EVELYN DELMORE

10 Questions to Ask Before the *Third Date*

Because charm is a skill.
It is not a character reference.

10

Love, dating & emotional clarity.





A NOTE FROM EVELYN

A wonderful first date measures one thing.

How good two people are at being charming for two hours.

Darling, I have been charmed by experts. Three marriages, two divorces, and I can tell you that charm is a skill. It is lovely, and it is not a character reference.

The *third* date is where it gets interesting. That is when people stop performing, and you can start noticing.

So I wrote down ten questions. Not an interrogation. Just the ones people skip, the ones that show you early whether your lives would actually fit together.

Evelyn

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How to use this list



1 Ask them lightly.

Over dinner or on a walk, not across a table with a clipboard. Two or three questions a date is plenty. These are conversations, not a test they can fail.

2 Listen to the feeling, not just the answer.

How someone answers tells you as much as what they say. Notice what lights them up, and what makes them go vague.

3 Answer them yourself.

You are allowed to have answers too. If you can't say what a good weekend looks like for you, start there.

AT ANY AGE

When we date again later in life, the first question is usually "Do they like me?" Lovely question, wrong order. Start with: "*Do I like the life I'd have with them*?" These questions work at fifty, sixty, seventy and beyond.



QUESTIONS 1 & 2 OF 10

1 What does a good weekend look like for you?

Sounds harmless. It isn't. It tells you about energy, friends, family, money and rest, and whether your ordinary lives actually fit.

> **LISTEN FOR**
> Who is in it. How much is planned. Whether there is room in it for another person.

2 What does a disagreement look like for you?

Some people go quiet for days. Some get loud. Some laugh and make tea. You will meet that version eventually. Better to meet it early.

> **LISTEN FOR**
> Real examples, not “I never argue”. Whether they can describe their own part in it.



QUESTIONS 3 & 4 OF 10

3 Where do you see yourself living in five years?

City. Countryside. Near the grandchildren. Anywhere with a boat. It sounds like small talk. It isn't. Love is lovely. Two different maps are not.

> **LISTEN FOR**
> Whether the picture is fixed or flexible, and whether you can imagine yourself in it.

4 How involved is your family in your life?

Sunday lunches, daily calls, twice a year at Christmas. None of these is wrong, but they are very different lives. You are not just dating a person, darling. You are dating their Sundays.

> **LISTEN FOR**
> How they speak about family: warmth, duty or distance. What they would expect from a partner.



QUESTIONS 5 & 6 OF 10

5 What does money feel like to you?

Not how much. How it feels. Security? Freedom? Stress? Two people can earn the same and argue for years, because money means something different to each of them. You don't need numbers yet. You need the feeling.

> **LISTEN FOR**
> The words they reach for: safe, free, worried, guilty. And how they talk about people who have more or less.

6 What are you looking for right now, in your own words?

People often tell us the truth early, then behave in a way that makes it easier not to hear it. “Not serious”, “not ready”, “right now” are not codes. They are information.

> **LISTEN FOR**
> Their exact words. Remember them. Later, check whether their behaviour matches.



QUESTIONS 7 & 8 OF 10

7 How do you make up after an argument?

Happy couples argue too. About the dishes. About his mother. About the thermostat. The difference isn't the fight. It's the repair: a joke, a hand on the shoulder, “Sorry, that came out wrong.”

> LISTEN FOR
> Who comes back to the table first. Whether “sorry” is part of their vocabulary.

8 What does an ordinary Tuesday look like for you?

You have built a life: friends, routines, your mornings. The right person adds to it. They don't ask you to shrink it. And “I'm set in my ways”? Not a flaw. Information.

> LISTEN FOR
> Whether they like their own life, and whether there is a place in it where you would fit.



QUESTIONS 9 & 10 OF 10

9 What did you change after your last relationship ended?

Not the feeling. The behaviour. If nothing has changed, it isn't a second chance. It's a rerun. And you have seen how it ends.

> LISTEN FOR
> Specifics. “I got honest about what I need” beats “She was impossible.” Also how they speak about their ex.

10 When did you last do something kind for someone who could do nothing for you?

Charm is for the person in front of you. Kindness is for the waiter, the neighbour, the stranger. It shows who someone is when nothing is in it for them.

> LISTEN FOR
> Whether a story comes easily or they have to search for one. And how they treated the staff tonight.



BEYOND THE QUESTIONS

The Tuesday Test

Saturday night shows you who someone is when everything is easy. Tuesday shows you the rest. You don't need to ask. Just watch.

1

The bad day

You had a terrible day, the kind where you just want to say it out loud. So you do. Do they ask about it, or tell you about theirs? Romance is easy on a good day. Watch what happens on a bad one.

2

The phone

You tell them something that matters: a worry, a small win. Does the phone go down, or stay in their hand, face up, waiting? Attention is the most honest compliment there is.

3

The tired Tuesday

Who notices you're tired. Who remembers you had that meeting. Who asks how it went and actually listens. Romance is lovely, but you don't live on Saturday. You live on Tuesday.



WATCH WHAT THEY SPEND

Watch the plans. Not the texts.

Attention is cheap. A like costs one thumb and two seconds. Effort costs something: time, plans, a Saturday.

Interest shows up in	Availability shows up in
Compliments	A day and a time
Likes and little flames	Plans that actually happen
Long, lovely midnight messages	Follow-through

Someone can be interested in you and still not available for you. Both feel lovely at the start. You need both.

> *That spark? It tells you that you're interested. It does not tell you whether you want the same life.*

The strongest spark can come from not knowing where you stand. That isn't a sign it's right. Sometimes it's a sign you're anxious. Enjoy the spark, then check the foundation.



THREE HONEST CHECKS

Before date three, be honest.

- [ ] Do you know whether they want a relationship because they **said so**? Not because you guessed?
- [ ] Have you seen how they handle a **bad day**?
- [ ] Have you seen them be **kind to someone** who can do nothing for them?

Three yeses? You're getting to know them.
Fewer? You're getting to know your hopes.

DON'T TRANSLATE IT

When someone says “I'm not looking for anything serious right now”, we translate. “Right now” means soon. “Not serious” means not serious *yet*. Darling, it isn't a code. It's information. Believe it, then decide what you want.

KEEP THIS PAGE

The ten questions, on one page

1. What does a good weekend look like for you?
2. What does a disagreement look like for you?
3. Where do you see yourself living in five years?
4. How involved is your family in your life?
5. What does money feel like to you?
6. What are you looking for right now, in your own words?
7. How do you make up after an argument?
8. What does an ordinary Tuesday look like for you?
9. What did you change after your last relationship ended?
10. When did you last do something kind for someone who could do nothing for you?

Screenshot it. Put it in your handbag. Then enjoy the date.



ONE LAST THING

You are allowed to take your time, and to notice.

If the answers fit the life you want, wonderful. If they don't, that isn't a failure. It's information, and you got it early.

And if you have a question of your own that belongs on this list, ask me. I read every one.

Evelyn

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