

BONUS TWO | CHOSEN AGAIN

The Conversation Vault

*47 specific questions and conversation starters
organised by situation. Open it. Pick one. Use it
tonight.*

A COMPANION GUIDE TO CHOSEN AGAIN

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The Right Words For The Right Moment

One of the most paralyzing parts of trying to reconnect is not knowing what to say. You know you want to reach. You do not always know how to begin.

The Conversation Vault removes that paralysis. It contains 47 specific conversation starters and questions organised by the situation you are actually in right now. Not generic prompts designed for couples retreats. Starters built for the ordinary, sometimes tense, often quiet moments of a real West African marriage.

You do not need to read this guide from beginning to end. Go directly to the section that matches your situation today. Pick one starter that feels true. Use it.

ONE RULE FOR USING THIS VAULT

These are starting points, not scripts. Say them in your own voice. Adjust the words to fit how you naturally speak. A question that sounds like it came from a book will not land the same way as one that sounds like it came from you. Use these as a foundation. Build on them with your own words.

The six sections:

Section A: When Things Are Just Quiet (10 starters)

Section B: After a Long or Stressful Day (8 starters)

Section C: After a Disagreement or Tense Period (8 starters)

Section D: When You Want to Go Deeper (10 starters)

Section E: When You Want to Remind Him of What You Share (6 starters)



SECTION A

When Things Are Just Quiet

For the evenings when nothing is wrong but nothing is happening either. Low pressure openers that invite without demanding.

STARTER 01

"What was the best part of today for you? Even something small."

Invites him to share something positive without pressure. Works well when the energy is neutral.

STARTER 02

"Is there anything on your mind lately that you haven't said out loud?"

Opens a door without pushing through it. He can walk through or not. Either is fine.

STARTER 03

"If you could have one completely free day with no obligations, what would you do with it?"

Reveals what he values and what he is currently missing. Usually opens easy conversation.

STARTER 04

"What are you looking forward to right now, even something small or far away?"

Shifts the conversation toward hope rather than the weight of the present. Light entry point.

STARTER 05

"Do you feel like you get enough time for yourself these days?"

Shows interest in his experience of his own life, not just his role in the household.

STARTER 06

"What would make this week feel like a good one for you?"

Practical and future-focused. Can be asked Sunday evening or Monday morning for natural timing.

STARTER 07

"Is there anything you wish was different about our day to day life right now?"

A more vulnerable opener. Use this when the energy between you has been warm for at least a few days.

STARTER 08

"What's something you've been thinking about lately that has nothing to do with work or the children?"

Reaches for the person underneath the provider and the father. Reminds him you are interested in him specifically.

STARTER 09

"If we could go anywhere right now, just the two of us, where would you choose?"

Opens imagination and reminds both of you that you are a couple, not just co-parents and co-providers.

STARTER 10

"What's something you've been wanting to tell me that you keep not finding the right moment for?"

A gentle invitation for honesty. Use this when you genuinely want to hear what he is carrying and are ready to receive it without defensiveness.

B

SECTION B

After a Long or Stressful Day

For when he comes home heavy. These are soft landings, not openers. They communicate safety without demanding engagement.

STARTER 11

"You look tired. Do you want to talk about it or would you rather just decompress?"

Gives him explicit permission to choose. Men who feel this choice is respected are more likely to eventually choose to talk.

STARTER 12

"I'm not going to ask you anything tonight. I just want you to know I see that today was heavy."

Not a question at all. A statement of warmth. Sometimes the most connecting thing is being named without being questioned.

STARTER 13

"What would help you feel better right now? I'm asking genuinely."

Positions you as someone who wants to serve his specific need, not impose your idea of what he needs.

STARTER 14

"Is there anything I can do to make this evening easier for you?"

Practical and warm. Most men respond well to this because it is concrete and not asking them to be emotionally available before they are ready.

STARTER 15

"You don't have to say anything. I just wanted you to know I'm here."

A powerful bid that requires nothing from him. Use this when he is particularly withdrawn and direct questions have been met with silence.

STARTER 16

"Do you want to tell me what happened or would it help more to leave it at work?"

Again, the choice is his. You are not demanding access. You are making yourself available if he wants it.

STARTER 17

"I'm not going to pretend today wasn't hard for you. What do you need from me tonight?"

Acknowledges what you observed without requiring him to explain it. Direct and warm simultaneously.

STARTER 18

"Take as long as you need. I'm not going anywhere."

The simplest and often the most powerful thing to say to someone who is carrying something heavy. No question. No demand. Just presence.



SECTION C

After a Disagreement or Tense Period

Re-entry after conflict without reopening the wound. These starters rebuild warmth without requiring resolution or apology first.

STARTER 19

"I don't want to keep the distance between us. Can we just be okay with each other for tonight?"

A ceasefire bid. Not asking for resolution. Asking for warmth before resolution. Often easier to get and makes the resolution that follows more genuine.

STARTER 20

"I know we haven't fully worked through what happened. I'm not trying to now. I just miss talking to you."

Honest and specific. Names the longing without making him responsible for fixing everything immediately.

STARTER 21

"I said some things I didn't mean. I'm sorry for those specifically."

Specific apology. Far more powerful than a general "I'm sorry." Own what you actually said, not the entire conflict.

STARTER 22

"Can we agree to disagree on that one for now and come back to it when we're both in a better place?"

Creates a path forward that doesn't require anyone to concede. Preserves both people's position while ending the immediate tension.

STARTER 23

"I don't enjoy fighting with you. I know that might not seem obvious lately."

Disarming honesty. Reminds him that you are not his adversary even when the conflict made it feel that way.

STARTER 24

"What would it take for us to feel okay with each other again? I want to know what that looks like for you."

Gives him ownership of the repair process. Some men need to be asked what resolution looks like before they can move toward it.

STARTER 25

"I love you. Even when we're like this. I wanted to say that out loud."

The simplest re-entry available. Do not underestimate how much weight these words can carry after a period of silence or conflict.

STARTER 26

"I'm tired of us being cold with each other. Whatever started it, I don't want this to be us."

Names the current state without assigning blame. Positions both of you as being in the same situation together, not against each other.

D

SECTION D

When You Want to Go Deeper

For when the basic warmth has returned and you are ready to rebuild genuine friendship and shared understanding.

STARTER 27

"What's something about yourself that you feel like I don't fully understand yet?"

A profound question that communicates humility. You are telling him you know there is more of him to know and you want to know it.

STARTER 28

"What has been the hardest thing for you in the last year that you've handled mostly alone?"

Reaches for what he has been carrying without partnership. Use this when you are ready to hear something that might be difficult and receive it without defensiveness.

STARTER 29

"What do you wish our marriage had more of right now?"

Direct and vulnerable. Ask this only when you are genuinely ready to hear an honest answer. Do not use this as a trap or a test.

STARTER 30

"Is there something I do that makes you feel like I don't see you? I want to know."

This requires courage to ask and courage to receive. The answer may be uncomfortable. It will also be useful.

STARTER 31

***"What does feeling truly loved by me look like for you?
Not what you think it should be. What actually lands."***

Goes beneath the surface of how people perform love to how love is actually received. One of the most important conversations a couple can have.

STARTER 32

***"What are you most proud of about yourself right now?
Not about your work or your role. About who you are."***

Invites him to see himself with appreciation. Most men are rarely asked this and rarely ask it of themselves.

STARTER 33

***"Where do you see yourself in ten years? What kind of life
are you building toward?"***

Connects both of you to the larger vision you share, or reveals where your visions have diverged. Both outcomes are useful.

STARTER 34

***"What's something you have always wanted to do or try
but haven't yet?"***

Reveals the parts of him that life and responsibility may have put on hold. Shows interest in him as a whole person, not just a husband.

STARTER 35

***"What did you think marriage would be like before we got
married? How close is it to what you imagined?"***

A genuinely interesting question that both reveals and invites. Works well when you have an evening with real time and real openness between you.

STARTER 36

***"What would you want me to know about what your life
feels like from the inside right now?"***

Perhaps the deepest question in this vault. Use it when you are ready to truly listen, without preparing your response while he speaks.

E

SECTION E

When You Want to Remind Him of What You Share

Questions and prompts that point back to your shared history and identity as a couple.

STARTER 37

"Do you remember when we [specific early memory]? I was thinking about that recently."

Fill in the blank with something specific and real from your early relationship. The specificity is what makes it land.

STARTER 38

"What's your favourite memory of us? The first one that comes to mind."

Opens a shared emotional archive. Almost always produces warmth in both people.

STARTER 39

"I was looking through some old photos of us. We used to laugh so easily. I want that back."

Honest and vulnerable. Names the loss without assigning blame for it.

STARTER 40

"What made you want to marry me? I'm curious what you remember about that."

Takes him back to before the drift. Reminds him what he chose and why. Can be surprisingly moving for both people.

STARTER 41

"We've been through a lot together. I don't think I always acknowledge that enough."

Recognises the shared weight you have both carried. Positions you as partners who have survived something, which you have.

STARTER 42

"What do you think the best version of us looks like? Not then. Now."

Forward-facing but rooted in who you already are. Invites him to imagine a future that is still within reach.



F

SECTION F

When He Seems Far Away

Gentle entry points for when he is particularly withdrawn. Low pressure. No demand. Just a door left open.

STARTER 43

"I'm not asking you to talk about anything. I just wanted to sit with you for a bit."

The presence bid. Requires nothing from him. Often the most welcome thing when he is very far away.

STARTER 44

"I've noticed you've been carrying something lately. I'm not going to push. I just want you to know I see it."

Names his state without requiring him to explain it. Creates safety for later disclosure.

STARTER 45

"Whatever is going on with you right now, I'm on your side. Even when it doesn't feel like it."

Powerful when said genuinely. Removes the feeling of being observed or judged that often accompanies withdrawal.

STARTER 46

"I miss you. Not in a dramatic way. I just miss the way we used to be easy with each other."

The most honest bid of the entire vault. Use it when you mean it completely and can say it without expectation attached.

STARTER 47

"You don't have to say anything. I love you and I'm not going anywhere."

The simplest possible closing bid. Says everything that needs to be said. Requires nothing in return.