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Date Six of Gottman Eight Dates

John and Julie Gottman, psychologists and founders of the Gottman Love Lab, have been studying how to win at love for over forty years. After observing thousands of couples, they know the areas in a couple's life that cause the most struggle. Through these eight dates, they lead you through the essential conversations that will give you the best chance at a fulfilling and connected relationship.

The Date: Fun and Adventure

Conversation Topic

How do we like to have fun? What is the role of play and adventure in our lives?

Preparation

Think about how you like to play and what adventures you'd like to have. Reflect on any ideas about what play and adventure look like to you and whether your needs for play and adventure are being met. How would you like to play with your partner in the future? What shared adventures can you have? Be curious about your own answers and those of your partner. You may just surprise yourself and find a little surge of dopamine reward from just the idea of playing and adventuring together in new ways.

Location

Somewhere you've never been before or a familiar place used in a new way. Try the park, the beach, on a rooftop, in your backyard, or swap apartments with a friend. Consider climbing a tree and having your entire date and conversation sitting on a limb. Make the entire date happen in the bathtub or another body of water. Follow a random car and have your date take place wherever the car ends up. Feel free to come up with your own adventurous location. Be spontaneous and be curious about what might happen. Try having your date at an atypical time for a date—early morning, middle of the night, when you both should be at work. This date should be all about newness and excitement. Be creative. Be spontaneous.

Suggestion

You can look up hidden locations near you at [AtlasObscura.com](https://atlasobscura.com) and explore one of them with your partner as you talk through the questions. You can also explore Geocaches near you—a kind of adult treasure hunt game—by logging into geocache.com and finding hidden treasure boxes near you through GPS coordinates.

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At-Home Date: Pick a beautiful location in or near your home. Create a scavenger hunt for your partner to find the location or simply leave them a note telling them where to meet you. Have a surprise picnic waiting for them when they find you.

Bring

You should bring the “For the Fun of It” exercise and items you circled as well as the top three things you’d like to do first. Be prepared to discuss with each other the items you circled and the ways that you’d like to play, or the things you would consider fun. Look for items that you both circled. These are the activates where your play and adventure interests intersect. If there’s no overlap, remember that part of play and adventure is stepping into the unknown. Which of the items that your partner thinks would be fun and playful are you willing to try?

Troubleshooting

- Stay open-minded to your partner’s ideas for play and adventure.
- Remember that your adventure involves the unknown and pressing against your comfort zone. Don’t minimize fears but try not to give in to them either.
- Ask your partner questions about why their ideas about play and adventure are important and meaningful to them.
- Don’t try to force your partner to do what you want to do or adventure in the way you want to adventure.
- Listen for excitement as your partner describes the adventures they want to have.
- Don’t criticize or judge your partner for playing differently.
- Take a leap of faith and embrace the unknown.

Open-Ended Questions for Your Date Conversation

After discussing and reviewing your lists, ask each other the following questions:

- What does adventure/play mean to you?
- How did you like to play when you were a child?
- What’s the most fun you’ve had playing in the last few years?
- How do you think we could have more fun?
- Share with me an adventure story from the past.
- What’s the most recent adventurous thing you did?
- What are you most excited about or looking forward to right now?
- What’s a one-day adventure you could imagine us having together?
- What adventures do you want to have before you die?

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Affirming Our Future Together

Take turns reading this affirmation out loud to each other. Maintain eye contact while reciting.

I commit to playing and having an adventure together in the following three ways in the next two weeks, and to making play a part of our daily lives together moving forward:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Adapted from: *Eight Dates: Essential Conversations for a Lifetime of Love*. By: John Gottman, Julie Schwartz Gottman, Doug Abrams, and Rachel Carlton Abrams