

Welcome to your Date Night Experience!

Congratulations on prioritizing one another— After all, your relationship needs you!

To get the most out of each date we have made the following suggestions:

♥ Stay positive!

This is not the time to tell the other what he or she has done wrong.

Be future focused. Focus on what you want your relationship to be like in the future. Don't concentrate on past failures. (It's okay to remember past successes).

Talk about your relationship. Do not talk about your job, children, in-laws, etc., unless it's part of the topic of the date.

♥ Give a gift of love.

Some discussion items will excite you more than others. On the less exciting ones, give a gift of love.

Participate enthusiastically!

Don't force it. If you get on a negative track, stop that discussion. Move on to another topic that you both feel good about.

♥ If you get stuck, ask for help.

If an issue comes up that you can't handle together, talk to a marriage coach at a local church or counseling center.

♥ Use good communication skills.

Be prepared for some surprises and new insights about each other. They can open new opportunities for growth and intimacy in your relationship. The following are several specific tips for a great date experience:

1. Be honest, yet never unkind.
2. Remember to start your sentences with "I" and let them reflect back on you.
3. Resist attacking the other or defending yourself.
4. Be specific and positive.



Dessert

The Perfect Ending

Support—Saving the Day

Giving Support is powerfully communicated when we come alongside our partner and share the load of life's struggles or practical things to do.

End this date night by affirming your partner's **"Super-hero-ness"**.

Share with your partner the following sentence:

"You're my amazing Super Hero when . . ."

(For example: *"You're my amazing Super Hero when you help with the chores in the yard, change lightbulbs, get groceries, bathe the kids, pay the bills, cook dinner, help with laundry, etc.")*

Celebrate: You've Just Been Loved!

Celebrate the unity of your relationship - that even the *challenges of life* can bring you two together!

Provided in partnership with:



DATE NIGHT MENU

*Love Gives
Support*





Appetizers

Starting Right

Celebrating Accomplishments

Celebrate the Things You Have Accomplished Together: Take turns talking about a favorite project, trip, or accomplishment that you have enjoyed doing together. Perhaps it was planting a garden, painting the house, learning a foreign language, organizing an anniversary trip, or building a playhouse for the kids.

Looking Deeper

Giving one another Support deepens closeness and helps brighten your future as you celebrate, "We did it!"

Time to Share

Just this week, I was remembering how grateful I was for your Support when...

(For example: *helped with dinner, picked up the clothes from the cleaners, entertained the kids etc.)*



Main Course

Taking an Honest Look

Expressing Support

Supporting your partner in the ways they need most, communicates a message of, "I'm here for you!"

Let's face it – sometimes we don't slow down long enough to reflect on the areas where we might need Support and then get irritated when we're doing things all alone.

Let's Talk About it

What does Support look and sound like for you? Take turns sharing with each other:

A time when I really felt supported by you was when...

Now, take the next few moments to reflect on one area of your life where you might need additional Support.

- ♥ First, prepare yourself for your partner's response. You are about to ask your partner where they need more of YOUR help. So drop any defensiveness or self-centeredness.
- ♥ Embrace this message: Because my partner can experience more of my love through additional Support, I want to hear and receive their response.
- ♥ Take turns asking: *I want to love you better, so what is one area where I could give you more Support?*
- ♥ Take turns sharing: *It would mean a lot if you could...*
- ♥ Finally, offer committed reassurance: *Thanks for letting me know how I can help. I'm looking forward to Supporting you in these ways.*

Removing Anxiety

Concern, and even anxiety about the future, can develop when we imagine facing the challenges of life without our partner's Support. If you talk NOW about your Support needs, this can reduce anxiety and increase unity as you encounter the challenges of the future.

Think about some of the life challenges you see in your future:

- ♥ A job change
- ♥ Child's education
- ♥ Car/transportation needs
- ♥ Pregnancy
- ♥ Child's schedule
- ♥ Housing needs and demands
- ♥ Aging parents
- ♥ Health issue
- ♥ Child's behavior
- ♥ Financial issues
- ♥ Conflicted relationship

Time to Share

Now, take turns sharing what your need for Support might "look like" when this challenge comes your way.

*When we deal with (name the challenge) _____,
I would feel like we're facing it together if you could...*

(For example: *When we deal with my mother's declining health, I would feel like we're facing it together if you could help me check out nursing home facilities for her).*