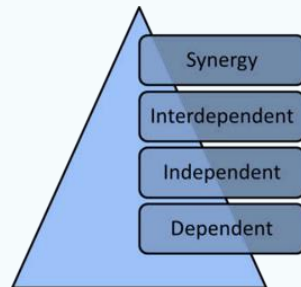


## Four Dating Relationship Tools

*"You come to love not by finding the perfect person,  
but by seeing an imperfect person perfectly."*

Sam Keen

### Tool #1 Relationship Pyramid



What level are you?  
What level is your relationship?

### Tool #2 Healthy Dating

**Pre-test (Are you ready to date? Are they?)**

**Commonsense dating guidelines-** make decisions based on your values, not just emotions.

### Tool #3 Love Attitudes Scale: *What's your \*style?*

**\*Six Love Classifications** Based on the works of sociologist John Lee and psychologists Clyde and Susan Hendrick

### Tool #4 Identify Your Ideal Partner

**Are YOU an ideal partner?**

**What are your deal-breakers—the minimal standards you set for who you will and will not date?**

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## Tool #1 Relationship Pyramid

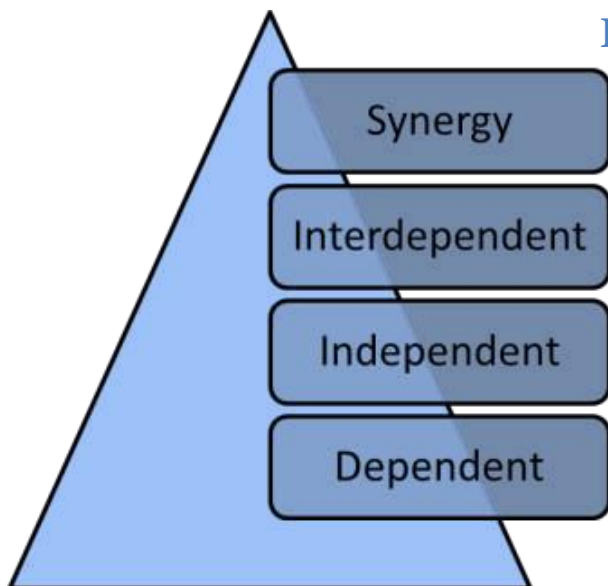
### Which level is your relationship?

#### Synergy: Level #4 “You make me want to be a better person”

**Synergistic** relationships occur when interdependent individuals choose to be in relationships with those who inspire them to grow, improve and excel. These relationships become a catalyst for extraordinary trust, intimacy, and success whether in the home, office, or community.

#### Interdependent: Level #3 “You Light Up My Life”

Independent people do not **NEED** others, so when they **CHOOSE** others, they create **interdependent** relationships. Healthy interdependent relationships *choose* compatible people interested in achieving common goals through shared values and mutual support. This interdependent connection is a building block for mutual gains at home, the office, and the community. Interdependence leads to synergy.



#### Independent: Level #2. “I Did It MY Way”

Independent people believe in their own value and ability. Secure in the knowledge that they can care for themselves emotionally, physically, and financially, they are comfortable taking responsibility for fulfilling their own needs. They are not afraid to make mistakes, learn and grow.

*I am true to myself.*

*I trust myself to create my own path.*

*I respect others’ right to their path.*

*We can agree to disagree.*

Independence is a building block toward interdependence.

#### Dependent: Level #1

*“I can’t live, if living is without you”*

**Dependent adults believe they are incapable of taking care of themselves.** Most healthy young adults in the U.S.A. build skills toward a full launch into adulthood by the age of 25. (They transition from dependent to independent). Unfortunately, not all succeed. Some trade their dependency on parents for dependency on friends or a partner. Others create a “role reversal” by becoming dependent on their children. Level #1 Dependency lacks the skill sets necessary for healthy adult dating. Dependency may be emotional, physical, or financial.

- **Emotional dependence:** *self-esteem depends on others’ approval, incapable of meeting own emotional needs, managing own emotions and making own decisions.*
- **Physical dependence:** *afraid to be alone, hates adulting, wants to be taken care of.*
- **Financial dependence:** *not capable of making or managing money at a level of independence.*

## Tool #2 Healthy Dating

***Love is not about finding the right person; it's about being the right person.***

Author Unknown

### Commonsense Rules for Adult Dating\*

\*In this context, dating refers to the information gathering stage of an adult relationship designed to determine the overall compatibility of a potential life partner. These rules include avoidance of unplanned, unwanted pregnancies in heterosexual relationships, and STDs in all relationships, hence the recommendation to establish *safety and compatibility* BEFORE making a sexual or long-term *commitment*.

### Healthy Adult Dating Prerequisites

Ideally, prior to adult dating, all parties involved can answer yes to each question:

#### I. Independence.

**1. Are you confident being alone?** Yes No \*Huh?

(The *inability* to be alone is a red flag on maturity, life skills and emotional intelligence. Learn to be alone before you begin dating. When you are alone—that means you are just with yourself... awesome company, right?!!)

**2. Have you developed a personal life plan?** Yes No \*Huh?

(\*Life plan should be more detailed than “wait for Mr. or Ms. Right to ride in on a white horse”).

**II. Current emotional and financial stability.** Healthy adult dating requires each person to have his/her personal and financial business in some order. **Emotionally needy or financially dependent dating creates either parent/child relationships or unequal partnerships.**

**1. Are you emotionally and financially stable?** Yes No \*Huh?

\*Examples of **instability** include *Excessive spending or gambling habits, unemployed when not a full-time student, recently experienced crisis, severe loss, or trauma, addictions with less than one full year of recovery, recent or recurrent psychiatric hospitalizations, legal problems such as on a tether, probation or incarcerated.*

**III. Completely single—with no strings attached if seeking monogamy.** If you or your potential date are entangled in another seriously committed relationship, whether you admit it or not, you are in a threesome. If that's not your thing, take notice.

**1. Are you single and available for dating?** Yes No \*Huh?

**2. Rebounding: has the divorce finalized or the roommate moved out completely?**

Yes No \*Huh?

\*The word “*separated*” means “*still legally married!*” People who were in a serious, committed relationship just days, weeks or even months earlier, typically have unresolved emotional business to work through. Unresolved financial matters, housing concerns and custody details are best resolved before establishing a new relationship. Once “Yes” is true for each question above, move on to the commonsense rules for dating listed on the next page.

## Commonsense Rules for Healthy Dating

### Let the dating begin!

- 1. Avoid alcohol and substance abuse.** Getting drunk or high on a date is like attending a job interview intoxicated. If you or your date consumes more than one drink per hour, consider reviewing the [DSM-5 substance use disorder criteria](#). **Alcohol and drug abuse sabotage healthy relationships.**
- 2. Use dating as a fact-finding mission.** Follow the same relationship advice that you give to those you love. Move slowly and proceed with caution. Get to know your date based on their actions, values, and character. Do not let appearance, charm, or sexual chemistry distract you from seeking the truth of who this person is. *Words can promise anything, behavior and history hold the truth.*
- 3. “Keep it real” as you date.** Speak your mind, live your truth, be yourself. The only way to discover if you and your date are compatible, is to be fully present in the moment, as yourself.
- 4. Establish compatibility BEFORE commitment.** Determine if lifestyles, character, goals, values, hobbies, and interests are compatible *before* committing to a sexual relationship. Sex hormones cloud the brain’s ability to think rationally. [Infatuation is not love; it is lust.](#)
- 5. Expect respect.** Jealousy is not love, it’s fear. No name-calling, threats, or violence of any kind. Hot tempers and jealousy are issues of insecurity, immaturity, power, and control. If your date’s temper frightens you or they treat you disrespectfully, stop dating!
- 6. Understand that dating is an “as-is” agreement.** Do not attempt to help, fix, improve, change, or rescue your date. Hoping for changes indicate current incompatibility, denial, and unrealistic expectations. Familiarize yourself with Alanon if you are hoping your date will clean up, sober up or grow up.
- 7. Discontinue dating if you discover that either you or your date is seriously pining after someone else.** No one deserves to be the “rebound” the “substitute,” or “better than nothing.”
- 8. Maintain independence.** Do not abandon your hobbies, family, or social life simply because you are dating someone new. Do not co-mingle funds, cohabitate for financial reasons, or serve as your date’s bank or lending institution. Financial “help” creates a dependent relationship.
- 9. Caution! “Love is blind” but your valued friends and family have their eyes wide open.** If the people who you respect most in the world question your choice of partner, pay close attention! Ask yourself, “Would I approve of my son, daughter, sibling, or best friend dating someone exactly like the person I am dating?”
- 10. Consider the “one year” rule.** Date for a minimal of one full year before deciding on engagement or cohabitation. Infatuation fades with time. Winter personalities may differ slightly from summer personalities. Minimally, see your relationship through all four seasons before deciding to build a future together. What’s the rush? Use your full year of dating to practice all of the tools posted on this website.



## Tool # 3 Love Attitudes Scale\* What's your love style?

\*Six Love Classifications Based on the works of sociologist John Lee and psychologists Clyde and Susan Hendrick

*Score each statement using the following scale.*

- 👎 (1) Strongly Disagree (2) Moderately Disagree (3) Neutral- neither Agree nor Disagree  
👍 (4) Moderately Agree (5) Strongly Agree

### **Eros (Fantasy, Beauty, and Sexuality) Love Style**

- \_\_\_ Love at first sight, I become sexually involved with partners rather quickly.  
\_\_\_ Attraction is greatly influenced by a strong physical chemistry and outer appearance.  
\_\_\_ I seek the fairy tale romance. I want to be swept off my feet.  
\_\_\_ Physical beauty/ handsomeness is very important. We must "look good" together.

Total:  = Eros Score

### **Ludus (Fun and games) Love Style**

- \_\_\_ I enjoy the flirting, the chase, and the conquest without the responsibility of a commitment.  
\_\_\_ Love is a game and I love to play the field.  
\_\_\_ I do whatever it takes to keep my lovers from finding out about each other.  
\_\_\_ I can move in and out of love easily and quickly.

Total:  = Ludus Score

### **Storge (Friendship, slow, peaceful) Love Style**

- \_\_\_ The best kind of love grows out of a solid friendship.  
\_\_\_ Romantic involvement is not desirable unless we have a friendship first.  
\_\_\_ My lover is my best friend, based on our trust, respect, companionship and communication.  
\_\_\_ I have no resentment toward an ex if our relationship ends. I want my ex to be happy.

Total:  = Storge Score

### **Pragma (Practicality, tradition) Love Style**

- \_\_\_ I consider a person's family background and career goals before I become involved.  
\_\_\_ I consider compatibility before getting sexually involved with a lover.  
\_\_\_ I consider my life plan carefully before making a commitment to a partner.  
\_\_\_ I only engage in relationships that my family approves of.

Total:  = Pragma Score

### **Agape (Compassion, selflessness) Love Style**

- \_\_\_ I would rather suffer myself than let my lover suffer.  
\_\_\_ I am only happy when my partner is happy.  
\_\_\_ Whatever I own is my lovers to use as he/she chooses.  
\_\_\_ No matter what my lover does, I still love him/ her fully and unconditionally.

Total:  = Agape Score

### **Mania (elation and depression) Love Style**

- \_\_\_ Once in a relationship, I have had trouble concentrating on anything else.  
\_\_\_ If my lover and I broke up, I would get so depressed that I would not function.  
\_\_\_ I cannot relax when my lover is away or if I suspect that my lover is with someone else.  
\_\_\_ If my lover ignores me for a while, I blow up, have a tantrum, or do stupid things for attention.

Total:  = Mania Score

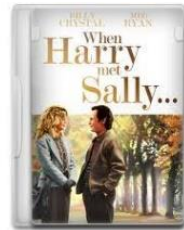
*Total each section. The highest score is your most dominant love style.  
Answer key on the next page.*

**\*Love Attitudes descriptions: Your highest score of the 6 sections indicates your dominant love style. Place your total score next to each description. Compare scores with your date or partner.**



**Eros Score** \_\_\_\_ (Emphasis on beauty and sexuality) Highly sexual, this love focuses on infatuation, popularity, and romance. Eros love is common during adolescence, before the brain is fully mature. Adults with Eros love tend to be narcissistic and immature. Their fantasy world fails to develop into realistic, stable, committed, or long-term relationships.

**Storge score** \_\_\_\_ (pronounced STOR-gay) love develops as friends, and over time the relationship evolves toward commitment and intimacy. It is a comfortable love, with mutual trust, compatibility, and respect. These committed and loyal relationships consider vows seriously, remaining partnered during both sickness and in health, for richer or poorer.



**Pragma score** \_\_\_\_ is a rational, (pragmatic) style of love based on practical considerations such as compatibility and life partnership. Because they choose their partners very carefully and emphasize similarities, they also have realistic romantic expectations. Love is a partnership with goals, teamwork, and shared vision of the future.

**Ludus score** \_\_\_\_ is a playful, carefree type of love, not to be taken too seriously. Ludus lovers view partners as temporary fun, playing the field without commitment and recovering quickly from break-ups. Rarely monogamous, they prefer quantity over quality. These players pair well with other players, but cause heartache to lovers who hoped to “change” the game into a long-term commitment or monogamy.



**Agape score** \_\_\_\_ (pronounced ah-GAH-pay) is self-sacrificing, altruistic, kind, and patient. When both partners practice agape love, the relationship is mutually beneficial. When this sacrifice is unbalanced, extreme or violated, agape lovers may be exploited. Extensive people pleasing without insight, boundaries, or reciprocity may cause inequity, dissatisfaction, and martyrdom in a one-sided agape love style.

**Mania score** \_\_\_\_ (Manic love) is possessive, dependent, and jealous. Arguments, drama, and chaos result from this high level of anxiety and insecurity. Manic lovers fear abandonment and rejection. Manic lovers lack the insight to realize that their obsessive and possessive love is inappropriate, fear based, destructive and often addictive. In addition to immaturity, manic love may be a symptom of mental illness, brain trauma, addictions, other medical condition, or personality disorder.



**\*Six Love Classifications** Based on the works of sociologist John Lee and psychologists Clyde and Susan Hendrick

## Tool #4 Identifying your Ideal Partner

The Ideal Partner adapted from *If I Am So Wonderful, Why Am I Still Single.* By Susan Page

*The minute I heard my first love story, I started looking for you,  
not knowing how blind that was.” Rumi*

### What are your criteria for an *IDEAL PARTNER*?

#### Are you an ideal partner?

**“Ideal” partner refers to the most compatible person to share your best life with.** Ideal partner does not mean this partner will fix, rescue, or complete you, or vice versa. In the space below, make a list of criteria that you believe produce your *IDEAL PARTNER*. Do not limit yourself to the characteristics of any one person whom you already know. (You may also apply this tool to choose other relationships by inserting the words ideal “friend,” “family member,” “neighbor”, etc..).

1. Ideal values/beliefs/life plan \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Ideal personality/abilities/habits/character \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Ideal background/training/education/career \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Ideal interests/hobbies/recreation \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Other important criteria \_\_\_\_\_

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### Application #1 (For everyone). Are YOU an ideal partner/friend?

1. Review your answers to each criterion on the previous page.
2. Rate YOURSELF according to your ideal partner list by checking each ideal that is a true statement about you. Consider YOUR strengths and weaknesses.
3. Before looking for the right partner, become the “right” person.
  - ✓ Develop your OWN interests. Prioritize personal goals. Increase skills and abilities.
  - ✓ Create and maintain the life plan that YOU desire to share.
  - ✓ Become comfortable with YOUR beauty, YOUR body, and YOUR sexuality.
4. Questions to consider:
  - ✓ Am I the best partner/friend/person that I can be?
  - ✓ What positive contributions do I make in relationships?
  - ✓ Do I negotiate my needs and advocate for myself in relationships?
  - ✓ Do I advocate for my partner/friend’s needs in relationships?

### Application #2 (For the single folks.)

1. Circle the five most important qualities/criteria from your “ideal” list.
2. Your five most important qualities become your *deal breakers*—do not date anyone who falls short of your 5 most important standards. This list becomes your dating life story, so be sure to write a life story that you respect! (Never date anyone who you would not want a son, daughter, or best friend to date)
2. Apply Tool #2 Healthy Dating Commonsense Rules when dating a potentially ideal partner.

Over the years, I have used this lesson with hundreds of participants. The most common criteria that ideal partners MUST possess include (not necessarily in this order)

1. **Compatible life plan:** *Independent, addiction free, employed, financially stable, compatible interests & future goals.*
2. **Compatible personality:** *Sense of humor, attentive companion, and open communicator.*
3. **Romantic compatibility:** *Love, honesty, trust, respect, loyalty, passion & sexual compatibility.*
4. **Compatible beliefs:** *Shared beliefs regarding values, priorities, finances, family, and childrearing.*
5. **Compatible domestic partners:** *Cooperative and harmonious partnership regarding standards of cleanliness, division of household labor, spending habits and money management.*

For all the relationship skills, be sure to review all the tools and videos on this site. So much to learn!