

When you got married, the two of you became an US. And while being an US is great, sometimes your US can get a little—or a lot—sideways. And why wouldn't your US experience times of conflict? You often see the world in a different ways, and your way is completely clear to you and your spouse's way is completely clear to them. But a little understanding mixed with a little healthy competition is a very . . . good . . . thing. And that's what this date is all about it. Relax, have a great time, learn something new about each other. Your US deserves it. Take this date step-by-step, but feel free to customize it to make it work for your unique US.

GROUND RULES

- Take a break from talking about the usual suspects, money, kids, in-laws. This is not a time to take care of checklists, this is time for your US.
- Flirt. Be considerate, kind, relaxed and a great listener. Act as if you are still trying to win him/her over.
- As much as humanly possible, stay off technology. Only text or take a call if it is an emergency. Everyone and everything will be okay. *(People use to leave their homes all the time without phones, and they lived to tell about it.)*

Special Alert: Some of the questions You're going to ask and answer could potentially start a fight. Don't let them! How? When your spouse reveals something "new" about you, your only response needs to be, "Thanks for letting me know fill in the blank pet-name."

GET READY

SOMETIMES IT'S HARD TO CHOOSE SOMEWHERE/ SOMETHING FOR DINNER.

But for this date, it's only going to be challenge for one of you. To determine who gets to or has to decide on what/where to eat, you are going to shoot a few hoops. Simply wad up 6 pieces of paper (from the recycling bin of course), then place a trash can 15 feet away. You each get three shots. The person with the highest score can either pick where to go or what to eat for dinner. If the winner prefers, he/she can make the loser pick.



On the way to dinner, or whatever meal or refreshments you may eating, you are going to play Worst/Best. Below are 5 categories. Share one of your best and worst responses to each.

- Where to Live
- Day
- Meal
- Vacation
- Movie

TABLE TENNIS

As you enjoy your food, you are going to verbally volley by taking turns identifying where you are on the following Personality Continuums. While there can be many different dynamics that fuel disagreements, perhaps personality types should be at the top of the list. Discuss where you see yourself on this continuum. Don't let this lead to a fight, let it lead to laughter and knowing each other just a little bit better.

1 PERCEIVING - MINIMIZER & MAXIMIZER

This is how you perceive the things that come toward you in your life. On one end of the spectrum, there is the Minimizer. To Minimizers, few things are a big deal. When troubles come they think, "Oh well, it will just pass." The disadvantage of being a Minimizer is that things have to be really big or bad for them to take action. The advantage of being a Minimizer is that they are easy going, tending not to create unnecessary drama or chaos.

On the other end of the spectrum are Maximizers. Maximizers tend to make everything a big deal. Using words like *everything, never* and *always*. Typically they want more of something—more love, more passion, more well . . . everything. The disadvantage of being a Maximizer is that they can create unnecessary tension. The advantage is that nothing slips up on a maximizer. They want to take care of problems as they come.

Where would you place yourself on this continuum?

MINIMIZER

MAXIMIZER

2 PROCESSING – INSIDER & OUTSIDER

This is how you process information and come to conclusions. Insiders are very contemplative and thoughtful. The disadvantage of being an Insider is they think they have shared more than they have. Saying things like, "I thought I told you that." The advantage of Insiders is that actually think before they speak.

On the opposite end is the Outsider. They think out loud. They talk to think. The disadvantage of being an Outsider is that they can say hurtful things they really don't mean. The advantage of Outsiders is that they want to talk things out, get things out in the open.

Where would you place yourself on this continuum?

INSIDER ————— OUTSIDER

3 RESPONDING - SATISFIER & RESISTER

The personality type is how you respond to information. On one end is the Satisfier. The Satisfier wants to keep connected with their spouse by telling them what they think they want to hear. The disadvantage of being a Satisfier is that they can be passive aggressive. The mouth may be saying "yes," but their heart is saying "no," and one day it shows up, often in unproductive ways. The advantage of being a Satisfier is they are outwardly focused, because they have to really listen to their spouse's needs to know how to satisfy them.

On the other end of the continuum is the Resister. When Resisters hear new information, they say, "Whoa, what do you mean by that?" Another term for Resisters are "Devil's Advocate." The disadvantage of being a Resister is they often make their spouse feel rejected. The advantage of being a Resister is that tend to want to make more balanced decisions by looking at both sides of the issue. They aren't always saying "no," it just takes them a while to get to the "yes."

Where would you place yourself on this continuum?

SATISFIER ————— RESISTER

DANCE, DANCE, MINI-REVOLUTION. Go and get dessert. As you are enjoying your treats, flip a coin, best 3 out of 5, to determine who has to do a Dare Me Dance. The loser has to dance in public. But the loser gets to determine where they get to dance by choosing one of the following options:

**DARE
ME?**

- The loser dances for 20 seconds right there in the dessert establishment.
- The loser dances 20 seconds on the way to the exit door of the dessert establishment.
- The loser dances 20 seconds outside of the dessert establishment.

KEEP IT GOING

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF WHAT YOU LEARNED ABOUT YOUR SPOUSE WITH THE PERSONALITY CONTINUUMS.

This week if you encounter the "disadvantage" of your spouse's personality traits, take it less personally. Maybe in your head, you can begin to think, "This isn't about me, this is simply how he/she is wired." Secondly, the next time you encounter the advantages of your spouse's personality type, you can affirm them.

Finally, take a couple of the two. Then post it using **#mpdates**. (Yes, this is the exception to rule to stay off of technology.) Also use it for your wallpaper on your phone and/or computer to remind you that it is okay that your spouse is different.