

Gottman's Love Maps: A Guide to Building Intimacy

What is a Love Map?

A love map is an ongoing process of building up a rich understanding of your partner's inner world - their fears, hopes, stresses, fundamental beliefs, and key experiences that shaped who they are. Having a detailed love map allows you to see things from your partner's perspective and forge deeper intimacy

Why Do Love Maps Matter?

- Strengthen friendship and emotional intimacy
- Improve empathy and understanding
- Manage conflicts better by appreciating where each other is coming from
- Keep discovering new things about your partner to prevent growing stale
- Prioritize quality time learning about each other

How to Build Your Love Maps

1. Set aside uninterrupted couple time, at least an hour to start
2. Take turns asking the questions below and truly listening to understand
3. Follow up with curiosity to learn more ("What was that like for you?")

Love Map Question Prompts

1. What were your parents' personalities like when you were growing up?
2. What's one of your happiest childhood memories?
3. How would you describe your closest friendships and what you value most in friends?
4. What are some of the most significant life events or challenges that shaped who you are today?
5. What are your top 5 most strongly held values or moral beliefs?
6. What does an ideal day for you look like from morning to night?
7. What are some of your irrational fears or things that make you uncomfortable?
8. If you could have any career in the world, what would it be and why?
9. What motivates you to work hard and be successful?
10. How do you prefer to be comforted when you're stressed or upset?
11. What's one of your proudest accomplishments in life so far?
12. When do you feel most appreciated and loved by me?
13. Is there anything you wish I did more or differently in our relationship?
14. What are your big life goals and dreams that are most important to you?
15. What were some of the most important lessons your parents taught you?
16. How would your closest friends describe your personality and character?
17. What are your favorite and least favorite aspects of your job/career?
18. How do you prefer to spend your free time and decompress?
19. What gets you most excited or passionate when talking about it?
20. What are your biggest stressors, worries, or sources of anxiety lately?

Tips for Successful Love Mapping

- Approach with openness and curiosity - not criticism or contempt
- Ask follow-up questions to learn more about significant events/beliefs
- Take notes so you can review and update your love map periodically
- Make it an ongoing conversation, not just a one-time activity
- Validate feelings and thank your partner for sharing vulnerably

Remember, love mapping is a gradual process of building up intimate knowledge over time. Be patient with each other, truly listen, and keep exploring! The more you invest in understanding your partner's world, the stronger your bond will grow.

