

# Legendary Love. Module 2. Lesson 9.

## You're Both Learning

In the last lesson you explored how family patterns, personal preferences and how your brain functions can affect the way someone communicates.

This lesson lays another of layer to the foundation regarding personal differences in communication. Being aware of personal differences can assist you in accepting others as they are and adapt how you interact with their style.

### Getting to Know You

Consider this question: **How much do you want to know your partner?**

When you were first dating you wanted to get to know each other. You telephoned, you texted, you dated. You talked. You listened. You learned.

People communicate because they want to know something, even if it's what time to be ready for dinner. What do you want to know about your partner? What do you want your partner to know about you?

- Hopes and dreams?
- Feelings?
- What's important?
- What makes you hurt?
- What makes you laugh?
- What makes you feel good?
- What's most meaningful in life?
- What they want from you?

Your desire to deeply know each other, as well as what time is dinner and when the next appointment is, will keep you talking to each other. As long as you have the desire to know more about each other and to live a fulfilling life together, you'll want to share your life through words.

### Give Yourself Time to Learn

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As discussed in Module 1, moving in together takes your relationship to a new level. You don't have the privacy and down time from each other that you used to have. You don't have the space from each other you once had. (You'll learn more about space in Module 4.)

In the last lesson, you explored assumptions. You've each formed some when you were dating. Be open to discovering that some of what you learned when dating may be different now.

When dating, you have a tendency to be on your best behavior. That can change when you're with each other more often.

## Consider these changes:

1. **When living together, you don't have the energy to always be on your best behavior.**
  - **It takes time and energy to communicate well.** When you're tired, the tendency is to not try as hard as when you were dating.
2. **You become used to each other and aren't as polite to each other.**
  - You may begin to take each other for granted and not think you need to continue the niceties such as "please" and "thank you," or even "I love you."
3. **You think the "getting to know you" mode is over.** You forget that you are both changing and there is always something to know about each other.
  - The only time there is nothing left to know is when someone has died.

Getting to know each other takes time and effort. Give yourselves time. Don't expect that your partner is going to know everything about your wants, needs, and desires. Those may change for each of you as you age.

**When both of you want to know more about each other, talking on a deep level is easier.**

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## The Power of Listening

The only way you can learn more about someone is to listen. Listening means that your full attention is on your partner. You're not thinking about what you have to do next. You're not even thinking about what your response will be to what they're saying.

The greatest sign of respect and the greatest motivator for someone to share is for you to listen. As you listen, they will talk. They will share their lives with you because you're demonstrating your desire to hear them with acceptance.

## The Art of Questioning

Asking questions demonstrates interest in someone. There is, however, a difference between asking questions and interrogating. You want to learn about your partner, not put them on the spot.

### Try these techniques:

1. **Give your full attention to your partner.** No looking at the phone, telephone, or mail. If you need to be doing something, such as putting dinner on the table, look at your partner as much as possible.
  - **If they seem reluctant to talk, ask them if they would rather talk about this later.**
  - Many people, when coming home from work, need time to decompress before they can interact meaningfully.
  - One area to learn about each other are personal preferences about when is the best time to talk.
2. **Ask open-ended questions.** These are the ones people are least likely to answer with one word. Open-ended questions invite a wider range of answers. Instead of "Did you have a good day?" you might want to ask, "What were the highlights of your day?"
3. **Once you ask a question, give them your attention so they know you're listening.** If they don't answer immediately, wait for a bit before

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trying to fill in the space. Some people take longer to answer than others.

- Check to be sure they aren't distracted. If they are, wait until they can give you their attention and then repeat the question.

## Communication Is a Puzzle

There are techniques and strategies to communication. There are good times and not-so-good times to attempt to gather information. As you come to know each other, you'll learn more about what techniques work best for you and when are the best times to have heart-to-heart talks.

## Summary

You'll be learning about each other the rest of your lives. Establishing a good foundation for communicating will assist during those times of change. Being open and attentive, as well as asking open-ended questions at times conducive to sharing, are excellent strategies no matter how you each change.

In the next lesson, you're going to discover more differences in the ways people communicate.

Before moving on, please take a few minutes to anchor in what you've learned by answering the following reflection questions.

## Reflection

1. When are the times you're more open to conversation with your partner?
2. What communication patterns of others irritate you the most?
3. How can you be more open to your partner in your communication patterns?