



A Relationship Without Drama

*A Guide and Worksheet in Finding the Right
Partner and Having a Healthy Relationship*

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Introduction

Relationships are hard. You know this especially if you've had relationships over the years that haven't worked out in the long run.

The good news is that you can take all of the relationships that you've been in and learn something from each of them, using those lessons as a springboard for attracting your soulmate and growing into the person you wish to become.

Know that you're not alone in your journey in wanting to experience success in intimate relationships.

It's not a coincidence that you're right where you are right now in life.

You're here for a bigger purpose and oftentimes old traumas get in the way. Let's discover what those roadblocks are and continue on your journey towards a whole healed self.

With best wishes for your relationship success,

Rabbi Shlomo Slatkin, M.S., LCPC

The Five Secrets of Successful Dating

Being single can be very lonely. What's worse is that the dating process can often feel frustrating and seemingly endless and it is hard to discern whether you just haven't found the right one or whether you are the one that is being too picky or needs to change.

While hindsight is 20/20 and we can only explain the length of our quest of find a spouse after we find him/her, there are some things we can do that may set the ball in motion. These tips will give you greater clarity about yourself and what you are looking for as well as teach you relationship tools that will not only help you date more effectively ultimately teaching you how to get married, but also benefit you during your marriage.

Here are five secrets to successful dating that you need to know.

01 KNOW WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR

When you become conscious about what you may be unconsciously looking for, you have the ability to choose and to leave behind self-destructive patterns as you learn more about yourself while you learn how to get married.

When we stretch out of our comfort zone, we grow and become more complete people. Dating is a practice for stretching. It can be uncomfortable but even on those unpleasant dates, it can give you an opportunity to act intentional in your relationships. Use it to your advantage to learn about yourself and what makes you tick or get ticked off. This will be a valuable tool for all of your relationships.

02 STRETCHING

03 YOU ARE NOT DATING YOURSELF.

Some people view a date as an opportunity to compare the person with their checklist. Instead I encourage singles to get curious. Ask questions. When we learn about the world of the other we connect and experience the depth of the other person.

The Five Secrets of Successful Dating

04 LEARNING HOW TO LISTEN

Learning how to listen will make your date feel great and it will also enable you to switch off the judgment switch in your brain. Accept that you are dating an “other” and that “other” has their own experiences, a unique way of viewing the situation, and a right to their own opinion. This will help them feel heard and endear them to you much more than if you get defensive or even gently off your own two cents.

Knowing yourself is always important when you are about to embark on a decision such as marriage, that you be clear about your goals and what you want out of life.

05 KNOW YOURSELF

So many men and women go out on a date and pretend to be someone they are not, thinking that if they act a certain way, they may be more likable. Pretending to be something that you are not is a mistake. Trust that if you're genuine, you will find your perfect match!

05 BE YOURSELF

Get in touch with your gut as you will be the only one that has to live with the decision you make.

05 TRUST YOURSELF

Worksheet

The first secret to successful dating and learning more about dating without drama is knowing what you are looking for. Use this guide to know about yourself and your past relationship so that you can reflect on what kind of relationship are you looking for.

WHAT MESSAGES HAVE YOU RECEIVED AS A CHILD?

Exercise: Look at the questions below. Take a deep breath, close your eyes, and picture your parents.

- Did they talk? Argue?
- Were they loving or distant?
- How did they work on finances?
- Which one expressed anger?
- Did Dad cry?
- Did marriage seem to be hard work or was it easy?
- Did your parents help you feel secure or smothered?
- Did you get the message that you should always be happy?

WRITE DOWN THREE MESSAGES YOU GOT ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS AND HOW YOU WANT THEM TO BE.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Are you ready to date?



While you can never really figure out everything there is to know about yourself and others in relationships, the more that you define what you want and need in a relationship, the more likely it is that you will find someone who meets those criteria.

ARE YOU READY FOR A RELATIONSHIP?

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF:

- Do I feel strongly about myself and about my own identity?
- Do I get my sense of self from people that I date?
- Do I know the components of an emotionally intelligent relationship?
- Do I know how to be a healthy and emotionally intelligent partner?
- Do I have other things going on in my life that are fulfilling and rewarding or do I spend my life around my dating partner?
- Do I have other intimate (non-sexual) relationships?
- Is there anything that I am afraid of or avoiding?
- Do I have any behaviors that are out of control (drinking, shopping, work, etc.)?
- Do I know what I want to get out of dating ... a committed relationship? Fun?
- Do I know how to be open and direct about my needs with my partner?

Finding the Right Partner

put intro here

List all the things about your past partners that you liked.

List all the things about your past partners that you didn't like.

Finding the Right Partner

Identify the characteristics that are least important to you when looking for a partner.

Identify the characteristics that are most important to you when looking for a partner.

Worksheet

Dating is a practice for stretching. This exercise will help you learn more about how you react when you are feeling uncomfortable on a date. Fill in the following sentences below.

I have experienced pain/anger/frustration/ in dating when my date

I have interpreted this to mean

And then I felt

At worst I have reacted by

To hide my fear of

When what I really desired was

Worksheet

The best way to get to know each other is to ask each some deep questions. This worksheet is designed to help you get to know your partner better. Take a look at these questions and try to ask the person you're dating.

QUESTIONS:

- Who do you most admire, and why?
- Did you enjoy your childhood?
- Do you think men and women are equals?
- What is your biggest fear?
- What makes you angry?
- What do you need to feel fulfilled in life?
- Do you think people are more influenced by their environment or by their biological traits?
- What do you think your purpose is?
- Who is the villain in your life story?
- What words do you think people use to describe you?
- What words do you want people to use to describe you?
- If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
- Do you think Younger You would be happy with what you have become?
- What is the best way I can be a supportive partner to you?
- What has been your greatest accomplishment in life thus far?
- What has been the happiest moment of your life up until now?
- Are there things I say or do that make you want to spend less time with me?
- For what do you want to be remembered?
- How can I make you feel more appreciated and honored?
- What do you think we can do to make our relationship stronger?
- Do you think we are all at the mercy of fate?
- When do you feel most loved?
- If I could live your life for one day, what do you think would surprise me the most?

Worksheet

OPENING UP TO YOUR DATE

It's scary to open up, especially to someone you're dating. But sharing how you feel and who you are is an important part of building intimacy and trust, and it can make it easier to connect on a deeper level. Here are some questions that you can ask to open up to your date

What role does physical attraction play in whether or not you pursue a relationship?

Would you say you have a "type"? Do I fit what you thought you were looking for?

What is the first thing you think when you see me?

What is something you think is true about me, but you've never asked to confirm?

What is the first thing you think when you see me?

What qualities make me special to you?

OPENING UP TO YOUR DATE

How do you describe me to other people?

How do you think I should describe you to other people?

What goals do you have for us?

How big of a deal are special occasions for you?

What could I do for you that I don't do now?

If you could have three wishes from me, what would they be?

How would you respond if my appearance drastically changed, either overnight (new haircut and different hair color, for example) or over time (more/less muscle, weight gain/loss)?

In Search to a Healthy Relationship

Healthy relationships don't just happen. They're built on trust, mutual respect, and a commitment to communication. Here are some tips for attracting the kind of relationship you're looking for.

Tip 1

KEEP THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

A good partner wants you to take care of yourself and will encourage your goals. Be honest about your flaws and shortcomings. If both are willing to make an effort to be supportive, it can increase the chances of a successful relationship.

Tip 2

BUILD A GENUINE CONNECTION

When entering into a relationship, try focusing on creating one based on respect and trust. Being honest and being open to learning your potential partner can help build a genuine connection as well.

Tip 3

PUT A PRIORITY ON HAVING FUN

Relationships should be fun! Lighten up and learn to enjoy every step of the journey.

Tip 4

HANDLE REJECTION GRACEFULLY

Rejection is an inevitable part of dating. The key is to accept that rejection and don't take it personally. Use it as an opportunity to reflect on what went wrong.

WATCH FOR RELATIONSHIP RED FLAGS

It's important to be able to recognize when something just isn't right in a relationship. These include abusive or controlling behavior, and general incompatibility with your personal values.

Tip 5

NURTURE YOUR BUDDING RELATIONSHIP

Nurturing a budding relationship means engaging in positive self-talk, supporting your partner through bad times as well as good ones, and strengthening your emotional intimacy by embracing vulnerability.

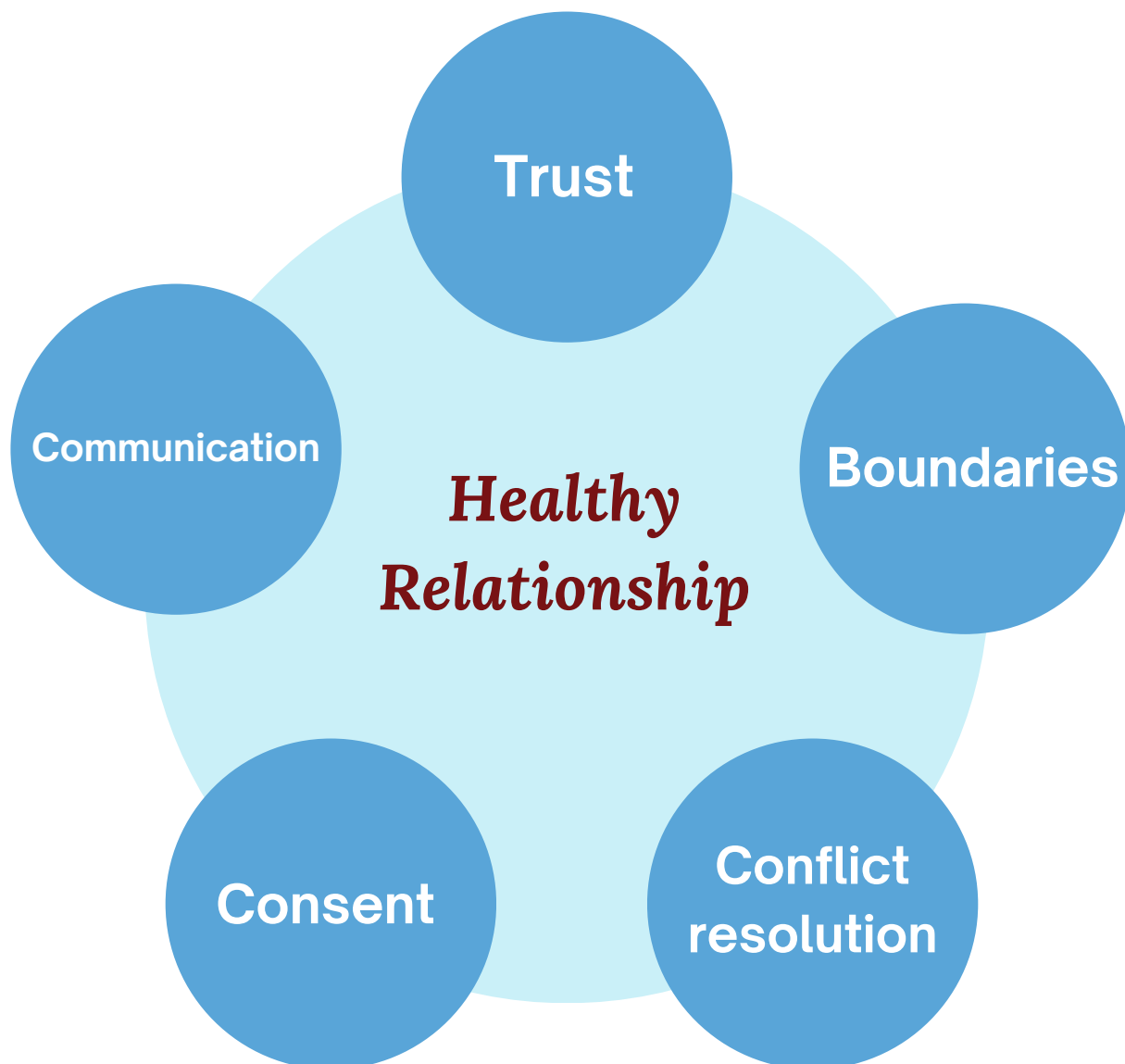
Tip 6

What is a healthy relationship?

A healthy relationship is one in which both people are able to be their true selves, where there is mutual respect and happiness. It's one in which both people are able to grow together, as well as individually.

This involves communication and compromise. Partners in healthy relationships make their own decisions without fear of retribution or retaliation. They share responsibility for their life together.

What makes a healthy relationship?



Healthy Relationship vs Unhealthy Relationship

Healthy Relationship

VS

Unhealthy Relationship

- Equality
- Respect
- Communication
- Trust
- Responsibility & Accountability
- Support
- Honesty
- Boundaries
- Non-threatening behavior

- Lack of Communication
- Dishonesty
- Disrespect
- Dependence
- Jealousy
- Manipulation
- Criticism
- Isolation
- Constant fighting
- Controlling behavior

Worksheet

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PAST

Use this worksheet to help you two think and talk about your past relationships, and how they can both help you build a better future.

Have you ever cheated on a partner? If not, have you considered it but changed your mind?

How many past partners have you had?

Did you debate whether or not to ask me out? Why would you have chosen not to?

Who is your role model in life? Who is your role model in love?

What did it feel like when you realized you were in love with me?

What were you looking for when you found me? Were you looking for love at all?

Worksheet

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE

We've written these questions with the goal of helping you imagine what your future will look like.

Where do you see this relationship headed in the next year? What about the next five years?

What is your opinion on marriage and children?

Would you stay with me if you found out I was unable to bear children?

What are your occupational goals and how could they affect our relationship?

Where do you see yourself living when you retire?

How do you imagine a day in the life of us, married with kids? What about a week in the life?

Worksheet

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE

How do you plan to save for retirement? What are your goals?

The Imago Dialogue

The Best of Relationship Listening Skills

Every exchange with your partner has the ability to be a positive and connected one. Follow these steps for maximum success.

FOR MORE HELP, CONTACT:

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THE APPOINTMENT

Ask your partner when is a good time to share a frustration or even an appreciation with him/her

THE SENDER SENDS

At the appointed time, begin sharing. Use I statements instead of accusing or blaming, sit across from each other, making eye contact for maximum connection.

THE RECEIVER MIRRORS

The receiver repeats verbatim back what he/she is hearing, suppressing the desire to respond or explain. After each mirroring back ask, "Did I Get You? Is there more?"

SUMMARIZE

Where you summarize what you've heard. "In summary what I heard you say..."

VALIDATE

Where you meaningfully state that the sender makes sense. (even if you disagree)

EMPATHIZE

Come up with what you think your partner may be feeling. "I imagine you might be feeling hurt or angry", for example..

Building a Healthy Relationship

Every relationship goes through ups and downs. It may be your first or you may be looking to improve a current relationship, but no matter the case, being in a healthy romantic relationship requires work and effort. Here are some simple tips on what you can work on for a healthy relationship.

SPEND QUALITY TIME TOGETHER

It's easy for your life to become rushed and busy. But if you want to keep your connection strong and build a healthy relationship, make sure that you're spending quality time together face to face.

Make sure to commit to spending quality time together. It could be doing something that you enjoy together such as shared hobbies, coffee dates, movie dates, or daily walks. You can also try to do something new together such as trying a new restaurant or visiting places you two have never been to before. And lastly, focusing on having fun together is a great way to connect and spend your time together.

STAY CONNECTED THROUGH COMMUNICATION.

Communication is an essential part of building a healthy relationship. When you communicate with your partner openly and honestly, you can be sure that things are running smoothly in your relationship. Being able to talk about problems in an open way is also important, especially when resolving conflict.

KEEPING PHYSICAL INTIMACY ALIVE.

Intimacy is important in a relationship. Make sure to make time for physical intimacy with your partner. This can be as simple as holding hands or snuggling on the couch together.

BE PREPARED FOR UPS AND DOWNS.

Relationships take a lot of work and inevitably, there will be ups and downs. To stay together through difficult times, you both need to be flexible and be willing to work on your issues together. Effective communication and resolving conflict respectfully can help you both get through the downs in your relationship.

Resources:

- <https://www.healthline.com/health/healthy-relationship#characteristics>
- <https://www.verywellmind.com/all-about-healthy-relationship-4774802>
- <https://www.ny.gov/teen-dating-violence-awareness-and-prevention/what-does-healthy-relationship-look#:~:text=Healthy%20relationships%20involve%20honesty%2C%20trust,or%20retaliation%2C%20and%20share%20decisions>
- <https://dating.lovetoknow.com/helpful-dating-resources/free-relationship-worksheets-couples>
- <https://dating.lovetoknow.com/deep-relationship-questions>
- https://dating.lovetoknow.com/Intimate_Questions_to_Ask_Your_Partner
- <https://counseling.sa.ua.edu/resources/healthy-vs-unhealthy-relationships/>
- <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/relationship-help.htm>
- <https://www.mentalhelp.net/blogs/how-do-you-know-when-you-are-ready-for-a-new-relationship/>

Contact Us

Speak to a Marriage Counselor at The Marriage Restoration Project



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Book a time to talk

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