

Relationships are hard. They can bring out the best in us, yes, but also the worst. They test the very essence of our beings: our capacity for forgiveness; our ability to trust (both ourselves and another); the true extent of our self-love; the strength of our boundaries; and the power of attachment. Anything that can help bring us together, then, should be explored. And one scientific finding about love rises above others in the literature, if only for its rom-com level of magic.

Yes, I'm talking about the study made famous by the viral New York Times article by psychologist Mandy Len Catron. It not only outlined the original study, but backed it up by revealing that Catron herself had tested the concept...and fallen in love with her question-answering companion. The original research was conducted by psychologist Arthur Aron at Stony Brook University. He split participants up into two groups, then had people pair up to talk to one another for 45 minutes. One group made small talk; the other received a list of 36 questions they went through one at a time — a list that got increasingly more personal. They then shared four minutes of sustained eye contact.

If there was ever a question of whether you can generate intimacy in a lab setting, it was answered by this study. Six months later, one of the pairs was in love. When they got married, they invited the whole lab staff to the ceremony.

When Catron, author of the New York Times piece, did the questions with an acquaintance, she wasn't totally prepared, especially for the eye contact at the end: "[T]he real crux of the moment was not just that I was really seeing someone, but that I was seeing someone really seeing me. Once I embraced the terror of this realization and gave it time to subside, I arrived somewhere unexpected." The unexpected place? It was a state of being more than anything, and one that led to more connection than perhaps either thought possible. "I wondered what would come of our interaction. If nothing else, I thought it would make a good story. But I see now that the story isn't about us; it's about what it means to bother to know someone, which is really a story about what it means to be known."

We all want to be known. We want to be known by our friends, our colleagues, our family members, even our neighbors. We want to be seen for what we have to offer, what we provide, for who we are.

But the person we often crave to feel most known by is our partner. This is the person with whom we share the most intimate details of our lives (not to mention our bodies). It's the person who sees us at our best and our worst. The one who knows our history and is a primary part of our future. We want them to know us — really know us, and these questions can help. As Catron says, "Most of us think about love as something that happens to us," she said. "We fall. We get crushed. But what I like about this study is how it assumes that love is an action."

There are lots of ways to celebrate upcoming Valentine's Day. This year, consider doing something different. If you're not in a relationship, propose doing this experiment with someone you've always thought was interesting but have yet to take the leap with. What do you have to lose? And if you're in a relationship, skip the fancy dinner or other high-pressure, conventional thing.

Instead, grab a bottle of wine and make the choice to commit to the magic of the questions. Allow the vulnerability of the answers to carry you even closer together. Take on the challenge of revealing yourself even more deeply to the person you cherish most in the world, and revel in the soul-deep connection that can ensue.

Take action. Fall in love.

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### Set 1

1. Given the choice of anyone in the world, whom would you want as a dinner guest?
2. Would you like to be famous? In what way?
3. Before making a telephone call, do you ever rehearse what you are going to say? Why?
4. What would constitute a "perfect" day for you?
5. When did you last sing to yourself? To someone else?
6. If you were able to live to the age of 90 and retain either the mind or body of a 30-year-old for the last 60 years of your life, which would you want?
7. Do you have a secret hunch about how you will die?
8. Name three things you and your partner appear to have in common.
9. For what in your life do you feel most grateful?
10. If you could change anything about the way you were raised, what would it be?
11. Take four minutes and tell your partner your life story in as much detail as possible.
12. If you could wake up tomorrow having gained any one quality or ability, what would it be?

### Set 2

13. If a crystal ball could tell you the truth about yourself, your life, the future or anything else, what would you want to know?
14. Is there something that you've dreamed of doing for a long time? Why haven't you done it?
15. What is the greatest accomplishment of your life?
16. What do you value most in a friendship?
17. What is your most treasured memory?
18. What is your most terrible memory?
19. If you knew that in one year you would die suddenly, would you change anything about the way you are now living? Why?
20. What does friendship mean to you?
21. What roles do love and affection play in your life?
22. Alternate sharing something you consider a positive characteristic of your partner. Share a total of five items.
23. How close and warm is your family? Do you feel your childhood was happier than most other people's?
24. How do you feel about your relationship with your mother?

### Set 3

25. Make three true "we" statements each. For instance, "We are both in this room feeling \_\_\_\_\_."
26. Complete this sentence: "I wish I had someone with whom I could share \_\_\_\_\_."
27. If you were going to become a close friend with your partner, please share what would be important for him or her to know.
28. Tell your partner what you like about them; be very honest this time, saying things that you might not say to someone you've just met.
29. Share with your partner an embarrassing moment in your life.
30. When did you last cry in front of another person? By yourself?
31. Tell your partner something that you like about them already.
32. What, if anything, is too serious to be joked about?
33. If you were to die this evening with no opportunity to communicate with anyone, what would you most regret not having told someone? Why haven't you told them yet?
34. Your house, containing everything you own, catches fire. After saving your loved ones and pets, you have time to safely make a final dash to save any one item. What would it be? Why?
35. Of all the people in your family, whose death would you find most disturbing? Why?
36. Share a personal problem and ask your partner's advice on how he or she might handle it. Also, ask your partner to reflect back to you how you seem to be feeling about the problem you have chosen.

## **Sociopath vs. Psychopath: What's the Difference?**

By Kara Mayer Robinson

FROM THE WEBMD ARCHIVES

You may have heard people call someone else a “psychopath” or a “sociopath.” But what do those words really mean?

You won't find the definitions in [mental health](#)'s official handbook, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. Doctors don't officially diagnose people as psychopaths or sociopaths. They use a different term instead: [antisocial personality disorder](#).

Most experts believe psychopaths and sociopaths share a similar set of traits. People like this have a poor inner sense of right and wrong. They also can't seem to understand or share another person's feelings. But there are some differences, too.

### **Do They Have a Conscience?**

A key difference between a psychopath and a sociopath is whether he has a conscience, the little voice inside that lets us know when we're doing something wrong, says L. Michael Tompkins, EdD. He's a psychologist at the Sacramento County Mental Health Treatment Center.

A psychopath doesn't have a conscience. If he lies to you so he can steal your money, he won't feel any moral qualms, though he may pretend to. He may observe others and then act the way they do so he's not “found out,” Tompkins says.

A sociopath typically has a conscience, but it's weak. He may know that taking your money is wrong, and he might feel some guilt or remorse, but that won't stop his behavior.

Both lack empathy, the ability to stand in someone else's shoes and understand how they feel. But a psychopath has less regard for others, says Aaron Kipnis, PhD, author of *The Midas Complex*. Someone with this personality type sees others as objects he can use for his own benefit.

### **They're Not Always Violent**

In movies and TV shows, psychopaths and sociopaths are usually the villains who kill or torture innocent people. In real life, some people with antisocial personality disorder can be violent, but most are not. Instead they use manipulation and reckless behavior to get what they want.

“At worst, they're cold, calculating killers,” Kipnis says. Others, he says, are skilled at climbing their way up the corporate ladder, even if they have to hurt someone to get there.

If you recognize some of these traits in a family member or coworker, you may be tempted to think you're living or working with a psychopath or sociopath. But just because a person is mean or selfish, it doesn't necessarily mean he has a disorder.

### **'Cold-Hearted Psychopath, Hot-Headed Sociopath'**

It's not easy to spot a psychopath. They can be intelligent, charming, and good at mimicking emotions. They may pretend to be interested in you, but in reality, they probably don't care.

“They're skilled actors whose sole mission is to manipulate people for personal gain,” Tompkins says.

Sociopaths are less able to play along. They make it plain that they're not interested in anyone but themselves. They often blame others and have excuses for their behavior.

Some experts see sociopaths as “hot-headed.” They act without thinking how others will be affected.

Psychopaths are more “cold-hearted” and calculating. They carefully plot their moves, and use aggression in a planned-out way to get what they want. If they’re after more money or status in the office, for example, they’ll make a plan to take out any barriers that stand in the way, even if it’s another person’s job or reputation.

### **Brain Differences**

Recent research suggests a psychopath’s brain is not like other people’s. It may have physical differences that make it hard for the person to identify with someone else’s distress.

The differences can even change basic body functions. For example, when most people see blood or violence in a movie, their hearts beat faster, their breathing quickens, and their palms get sweaty.

A psychopath has the opposite reaction. He gets calmer. Kipnis says that quality helps psychopaths be fearless and engage in risky behavior.

“They don’t fear the consequences of their actions,” he says.

WebMD Feature Reviewed by [Joseph Goldberg, MD](#) on August 24, 2014

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# Browse in private

If you don't want Google Chrome to remember your activity, you can browse the web privately in Incognito mode.

Computer Android iPhone & iPad

1. On your computer, open Chrome.
2. At the top right, click More  > New Incognito Window.
3. A new window appears. In the top corner, check for the Incognito icon .

You can also use a keyboard shortcut to open an Incognito window:

- Windows, Linux, or Chrome OS: Press Ctrl + Shift + n.
- Mac: Press  + Shift + n.

You can switch between Incognito windows and regular Chrome windows. You'll only browse in private when you're using an Incognito window.

## Stop private browsing

Incognito mode runs in a separate window from your normal Chrome windows.

If you have an Incognito window open and you open another one, your private browsing session will continue in the new window. To exit Incognito mode, close all Incognito windows.

If you see a number next to the Incognito icon at the top right, you have more than one Incognito window open.

1. On your computer, go to your Incognito window.
2. Close the window:
  - Windows or Chrome OS: At the top right, click Close .
  - Mac: At the top left, click Close .

## What happens when you browse privately

- Chrome won't save your browsing history, cookies and site data, or information entered in forms.
- Files you download and bookmarks you create will be kept.
- Your activity isn't hidden from websites you visit, your employer or school, or your internet service provider.

## Intuition by MJ Vess

We all have it. Some of us actually use it. Why do some of us not when we know it could save us a world of hurt? Or do we not know that? Do we not trust it? Do we not trust...ourselves?

I'm sure the answer is really not that complicated.

Like, when I first began going out with my soon-to-be-abuser, he said the hole in an interior door got there from a piece of furniture falling into it when he moved in.

Not ever knowing someone to punch a hole in anything, it didn't occur to me that that particular hole was at the right level for a fist. So, although "something" gave me a moment of pause, I brushed it off not knowing what "it" was. Logic overruling intuition. Why would he lie?

Like, when he said he lost his truck after he moved to a different state because he couldn't find work and they came and repossessed it. But no job = not being able to keep up the payments = logic. Logic wins again. I did not delve deeper, not thinking how is he paying for rent or school or food or getting around, etc.

But then he found work. A couple of good jobs actually. He works! He was able to take me out to dinner and see movies now in his beater car someone gave him. The odd thing was, even though it started out as my decision, it always ended with his choice of restaurant or movie. What he wanted. Intuition never came into play. I learned to acquiesce to his wants, because I didn't want him to get mad at me. Intuition should have started right then. I only recognized the intuition when I started harboring ill feelings about it. Logic told me it was no big deal, so let's put intuition away. It was nice he wanted to spend time with me. Good ole' logic....or...was that denial? What was to deny? Myself? Hogwash. Low self-esteem? You bet.

He wanted to court me. So we barely held hands which I thought was odd (intuition) but logic...yes...logic told me that we didn't have much physical contact because he wouldn't be able to control himself. So, self preservation on his part. Yes, that must be it! So why would he get animated and aroused when he would want to wrestle with me? Put me into lock holds where I couldn't move for fear of getting hurt? Have dominance? Intuition told me something was wrong. Logic told me that's just what boys do. Damn logic. More like stupid thinking. Where was sense of self worth? Extinct.

I could go on. The intuition was there all along BEFORE we were married. My sense of self was very small even though I knew God loved me unconditionally. Surely having met this man in Bible College, and him saying we would start our own church, he knew that God loved him unconditionally as well. That seems logical...right? I'm not really sure if he actually knew that though. With the way he treated me, and his other wives apparently from the stories he told me (after we were married), I'm not sure he had God's kind of love to give away. Logic tells me now that you can't give away what you don't have. So...logic *can* be helpful when we apply it...logically.

If I could do it all over again with him, I wouldn't have anything to do with him! It was a long six years with him. It has been a long four years away from him coming to terms with everything, how he was, how I was with him. I take great care now to listen to my intuition. God gave me such a beautiful, creative spirit and a healthy dose of intuition for a reason. To protect myself from predators. He gave us all this ability. To use all of our senses. We need to beef up our sense of self. Test our intuition. Follow through with our intuition. Realize that intuition is one of our greatest gifts to self protect. No need to beat yourself up for not following through in the past! Start today. Listen to that small still voice that makes you pause. Pay attention. Give it credence. Trust it.

Trust...yourself.