

Dream Sharing Sessions

Aligning Your Future Visions Together

Dream Sharing Sessions are 45-minute conversations where partners share their individual dreams, aspirations, and visions for the future, then work to weave them into a shared vision. This exercise prevents the common relationship pitfall where partners drift apart because they stop sharing their evolving dreams. Research by Dr. John Gottman shows that successful couples maintain detailed "love maps" of each other's inner worlds, including hopes and dreams.

Why Dreams Matter in Relationships

- **Prevents Growing Apart:** People evolve. Sharing dreams keeps you aware of how your partner is changing
- **Creates Shared Purpose:** Aligned dreams give you something bigger than daily life to work toward together
- **Validates Individuality:** Supporting each other's separate dreams strengthens the relationship
- **Identifies Conflicts Early:** If dreams are incompatible, better to know sooner than later
- **Inspires Hope:** Talking about dreams reminds you that the future holds possibility and excitement

The Three Layers of Dreams

Effective dream sharing explores three layers, moving from surface to depth:

Layer 1 - Practical Dreams (10 minutes): Tangible goals like travel destinations, career changes, home improvements, skills to learn, or experiences to have. These are concrete and achievable. Examples: "I dream of visiting Japan," "I want to learn to play guitar," "I'd love to renovate our kitchen."

Layer 2 - Relational Dreams (15 minutes): How you want your relationship to feel and evolve. This might include family dreams, how you want to grow old together, the kind of partnership you're building. Examples: "I dream of us being that couple who still holds hands at 80," "I want us to be adventure partners who try new things together."

Layer 3 - Soul Dreams (20 minutes): The deepest aspirations about who you want to become, your legacy, and what you want your life to mean. These are often harder to articulate. Examples: "I dream of making a difference in my community," "I want to live a life I'm truly proud of," "I hope to become more patient and present as I age."

pagebreak

How to Conduct a Dream Sharing Session

Step 1 - Individual Reflection (10 minutes): Before sharing, each person spends 10 minutes alone writing down dreams across all three layers. Don't censor or filter - write whatever emerges, even if it seems impossible or silly.

Step 2 - Sharing Without Discussion (20 minutes): Take turns sharing your dreams out loud. The listener doesn't interrupt, question, or problem-solve - just listens deeply and asks clarifying questions. The goal is understanding, not evaluation.

Step 3 - Finding Alignment (15 minutes): Together, discuss where your dreams align, where they're different but compatible, and where they might conflict. Look for ways to support each other's separate dreams while identifying shared dreams you can pursue together.

Questions to Explore

- If money and time weren't constraints, what would you spend your days doing?
- What's a dream you had as a child that you've let go of? Would you want to revive it?
- What do you want to be known for or remembered for?
- What experiences do you want to have before you die?
- How do you want our relationship to be different in 5 years? 10 years?
- What's a dream you've been afraid to tell me about?
- If you knew you couldn't fail, what would you attempt?
- What does your ideal daily life look like 20 years from now?

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

Dream Crushing: Don't immediately respond with "That's not realistic" or "We can't afford that." Just listen first.

Making It About You: When your partner shares, don't hijack with "Well, I want..." Let them finish completely.

Assuming Permanence: Dreams can change. That's okay. Revisit this exercise annually as you both evolve.

Forcing Agreement: You don't have to share every dream. Some individual dreams are healthy for the relationship.

Creating Action Plans

Before ending the session, choose ONE shared dream and ONE individual dream for each person (three total). For each, identify one small action step you can take in the next month. Big dreams become real through small, consistent actions. Write these down and check in next month on progress.

Monthly Practice

Make dream sharing a monthly ritual, ideally on the same date (like the first Sunday of each month). You don't need to share entirely new dreams each time - tracking how existing dreams evolve is equally valuable. Over time, you'll build a rich understanding of each other's inner world and create a relationship that supports both individual flourishing and shared purpose.