

Fundamental Living Solutions Series

SMART HAPPY LOVE

Ten Practical Dating Guidelines
for Meeting Your Relationship Goals
and Creating a Lifelong Partnership

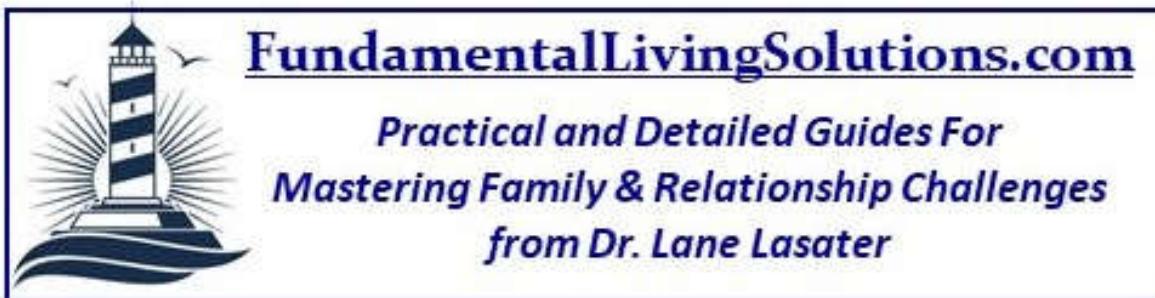


Lane Lasater, Ph.D.

Relationship Workbook

Smart Happy Love

Relationship Workbook



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warranties, express or implied. By using this work, you are agreeing to the provisions of this disclaimer, and you waive all claims that may arise in connection with your use of this information.

Dear Friend,

Thank you for downloading this workbook with all the relationship exercises for *Smart Happy Love: Ten Practical Guidelines for Meeting Your Relationship Goals and Creating a Lifelong Partnership*. There are instructions for each exercise in this workbook, and you can study the completed examples in the full book to guide you in your work.

All the effort and contemplation you invest in preparing for and planning for your life partnership I hope will be repaid many times over as you enjoy the benefits and joys of sharing your life path with someone who helps you fulfill your dreams and you pursue your common vision for your partnership.

Best wishes to you as you move forward to find your life partner.

Sincerely,

Lane

Lane Lasater, Ph.D.

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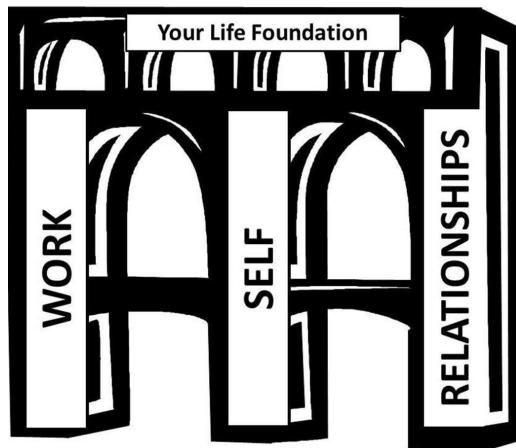
Stage One: Prepare Yourself for Partnership

Action Step #1: Describe Your Relationship Status and Goal

Describe your current situation and your relationship goal. Keep this goal in mind as you use the exercises and action steps through this book to chart your path.

Action Step #2: Assess Your Life Foundation Developmental Tasks

For each of the 15 life development tasks, rate your progress from 0 to 20, where 0 = little accomplished, 5 = some tasks begun but recognize the need for progress, 10 = some tasks accomplished, 15 = most tasks accomplished, and 20 = fully accomplished. (Note: for the SDT 1 and 2 “if needed” items that don’t apply for you—rate yourself a 20.)



Self-Development Tasks (SDTs)

Note that SDTs 1 and 2 refer to developing a recovery plan, if needed, for emotional challenges such as unstable self-worth, difficulty trusting, PTSD, or addictions. Undertaking recovery from these issues is a complex process which I describe in depth in my book titled *Transcending Family Trauma: Your Essential Guide to Lifelong Recovery from Adverse Childhood Experiences and Adult Aftermath*. That book outlines the process and resources of recovery that enabled me to stop drinking permanently and

to make peace with emotional issues resulting from childhood experiences.

SDT 1: Develop a recovery plan, if needed, for emotional challenges resulting from childhood experiences or later events.

SDT 2: Develop a recovery plan, if needed, for addictions.

SDT 3: Develop and practice a daily plan of diet, rest, exercise, and self-care to maintain your energy, health, and well-being.

SDT 4: Define and practice interests and hobbies, personal spiritual/religious beliefs and practices, and political/ethical values and affiliations.

SDT 5: Define your economic and social aspirations, lifestyle, and geographic preferences, and begin deciding whether you wish to have and raise children.

Your Self Development Total

Work Development Tasks (WDTs)

WDT 1: Master the tools and experience required in the workplace using the mechanical, technical, writing, speaking, digital, and soft skills necessary to perform and advance in your field.

WDT 2: Organize your time and effort effectively to accomplish home, college or job duties.

WDT 3: Work cooperatively with others, including accepting direction and performance evaluation, resolving work conflicts, and taking part in diverse work teams.

WDT 4: Choose a career interest through job and life experiences and plan and complete (or undertake) education and/or training that provides a satisfactory career path.

WDT 5: Manage your money to support yourself, maintain a home, afford your lifestyle, build a positive credit history, and establish savings for unexpected events or emergencies.

Your Work Development Total

Relationship Development Tasks (RDTs)

RDT 1: Listen to and respond respectfully to others and communicate your ideas, feelings, and needs.

RDT 2: Practice courtesy, maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries, and learn to resolve conflict fairly.

RDT 3: Learn to be self-reliant and to live alone while widening your friendship circle, planning and carrying out satisfying social and recreational activities, and building your social support system.

RDT 4: Learn the social and dating skills for romantic and sexual relationship interactions and discussing intimate topics and needs.

RDT 5: Take part in practice relationships to understand the give and take between romantic partners, recognize another person's intimate needs, gain insight into compatibility, and learn to resolve intimate conflicts.

Your Relationship Development Total

Your Life Foundation Total for All Three Pillars

Understanding Your Life Foundation Scores

The maximum score for each pillar of your life foundation is 100, and it's 300 for all three pillars. These scores are a snapshot of your developmental foundation and let you identify life areas that require more focused effort. You won't (and don't need to) fully complete each task before starting a life partnership, but it's important you and your potential partner have these tasks well underway.

Action Step #3: Analyze Your Life Foundation

Note your score and progress for each pillar and your total life foundation score.

Note the tasks (if any) you need to focus on.

Set clear goals and identify specific, manageable action steps you'll take for each task that requires more work (if needed).

What additional information or resources do you need (if any) to move forward?

Example: My Life Foundation Analysis

Here is my life foundation analysis for when I met Nancy (from today's perspective).

Lane: Almost Ready

Life foundation scores: Self = 65; Work = 80; Relationship = 80; Total score = 225.

Self: I needed a complete recovery plan for childhood emotional adjustments and alcoholism. To accomplish this, I needed therapy, alcohol rehab, and self-help support. Although I understood a lot about myself, from today's perspective, stopping drinking was the key to recovering from childhood emotional challenges.

Work: My professional life was going well, but when I stopped drinking, I recovered my integrity. So rather than facing a professional decline or

disaster from alcoholism, I could now progress further in my professional sphere.

Relationships: I felt mostly prepared for a committed partnership. I learned from my relationship field research (guideline #6) what couple combination worked best for me and discovered during our partnership trial run that I needed to improve my relationship problem-solving and communication skills.

Your Life Foundation Analysis

Action Step #4: Complete the Childhood Basic Human Needs Survey

Were you able to meet your basic human needs while growing up? Rate the truth for you at age 10 of each statement below. Use a 0–10 scale, where 0 = very untrue and 10 = very true. Then add up your scores.

1. I had good physical health.
2. I felt safe.
3. I felt loved by my family members.
4. I received the care and affection I needed.
5. I felt valued.
6. I felt comfortable and able to be myself.
7. I felt I could improve my life through my efforts.
8. What I wanted was important to others.
9. I could plan with confidence.
10. I understood myself well.

Your Basic Human Needs Total

Understanding Your Basic Human Needs Scores

Your total basic human needs score can range from 0 to 100.

Isolated single-digit scores suggest individual need frustration.

Totals below 40 suggest severe need frustration.

Totals in the 41–60 range suggest moderate need frustration.

Totals in the 61–85 range suggest moderate need satisfaction.

Totals of 86–100 show that your needs were very well met.

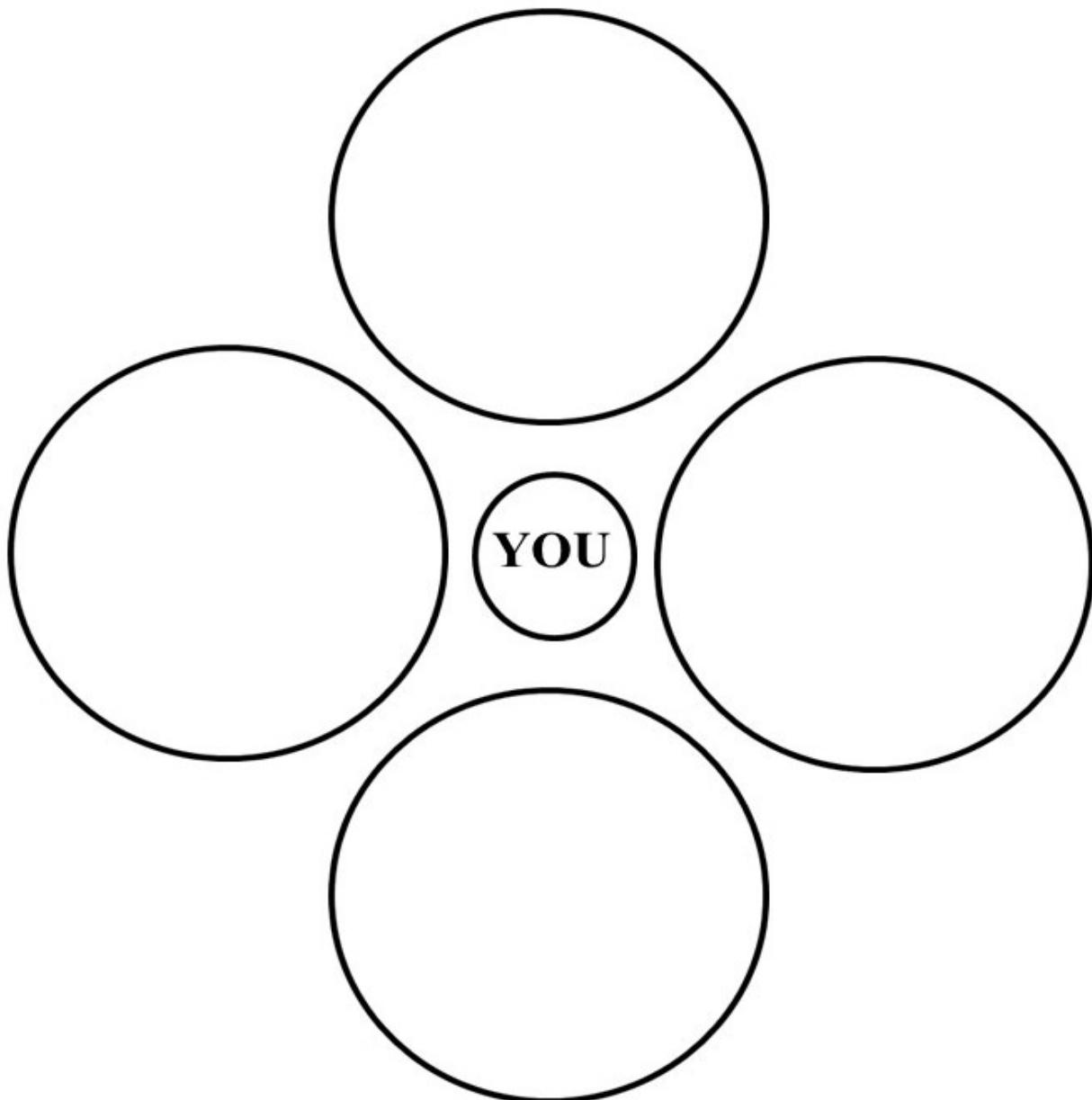
Discuss your childhood basic human needs findings.

Action Step #5: What Basic Human Needs Are Your Priority?

In your relationship journal, identify the basic human needs you want to make sure you meet in your intimate relationship and describe what this will look like.

Action Step #6: Fill in Your Social Atom Inner Circle

In your relationship journal, draw and fill out the inner circle of your social atom. Identify the person who fills each role for you, such as love partner or close friend. Different close friends may help you meet different needs. If you have role openings now, draw a blank line in that circle. Beneath each role, list the essential needs that role fills for you.



Action Step #7: Identify Your Important Family Values

List important family values (both positive and negative) you grew up with. Then list family values you want to build in your partnership and/or new family under two headings: (1) Important values I learned as a child, and (2) Important values I want for my family.

Action Step #8: Describe Your Family Characteristics

Identify key characteristics about your family. You'll use these for reference later as you assess the fit with your partner's family.

Action Step #9: Summarize Your Family History and Values

Discuss what you've learned as you completed the exercises on basic human needs, your social atom, essential values, and family characteristics in this chapter. What does this tell you about what kind of partnership will work best for you? Identify patterns from your family history you want to continue and those you want to avoid.

Family History and Values Summary

Stage Two: Understand Your Relationship Experiences

Action Step #10: Analyze Your Relationship Availability and Level of Sexual Relationship

Write about your relationship availability and that of your most recent partner to get a feel for how this works and describe any issues this created. Here are several questions to consider:

1. Are you comfortable living as a single person if you need to?
2. What level of relationship do you feel ready for right now?
3. What level of relationship was the last person you dated ready for and did this correspond to your own (if applicable)?
4. If you're currently dating, do you have more work to do in building your life foundation?

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Action Step #11: Rate your Low-Key vs. High-Strung Characteristics

Rate yourself between 1–10 on each low-key vs. high-strung word pair below, where 1 means the low-key quality on the left is very true of you, and 10 means the high-strung quality on the right is very true of you. Then add up your scores.

1. subdued vs. intense
2. contented vs. driven
3. serene vs. excitable
4. other-oriented vs. self-centered
5. secure vs. vulnerable
6. cooperative vs. controlling
7. easy going vs. aggressive
8. independent vs. needy
9. diplomatic vs. confrontational
10. traditional vs. adventurous

Your Low-Key vs. High-Strung Score

Your total score can range between 10 and 100, with a score of 10 implying you're very low-key and 100 implying you're extremely high-strung. A

score of 50 implies you're someone with a mix of low-key and high-strung qualities.

Discuss your score below.

Action Step #12: Using the Couple Combinations Matrix

Classify you and your current intimate partner or potential partner (if applicable) in terms of low-key or high-strung, and as similar or different from each other in backgrounds. In the next chapter, you'll analyze your important relationships using these classifications to gain more clarity about what couple combination works best for you.

Action Step #13: Analyze Your Parents' Couple Combination

Considering the couple combination matrix and balanced sharing of power and responsibility in couples covered in this chapter, analyze your parents' (or the relationship experience of the people/person who raised you, such as a single parent) couple combination and how it worked for them. Because you may have a lot of first-hand information about their relationships, this gives you a close-up view of how couple combinations and power dynamics work in practice.

Action Step #14: Your Relationship History Analysis

Answer the relationship history questions below chronologically for your significant sexual relationships, including your current relationship (if applicable).

Are you a low-key or high-strung person, and how strongly?

Classify each significant sexual relationship in terms of level of sexual relationship (affair, hookup, fling, tryout, arrangement, false start, trial run, or committed partnership), where the relationship fell on the couple intensity and conflict matrix (levels 1–6), and how satisfying the relationship was from 0 = very low to 10 = very high.

After reviewing the above, what kind of relationship works best for you?

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Stage Three: Connect with a Potential Partner and Complete a Trial Run

Action Step #15: Finish Your Old Relationship Business

To be fully available to look for a new partner, do your best to resolve your old relationship completely. The partner you're looking for also needs to clean up his/her past relationships so that when you meet, the coast is clear to move forward together. Note any old relationship business you need to finish.

Action Step #16: Develop Your Relationship Vision and Goals

In your relationship journal, describe what you want in each of the following areas.

Where do you want to live?

What are your career objectives?

Do you want to have children, and if so, how many and when?

What is your philosophy for raising children?

What core values do you live by?

How do you include spirituality or religion in your life?

What are your political values and how important are they to you?

What are your financial goals?

What hobbies or interests do you enjoy?

What diet do you follow, and how do you maintain health and wellness?

What relationship do you want with the people who raised you, siblings, and relatives?

How are you involved in your community?

Action Step #17: Develop Your Entrance Exam

Develop your entrance exam by listing your non-negotiable “must haves” and “can’t stands.”

Action Step #18: Carry out a Partnership Trial Run

If you haven't done so already, I suggest sharing this book with your prospective partner so he/she understands the process and completes the exercises just as you have. When you're ready, share your vision and goals with each other as a bonding exercise, to deepen your mutual understanding and appreciation. In the next chapter, you'll develop your partnership agreement, which embodies your shared relationship vision and goals. What are things you want to learn more about during your partnership trial run?

Action Step #19: No Communication Nukes!

Make a list of communication nukes you've experienced (or used) in the past and discuss these with your partner. Agree that using communication nukes will be completely off-limits in your partnership. If either of you feels tempted to use a nuke in an argument or discussion, it's a warning sign you need to take time out to cool off. As tempting as it is to "get in the last word," a nuke creates sometimes irreversible hurt. If you use a nuke, apologize sincerely as soon as you can, even though harm has already happened. An insincere apology is just another nuke.

Action Step #20: Couple Communication Exercise

1. Listen to your partner throughout this exercise and repeat back everything you heard him or her say. Let them know the positive things you learned about them or thought of during the exercise.
2. One person talks for one minute about an interest he/she has and why it's important to them. For example, you might explain to your partner how you enjoy caring for plants because they make the house fresher and happier, and how you raise tomatoes in a window pot in order to use in salads.
3. When the first person finishes, the partner repeats everything he/she heard and provides positive feedback about the interest their partner shared. He/she can also mention something good it shows about their partner. (For example, when your partner responds to your interest in plants, they tell you they notice and appreciate the effort you make to keep your home pleasant and attractive. They also recognize the work involved in taking care of plants and how much they enjoy them and the fresh tomatoes.)
4. The first person thanks their partner for listening carefully and understanding. The speaker tells their partner how much it means to them when their partner notices and appreciates what they shared.
5. The other partner then completes the steps above and the first responds.

What did you learn during the exercise?

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Action Step # 21: Practice the Eight Couple Problem-Solving Steps

Each partner identifies a low-intensity issue they'd like to discuss. Following the guidelines above and taking on one issue for each person per sitting, practice each step of the process above. Now you have this tool to use when you need it.

1. Both people must be in a problem-solving mood.
2. No nukes.
3. One person describes their concern without blaming or judging, focusing on how they were afraid, humiliated, or hurt—not angry (as this merely covers hurt and fear). Also, talk about the history that person has with feeling like this because commonly, the things we get triggered by subconsciously touch old feelings or hurts.
4. The second person repeats back everything that the first person shared about their vulnerable feelings and their history with these feelings, using the same words as they did and without further comment.
5. The first person validates that the second person understood them correctly and thanks them for listening carefully.
6. The second person then responds to the issue (not blaming, judging, or defending), expressing their compassion for how the other person feels now and in the past, and their willingness to learn from the situation. They then

commit to specific actions they'll take to avoid hurting the first person in that way again.

7. The first person accepts the acknowledgment and commitment of the other person, thanks them for their willingness to listen to them and non-defensively hear them, and agrees they're finished with the issue and won't bring it up again.
8. Now, the other person raises one of his/her low-intensity issues, and the process starts again.

What did you learn during the exercise with your partner?

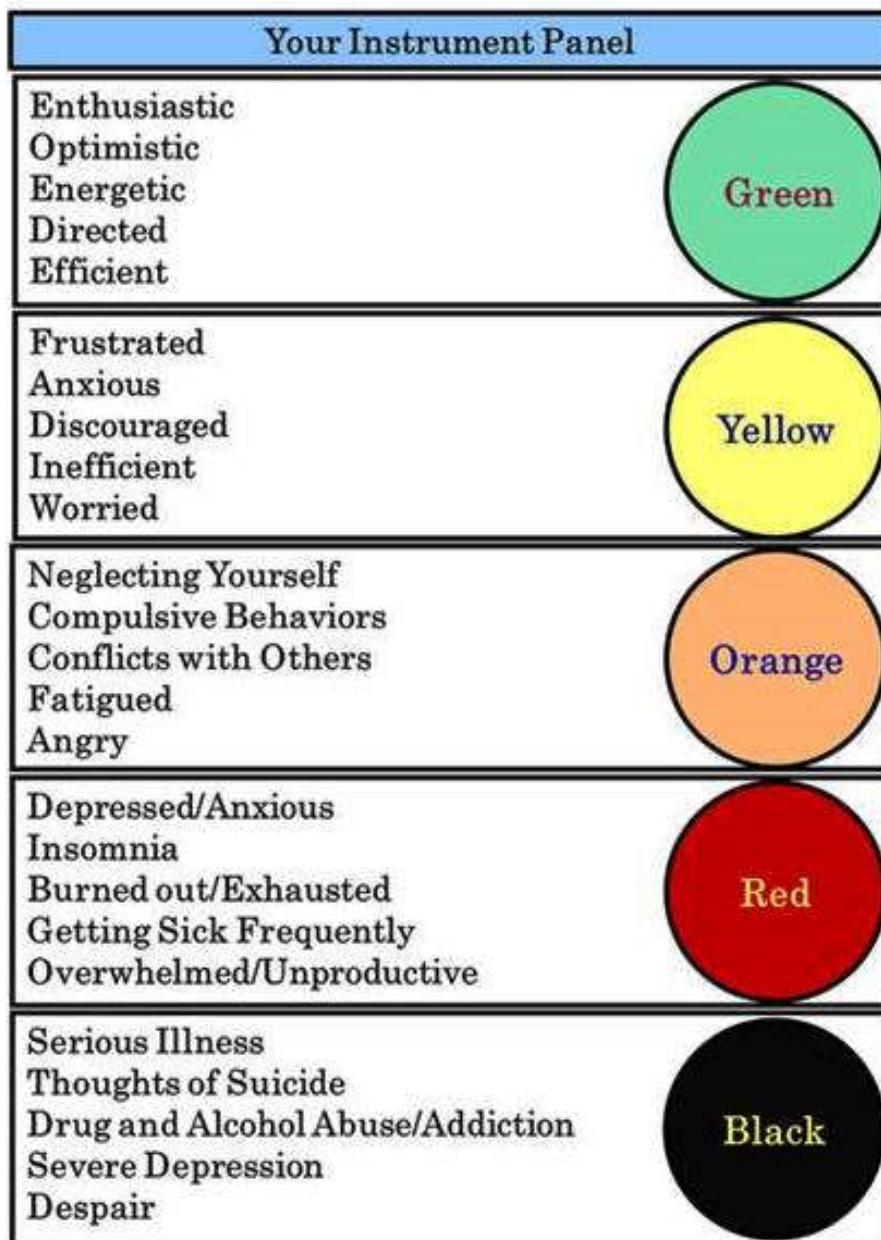
Stage Four: Commit to a Long-Term Partnership

Action Step #22: Develop a Partnership Agreement

Using your relationship vision and goals from action step #16, blend your relationship vision with your partner's into your combined vision and goals. Update your partnership agreement as needed.

Action Step #23: Monitor Your Instrument Panel

If your instrument panel lights up, use the well-being checklist below to identify what's bothering you and develop a plan to get back on track. What's your instrument panel telling you?



What's your instrument panel telling you?

Action Step #24: Use the Well-Being Checklist

When you get warning signals on your instrument panel, use the following well-being checklist to identify how to restore emotional and physical balance.

Be compassionate with yourself. Write three ways you criticize yourself and three kind things you can say to yourself instead.

Correct your mistakes. Are there any mistakes you need to correct? How and when will you do it?

Follow a daily self-care plan. List your daily/weekly self-care actions for each area below in your relationship journal.

Move away from toxic influences. What action do you need to take to move away from toxic influences?

Be grateful. List what you're grateful for and use it to remind you when things get tough.

Design a positive future. Develop a plan for the important things you want to accomplish during life and partnership, and the next steps you'll take to accomplish each of these.

Serve others. What service can you provide?

Congratulations!

You've completed all the exercises.

Way to go!

Please Review the Book if You Would

If Smart Happy Love and the relationship exercises have been helpful to you, I would greatly appreciate it if you would take a few moments to leave an honest review on Amazon to help other people decide if the book is right for them.

May all your partnership dreams come true!