

# Intimacy Questions

A technique for romance and intimacy in Live-Action Roleplay

by

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If you've used *Intimacy Questions* in your own game, tell me how it went at [Stolen Fire!](#)

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## **The Rules**

The representation of intimacy and romance in a live-action game, especially between players who are not themselves romantically involved, has always been difficult. A proper balance must be struck between what the characters want and the comfort level of the players. To solve this problem, game designers have developed several techniques to represent physical contact - such as Ars Amandi or the more prevalent backrub method.

Intimacy Questions presents another option, especially for those who may not find themselves comfortable with physical contact. In this technique, personal information about one's character is treated as a stand-in for an emotional or physical connection. Due to this construction, *Intimacy Questions* functions best when the entire game agrees to use it.

Below are a series of questions intended to represent both physical and emotional intimacy between characters. When playing out a romantic or intimate situation, participants should remove themselves from the larger play area and exchange answers to the questions. If possible, everyone should ask and answer the same question.

The number of questions asked represents the degree of intimacy. A one-night stand or

professional transaction might involve only one question while a pair of committed lovers decide to exchange answers once a game. Asking and answering more questions represents a growing intimacy between characters.

Needless to say, the questions should be answered In Character; however, the asking is not necessarily In Character. Rather, the questions are an abstraction designed to represent how people get to know each other as they spend time together.

The information given during *Intimacy Questions* should be considered in-play and treated with the exact same privacy with which one would normally handle sensitive personal information. A character who reveals another's answer in public would be akin to bragging about a conquest; asking an Intimacy Question in public is equivalent to making an inappropriate remark. As other's answers can be given during encounters, discovering that someone unexpectedly knows the answer to someone's Intimacy Question is grounds to suspect infidelity or betrayal.

Asking Intimacy Questions is not necessarily a presumption that intimate physical contact has happened between characters; players may choose to adopt this system to represent bonds between siblings; incorporate them into initiation rituals for secret societies or use them to symbolize a close platonic friendship (among other forms of intimate relationships). Players should verbally agree on the level of physical intimacy their characters are engaging in prior to asking these questions.

If an Intimacy Question makes a player uncomfortable, they may declare 'Pass' and a new question will be chosen. Character discomfort, however, is not a suitable reason to decline answering! If a character declines to answer, the encounter is an unsatisfying failure.

A character may, in lieu of answering for herself, answer for someone else whose Intimacy Question she knows the answer to. Players may not lie, and must clarify the PC for whom she is answering.

The questions may be asked in any order the players choose.

## Intimacy Questions

1. What was your greatest childhood fear?
2. Do you think you are living up to your parents' expectations for a good person? Why or why not?
3. What do you like the least about your physical appearance?
4. Tell me an awkward story from when you went through puberty.
5. What's something you are ashamed of?
6. What are you *secretly* proud of?
7. Describe your first love OR Why do you think you have not fallen in love yet?
8. How do you envision yourself as a parent? OR Do you think you are living up to your expectations of being a good parent?
9. What is something you could never tell a joke about?
10. What is your most profound regret? OR What is your most profound fear for the future?
11. What are you the most afraid of losing?
12. What are you currently the most afraid of?
13. Describe the time when you experienced a broken heart, your feelings were not returned, or you lost someone important to you.
14. What is it that you really don't want me to find out right now?