



A COUPLES RITUAL

# LOVE MAPS

## KNOWING YOUR PARTNER'S WORLD

Gottman's first principle. The more detailed a map you keep of your partner's inner world, the more connected you stay and the better you handle stress together. This is a set of open-ended questions to build that map and keep it current.

### WHY LOVE MAPS MATTER

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#### THE IDEA

- A love map is your mental model of your partner's inner world: what they love, fear, hope for, and carry day to day.
- Couples with rich love maps weather conflict and stress better, because they know the person underneath the hard moment.
- Maps go stale. People change, and a map you built five years ago needs updating.
- The method is simple: ask open-ended questions and listen for the story, not just the fact.

### EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

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For the daily, current-life layer of the map. Ask a few at parting, at dinner, on a walk.

What's been on your mind this week?

What are you looking forward to right now?

Who are the people you feel closest to these days?

What's stressing you the most lately?

What's a small thing that would make this week better?

What's something you've changed your mind about recently?

## DEEPER QUESTIONS

For the hopes, fears, and dreams layer. These have stories for answers, so leave room for the story.

What's a dream you haven't fully told me about?

What are you most proud of right now?

What's a worry you carry that you rarely say out loud?

If we had a free year, what would you want it to hold?

What do you want to be different about your life a year from now?

What's something you'd want more of from me?

## HOW TO USE IT

### KEEP IT A CONVERSATION

- Ask a couple at a time. This is a conversation, not an interrogation.
- Listen for the story underneath the answer. Follow it with "tell me more."
- You're not solving anything here. The whole job is knowing them better.
- Come back to it. Make updating the map a regular, low-pressure habit.

**Knowing your partner is not a one-time project.** The map is never finished, because the person keeps growing. Small, regular updates are what keep the two of you feeling known. Adapted from Gottman's first principle, Build Love Maps (*The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*).

**EDUCATIONAL ONLY – NOT THERAPY.**