

Five Steps To Turn a Date Into a Relationship



By Dr. Tranquility – Lydia Belton, PhD, Ct.H.A.

For many people who seek lasting relationships, the first date isn't the big issue. In truth, the actual challenge is to use that first date as a litmus test for whether to move forward or not. You can't hope to follow in the footsteps of Kyra Sedgwick and Kevin Bacon or Sarah Jessica Parker and Mathew Broderick directly after the first cocktail. However, as these celebrities would surely tell you, a lengthy partnership is rooted in loyalty and consistency. Once you get past that initial encounter, you may be ready to take steps towards a lasting and meaningful relationship. Here's how to go about it, step by step:

Step One: Focus on the Attraction and Ignore the Distractions

Many, if not most, first dates are over drinks or a meal with plenty of potential distractions swirling around the room – televised sports, side table conversations, interesting people, etc. You were attracted to your date for some reason or you would not be there in the first place. So keep your attention where it needs to be – your date is the Attraction. Continuous eye contact is the key, as it will also work to keep your date's attention focused on you. Eye contact also will help with active listening and make the conversation flow easily.

Related: [5 Conversations to Avoid on the First Date](#)

Step Two: Listen Actively and Be Engaged in the Conversation

Eye contact should foster concentration on your date and what your date has to say about values, beliefs, understandings and even issues. If you let your mind drift to the pressures of work, finances, where you need to be next week, you will end up excusing yourself for not paying attention – the last thing that a date leading to a relationship wants to be told. You risk losing the areas where you connect, and the important elements of the foundation for forming the relationship. Worst case – you will convey to your date the impression that you do not care to move past the dating stage. So, concentrate and stay engaged!

Related: [4 Steps to a Stronger Long Term Relationship](#)

Step Three: Flirting and Body Language

Understanding your limits, particularly if consuming alcohol, will enable you maintain all the positive elements of your body language and appropriate level of flirting. Smile and laugh. Make your gestures inviting – keep your palms up. You want to be open and inviting, conveying an open mind and interest in exploring something new. Reach across the table

and touch your date's hand (the eye contact and active listening will lead to this), and before you know it, you will be holding hands and gazing into each other's eyes. You too can flirt like Pamela Anderson and Katy Perry.

Step Four: Time is Important and Valuable

Aside from simple good manners, being on time and respecting the time of your date is important. Be punctual and respect the time parameters of your date.

Step Five: Agree on the Next Step

If this is going to be a relationship, before you part ways, talk about what, when and where for the next date. If you have followed the first four steps, setting the next date will come naturally.

With these several steps in mind, it should be a little easier for you to gauge whether or not you're ready for a long term situation with your new fling.

Developed by Lydia Belton PhD, Ct.H.A. of DrTranquility.com, Date Therapy® is an effective protocol that helps people get in touch with their criteria for an ideal mate. DrTranquility's protocols® have been featured most recently on Forbes.com & Yahoo, ABCNEWS.com, ABC'ss the View, KISS FM, cupidspulse.com, Metromix for the Chicago Tribune, British Glamour, REDBOOK, Cosmopolitan Magazine & promoted by Match.com.