

A little over a year ago, I discovered a possibly life changing story composed for analytic minds and curious hearts. Three sets for a total of [36 questions](#), written by psychologist Arthur Aron, were made with the intent of making strangers fall in love over the course of three dates. The questions focus on building trust through personal questions, giving and receiving compliments, and a lot of eye contact. My own interest in humans has compelled me to put these 36 questions to the test and do them with three different people: a close friend, an acquaintance, and a stranger.

Senior Meghan Paul and I have known each other for about six years. I assumed these intimate and personal questions would be easiest with her, as we've already established and developed our relationship. While Meghan and I both agreed the questions were successful in their mission to help us learn more about each other, Meghan noticed some issues regarding the questions. She noted that our close friendship hindered the questions' goals of bringing us closer, despite the fact that we now knew some oddball information about each other.

"It's not something that comes up in conversation for other people to know," she said. Overall, we both enjoyed the experience of strengthening the bond we already had.

The next person I did these questions with was senior Brennan Crowder.

"I know you as a person, you know me as a person, but I know nothing about your background or anything like that," Brennan said.

In other words, we're acquaintances, making him perfect to test with. Although I have been working with these questions and doing them with people for over a year, I shared the same nerves that Brennan had. But nervousness slowly dissolved as we finished the thirty-six and it was time to see if we thought they had changed our relationship. Once again, we agreed that the questions helped us learn more about one another, but still had some issues.

"I liked how they were simple on the topside but when you realize-when you explained them, you had to go deeper and deeper," Brennan said. "It was good."

Finding a stranger willing to answer 36 personal questions was a lot easier than expected. Originally, a student had been selected using a Simple Random Sample, but that didn't work out. Instead, I went to the bridge and talked to the first person I saw. Alysia Martinez is a sophomore who was cool enough to say yes to answering 36 personal questions with an absolute stranger. Funnily enough, this interview ended up being the longest, due to lengthy side conversations.

“I feel like I know a lot about you now, which is kind of surprising because these questions are things I never would have thought to ask my friends or anything,” Alysia said. “Some of the stuff I realized I wouldn’t know what my friends would say.”

We both agreed that the questions focused on oddball information that helped lead into more in-depth and occasionally off-topic conversations.

The only issue involving the questions was in the way this experiment was conducted. The four of us agreed that had we done this the the intended three meetings, repetition would not have been a problem

Regardless, if this experiment appeals to you, Meghan, Brennan, and Alysia have some advice for you.

“Be open, it doesn’t work if you’re not open, Meghan said, “If you come in and are shut off and don’t tell them everything, then it’s pointless,” Meghan said.

“Go for it,” Brennan said, “Be honest, there’s no reason to lie.”

“You can’t really be awkward with this,” Alysia said, “With the stuff you have to answer you just have to be more open. You have to be really open with some of these question because they’re personal, but not uncomfortable.”

We didn’t fall in love, but we did learn more about each other and further develop, or begin, our friendships.