secret ambition? What is it? (4)
57. What foods do I hate? (2)
58. What is my favorite animal? (2)
59. What is my favorite song? (2)
60. Which sports team is my favorite? (2)

Play this game as frequently as you'd like. The more you play, the more you'll come to understand the concept of a love map and the kind of information yours should include about your spouse.

EXERCISE 2: ASKING OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Updating your love map is as important as the map itself. The process entails asking open-ended questions, and then remembering the answers. An open-ended question is one that can't be answered with a quick "yes" or "no." Instead, it invites your partner to offer up his or her experiences, opinions, and emotions. Asking an open-ended question demonstrates genuine interest in your partner's life and inner world.

Instructions: Below is a long list of open-ended questions. Choose four to ask each other. Switch off being the speaker and the listener. After your partner answers your question, follow up with an open-ended question of your own. Then answer that original question you asked your partner. Now it's your partner's turn to ask you an open-ended question and so on. Of course, you don't have to limit yourselves to just four of these questions. Over time, you can go through all of them—it can be entertaining and enlightening.

1. How would you like your life to be different three years from now?
2. Do you see your work changing in the future? How?
3. What is your opinion of our physical home? Would you make changes if you could?
4. How do you think your life would have been different if you lived 100 years ago?
5. How would you compare yourself as a mother (father) to your own mother (father)?
6. What kind of person do you think our child(ren) will become? Any fears? Any hopes?
7. How are you feeling about your job these days?
8. If you could redo a five-year period of your life, which would you choose?
9. How are you feeling right now about being a parent?
10. If you could change one thing in your past, what would it be?
11. What is the most exciting thing happening in your life right now?
12. If you could instantly possess three new skills, which would you choose?
13. When it comes to the future, what do you worry about most?
14. Who do you consider your best friends or closest allies? Has that list changed recently?
15. What qualities do you value most highly in friends right now?
16. What were the best and worst things that happened to you when you were a teen?
17. If you could live during any other time in history, when would you choose and why?
18. If you could choose a different career or vocation, what would it be, and why?
19. What is the one thing you would most like to change about your personality? Why?
20. Do you feel like certain things are missing from your life? What are they?
21. Do you think you've changed in the last year? How so?
22. If you could design the perfect home for us, what would it be like?
23. If you could live another person's life, whose would you choose?
24. Have any of your life goals recently changed?

25. What are some of your life dreams now?
26. What are your goals for us as a family?
27. What goals do you have just for yourself right now?
28. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
29. What have been the highlights and low points of the past year for you?
30. What adventures would you like to have in your life right now?

The love map questions above are useful for creating a broad outline of your current lives. But love maps shouldn't just be broad—they should also be deep. The next exercise will ensure that yours are.

EXERCISE 3: WHO AM I?

The more you know about each other's inner world, the more profound and rewarding your relationship will be. This questionnaire is designed both to guide you through some self-exploration and to help you share this exploration with your partner. Work on this exercise even if you and your spouse consider yourselves open books. There's always more to know about each other. Life changes us, so neither of you may be the same person who spoke those wedding vows five, ten, or thirty years ago.

Many of the questions in this exercise are powerful. Please make sure you have enough time and privacy to do them justice. In fact, it may be best to reserve this exercise for an uninterrupted stretch when you do not have work to do, deadlines to meet, e-mails to send, or children (or anybody else) to look after. Most likely, you won't be able to complete this questionnaire in one sitting, nor should you try. Instead, break it up by section and proceed slowly and together.

Answer the questions in each section as candidly as you can. You don't have to answer every aspect of each question—just respond to the parts that are relevant to your life. Write your answers in a private journal or notebook. If writing so much is hard, you can do it in outline form—but the process of writing this down is important to the success of the exercise. When you're ready, exchange notebooks