

## **Q & A: A Guide to Questions to Keep The Conversation Going**

### Starter Questions

Very basic questions that aren't threatening or overly personal.

At a party: "How do you know the hostess?"  
"That's a really unique piece of jewelry. Did you make it?"

At a restaurant: "This is my first time here. Do you have any recommendations?"  
"That looks delicious! What is that?"

At a class: "What do you think of the speaker so far?"  
"This is a really interesting class. What are your thoughts on the topic?"

### Personal Questions

We all love to talk about ourselves, but avoid overly-personal questions about finances or their past. Also remember not everyone is comfortable revealing certain information about their job, whether they have kids, where they live, etc. Respect their boundaries.)

"What's your favorite ice cream?"  
"What would you do if you found a million dollars?"  
"What do you do when you're not in the dungeon?"  
"How did you enter the scene?"  
"How did you pick your scene name?"  
"You seem really skilled at flogging. How did you learn?"

### Unusual or Silly Questions

Unusual and funny questions can help break the ice, get the other person laughing and calm both your nerves.

"Do you have any superstitions?"  
"What is the most interesting thing in your toybag?"  
"What's the funniest pick-up line you've ever heard?"

### Relationship-Status Questions

These questions help determine if the other person is taken. While the collar and/or wedding ring might be a clue, our lifestyle lends itself to a variety of arrangements with multiple partners: play, significant or otherwise.

"Did your girlfriend buy you that necklace?"  
"That's a lovely tie. Your wife must have great taste."  
"Did you come here with your partner?"

### Help Questions

Even if you don't need help, asking for it can be a great way to break the ice and show the person you value their knowledge or skill. Plus, you can thank them by giving them a compliment or returning the favor.

"I'm not sure where to find the measuring cups. Could you help me?"  
"I didn't catch what the instructor said about gender roles. Could you explain it to me?"  
"There are so many flavors of ice cream. How did you decide what to get?"

Source: The Flirting Bible by Fran Greene

## Red Light, Green Light: A Guide to Nonverbal Signals

Remember: context is everything: look for clusters of signals, not just one.

### Red Light Signals

1. "I'm nervous and hesitant."
  - Standing or sitting in a slumped position
  - Standing like a statue
  - Looking at the floor while talking
  - Wrapping your legs around each other or a chair or table leg
  - Putting barriers in front of you: your arms, a book, a table
  - Smiling non-stop
2. "I'm bored or not interested in you."
  - Looking around the room when talking to someone
  - Playing with your cell phone
  - Fidgeting: tapping your fingers on the table or jiggling your legs
  - Sighing, yawning
  - Looking at your watch
  - Leaning away from the other person
3. "I'm not feeling confident in myself."
  - Picking at your skin, nails or other body part
  - Rubbing your arms and legs
  - Shuffling your feet
  - Adjusting clothing *constantly*
  - Speaking in monotone or low volume
4. "I'm angry or frustrated."
  - Tight body language: clenched hands, tight muscles
  - Frowning or grimacing

- Speaking in a loud, arrogant tone

### Green Light Signals

1. "I want you to notice my appearance."
  - Preening: reapplying lipstick, playing with earrings or jewelry (women)
  - Fixing or playing with your hair
  - Straightening your clothes *once or twice*
  - Chest thrust out
2. "I feel confident."
  - Eye contact
  - Arms relaxed at your sides
  - Tilted head
  - Standing tall
  - Hands on hips, thumbs in belt or hands in pockets (men)
3. "I'm really interested in you."
  - Eyebrow flash
  - Leaning in
  - Touching arm, wrist or shoulder
  - Giving a light, playful push
  - Removing a piece of lint or string from the other person's clothing
  - Chivalry: opening the door, offering you a jacket (men)
  - Crossing and uncrossing of your legs (women)
  - Exposed wrists (women)
  - Pulling skirt slightly above knee, dangling your shoe (women)

Source: The Flirting Bible by Fran Greene

### **What Do You Mean, “Be Playful?”**

A large part of flirting is being playful with the other person. More than telling jokes, being playful means having fun with the conversation. It can often involve wordplay and power dynamics – where you purposefully alter the conversation so one or the other is “in charge” or you’re “fighting” to be in charge. Because this type of verbal interaction relies so heavily on double meanings, make sure your tone and body language convey that your words shouldn’t be taken seriously. So what can this look like?

#### Mirroring Language

Using similar words or phrases as the other person. When it happens in sequence, the effect is usually playful and establishes a rapport with the other person. (Note: you can also use mitigating language, which uses words like “might” or “maybe.” These words intended to offer something up without putting too much out there.)

A: I think you might be a bit of a troublemaker...

B: You could make a little trouble with me, if you wanted.

A: Maybe I should take you to the next play party.

B: Maybe you should.

#### Challenges & Games

If you like your relationships with a competitive edge, try adding challenges or games into the mix. It can engage the other person and create a bond between the two of you. You can either work together or “against” each other in friendly competition.

“What kind of underwear you think other people in the room are wearing?”

“Do you know any magic tricks?”

“Do you have any special talents?”

“I bet you can’t think of five things that are the color purple in 5 seconds.”

#### Let’s Pretend

Pretending is an excellent tool for flirting. You can use mock indifference, mock insults, mock fighting, or mock intimacy to create a rapport and feeling of connection. This tactic also plays with power dynamics.

A: I’m going to grab another drink. Do you want anything?

B: I can’t believe we’ve spent all this time together and you forgot my favorite drink! It’s like you don’t even like me anymore...

A: Van Gogh is probably my favorite artist of all time.

B: You’re a Van Gogh person? I’m a Picasso person! Now we can’t even be friends!

A: I don’t think we’ve met before, have we?

B: Of course we have! You, me, a yacht on the Caribbean...I’ll never look at mangoes the same way again.

#### Favors / Invitations

Favors or invitations can be a great icebreaker or way to keep the conversation going. Whether you’re at the grocery store or a play party, asking for help can put the other person in power – which may work later in your favor.

A: Hi. I don’t think I’ve ever seen you at a SKALES class before. What made you decide to come tonight?

B: Oh, I’m terrible at flirting. I’ve never been good at it.

A: Well, if you’re not busy right after class, you can practice on me.

A: There’s a jar of mustard on the highest shelf over there. Do you think you could help me reach it?

B: I can probably reach it...or I can hoist you onto my shoulders, if you want.

### **Flirting: A Step-By-Step Approach**

1. Make eye contact.
2. Smile.
3. Approach the other person and introduce yourself.
4. Open the conversation with an observation, question, or compliment.
5. Maintain the conversation verbally using questions, sharing some personal information, and showing that you're interested in what they have to say.
6. Remember to listen.
7. Maintain the conversation non-verbally by maintaining eye contact, mirroring their body language, and physical touch.
8. If it goes well and you want to take things further, make plans or exchange information. Be sure to give the other person an opportunity to gracefully decline.

### **Getting in the Right Frame of Mind**

Feeling a little low? Need to boost your self-confidence levels? Try some of these techniques:

- Think of a time that you felt really good about yourself. What were you doing when you felt that way? Replay the scenario in your head.
- Create triggers with positive associations: a song (James Brown's "I Feel Good"), a ritual (putting on perfume or cologne), a talisman (a necklace or shoes). These small acts can have a big influence on your mood.
- Call your best friend for a morale-boosting session.
- Write down five things that you like about yourself.
- Play with young children or pets.
- Wear something that makes you feel amazing.
- If you're inspired by an actor or actress, watch a movie with them in it. Notice how they stand, how they talk, how they dress.

### **Graceful Exit Lines**

Sometimes we aren't in the mood to flirt, or interested in the person doing the flirting. If you're looking for a way to communicate that you're not interested, here are some ideas:

- "Sorry, I need to go meet my friend."
- "It's late, I've got to get going."
- "I'm going to walk around a bit. Have a good night."
- "I was actually just about to use the restroom. Take care."
- "Excuse me, I need to take this phone call."
- "Thank you so much, you have made my night, but my husband really gets upset when I date."
- "Thanks for the wonderful chat, but I must make believe I'm interested in everybody else."