



RESOURCE 2.4

PREPARING FOR HEALTHY PARTNERSHIP

HVL Connect Client Resource

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ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

Purpose: This resource helps you prepare yourself to be a healthy partner and build a healthy relationship when you meet the right person.

When to use this:

- You're dating and want to show up as your best self
- You're getting serious with someone
- You want to build a healthy relationship foundation
- You're working on being a better partner
- You're preparing for long-term commitment
- You want to ensure you're ready for healthy love

What this resource provides:

- Self-assessment of relationship readiness
- Skills for healthy partnership
- Communication and conflict tools
- Emotional intimacy building
- Relationship maintenance strategies
- Transition from dating to partnership guidance

Important: A healthy relationship requires two healthy people. This resource focuses on YOUR preparation.



INTRODUCTION: BEING RELATIONSHIP-READY

What Makes Someone Ready for Partnership

BEING READY FOR RELATIONSHIP MEANS:

You've done your personal work:

- Healed from past relationships
- Addressed your patterns
- Know yourself well
- Emotionally healthy and stable
- Have your own life and identity

You know what you want:

- Clear on values and goals
- Know what you need in partnership
- Understand your deal-breakers
- Have realistic expectations

You have relationship skills:

- Can communicate effectively
- Can handle conflict maturely
- Can be vulnerable and intimate
- Can maintain boundaries
- Can give and receive love

You're willing to invest:

- Time and energy
- Emotional vulnerability
- Growth and change
- Commitment and consistency

This resource helps you develop all of these.

The Foundation of Healthy Partnership

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS ARE BUILT ON:

Mutual respect:

- You value each other
- You treat each other well
- You honor boundaries
- You support each other's growth

**Trust and honesty:**

- You're truthful with each other
- You keep your word
- You're reliable and consistent
- You feel safe with each other

Emotional intimacy:

- You share your inner world
- You're vulnerable with each other
- You understand each other deeply
- You feel connected

Effective communication:

- You talk openly and honestly
- You listen to understand
- You address issues constructively
- You repair after conflict

Shared vision:

- You want similar things
- You're building toward common goals
- You support each other's dreams
- You're on the same team

Individual wholeness:

- You're both complete on your own
- You enhance each other's lives
- You don't complete or fix each other
- You choose each other, not need each other

This resource helps you build this foundation.



PART 1: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Are You Ready for Partnership?

EMOTIONAL READINESS:

Rate each statement (1-5):

1 = Not true at all, 5 = Very true

- ☐ I've healed from past relationships
- ☐ I'm not looking for someone to complete me
- ☐ I'm emotionally stable and healthy
- ☐ I can be vulnerable and open
- ☐ I can handle relationship challenges
- ☐ I'm not desperate or needy
- ☐ I have a full, satisfying life on my own
- ☐ I'm dating from desire, not fear
- ☐ I'm ready to invest in a relationship
- ☐ I'm willing to grow and change

Total: _____ / 50

40-50: You're emotionally ready for partnership

30-39: Mostly ready, some areas to work on

20-29: Need more healing and personal work

10-19: Not ready yet; focus on yourself first

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS:

Rate each statement (1-5):

1 = Not true at all, 5 = Very true

- ☐ I communicate my needs and feelings clearly
- ☐ I listen well and seek to understand
- ☐ I can handle conflict without escalating
- ☐ I take responsibility for my part
- ☐ I apologize sincerely when I'm wrong
- ☐ I can set and maintain boundaries
- ☐ I'm comfortable with emotional intimacy
- ☐ I can give and receive love
- ☐ I'm willing to compromise
- ☐ I can work through challenges

Total: _____ / 50

40-50: Strong relationship skills

30-39: Good skills, room for growth



20-29: Need to develop skills

10-19: Significant skill-building needed

SELF-AWARENESS:

Rate each statement (1-5):

1 = Not true at all, 5 = Very true

___ I know my patterns in relationships

___ I understand my attachment style

___ I know my triggers and how to manage them

___ I know what I need in a relationship

___ I know my values and priorities

___ I understand my strengths and weaknesses

___ I know what I bring to a relationship

___ I'm aware of my growth edges

___ I take responsibility for my behavior

___ I'm committed to ongoing growth

Total: _____ / 50

40-50: High self-awareness

30-39: Good awareness, continue developing

20-29: Need more self-reflection

10-19: Significant self-work needed

OVERALL READINESS SCORE:

Add all three totals: _____ / 150

120-150: You're ready for healthy partnership

90-119: Mostly ready, some work to do

60-89: Need more preparation

Below 60: Focus on personal growth first

What You Bring to a Relationship

YOUR STRENGTHS AS A PARTNER:

What are your best qualities in relationships?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



What do you offer a partner?

What makes you a good partner?

What would past partners say you're great at?

Celebrate these strengths. Build on them.

What You Need to Work On

YOUR GROWTH EDGES:

What do you struggle with in relationships?

1.

2.

3.

What patterns do you need to break?



What skills do you need to develop?

What would past partners say you need to work on?

Be honest. Growth requires awareness.

Your Commitment to Growth

I COMMIT TO WORKING ON:

Priority 1:

How I'll work on it:

Support I need:

Priority 2:

How I'll work on it:

Support I need:



Priority 3:

How I'll work on it:

Support I need:



PART 2: ESSENTIAL RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Communication Skills

HEALTHY COMMUNICATION IS FOUNDATION OF HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP.

CORE COMMUNICATION SKILLS:

1. Expressing needs and feelings:

- Use "I" statements
- Be specific and clear
- Express feelings, not just thoughts
- Make requests, not demands

Formula:

"I feel [emotion] when [situation] because [reason]. I need [request]."

Example:

"I feel disconnected when we don't spend quality time together because connection is important to me. I need us to have a weekly date night."

Your practice:

2. Active listening:

- Listen to understand, not to respond
- Put away distractions
- Make eye contact
- Reflect back what you heard
- Ask clarifying questions
- Validate their feelings

Formula:

"What I'm hearing is [summary]. Is that right? That makes sense because [validation]."

Example:

"What I'm hearing is that you felt hurt when I didn't call. Is that right? That makes sense because you value communication and felt forgotten."

Your practice:



3. Asking for what you need:

- Be direct and specific
- Don't expect mind-reading
- Make it a request, not a demand
- Be open to compromise

Formula:

"Would you be willing to [specific request]? It would mean a lot to me because [reason]."

Example:

"Would you be willing to text me when you're running late? It would mean a lot to me because I worry when I don't hear from you."

Your practice:

4. Giving feedback:

- Focus on behavior, not character
- Be specific
- Use gentle startup
- Offer appreciation too

Formula:

"I appreciate [positive]. I'd like to talk about [concern]. When [behavior], I feel [emotion]. Could we [request]?"

Example:

"I appreciate how thoughtful you are. I'd like to talk about our communication. When you don't respond to my texts for hours, I feel anxious. Could we agree on a timeframe for responses?"

Your practice:

5. Receiving feedback:

- Listen without defensiveness
- Ask clarifying questions
- Validate their experience
- Take responsibility
- Thank them for sharing

Formula:

"Thank you for telling me. Help me understand [question]. I can see how [validation]. I'll work on [commitment]."



Example:

"Thank you for telling me. Help me understand what would feel better to you. I can see how my silence made you feel unimportant. I'll work on being more responsive."

Your practice:

Conflict Resolution Skills

CONFLICT IS INEVITABLE. HOW YOU HANDLE IT MATTERS.

HEALTHY CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

1. Soft startup:

- Start gently, not harshly
- Use "I feel" not "You always"
- Focus on specific issue
- Choose good timing

Harsh startup:

"You never listen to me! You're so selfish!"

Soft startup:

"I feel unheard when I'm talking and you're on your phone. Can we talk about this?"

Your practice:

2. Take breaks when needed:

- If you're flooded (heart racing, can't think), take 20-minute break
- Tell partner you need a break
- Self-soothe during break
- Come back and continue

Script:

"I'm feeling overwhelmed. I need a 20-minute break to calm down. Let's continue this conversation at [specific time]."

Your practice:



3. Stay on topic:

- Address one issue at a time
- Don't bring up past or other issues
- Don't kitchen-sink (throwing everything in)
- Resolve current issue before moving on

Stay focused:

"Right now we're talking about [current issue]. Let's resolve this first."

4. Avoid the Four Horsemen (Gottman's predictors of relationship failure):

Criticism (attacking character):

X "You're so lazy and irresponsible!"

✓ "I feel frustrated when the dishes aren't done. Can we create a system?"

Contempt (disrespect, mockery):

X Eye-rolling, name-calling, mocking

✓ Respect even when disagreeing

Defensiveness (not taking responsibility):

X "It's not my fault! You made me do it!"

✓ "You're right, I did that. I'm sorry."

Stonewalling (shutting down):

X Silent treatment, walking away, refusing to engage

✓ "I need a break, but I'll come back to this."

Commit to avoiding these.

5. Repair attempts:

- Lighten the mood
- Take responsibility
- Express appreciation
- Offer affection
- Find compromise

Repair examples:

"I'm sorry, I'm not handling this well. Can we start over?"

"I love you and I want to work this out."

"You're right about that. I didn't see it that way."

"Can we take a hug break?"

Your repair attempts:



6. Find win-win solutions:

- Both people's needs matter
- Look for creative solutions
- Be willing to compromise
- Focus on underlying needs, not positions

Example:

Position: "I want to go out Friday night" vs. "I want to stay in Friday night"

Underlying needs: Connection and fun vs. Rest and quiet time

Win-win: "Let's stay in Friday and have a nice dinner together, then go out Saturday when we're both rested."

Your practice:

Emotional Intimacy Skills

EMOTIONAL INTIMACY = BEING KNOWN AND KNOWING YOUR PARTNER DEEPLY

BUILDING EMOTIONAL INTIMACY:

1. Vulnerability:

- Share your inner world
- Express feelings, fears, dreams
- Let them see the real you
- Take emotional risks

What makes you vulnerable:

How you'll practice vulnerability:

2. Emotional attunement:

- Notice their emotions
- Respond with empathy
- Be present with their feelings
- Validate their experience



When they're upset:

"I can see you're hurting. Tell me what's going on."

"That sounds really hard. I'm here with you."

Your practice:

3. Deep conversations:

- Go beyond surface topics
- Ask meaningful questions
- Share hopes, fears, dreams
- Explore values and beliefs

Questions for emotional intimacy:

- "What's been on your mind lately?"
- "What are you most afraid of?"
- "What do you dream about for your future?"
- "What makes you feel most alive?"
- "What do you need from me right now?"

Your questions:

4. Emotional support:

- Be there in hard times
- Listen without trying to fix
- Validate their feelings
- Offer comfort and presence

When they need support:

"I'm here. You don't have to go through this alone."

"What do you need from me right now?"

"That makes sense. I'd feel that way too."

Your practice:

5. Celebrating together:

- Share good news enthusiastically
- Celebrate their wins
- Be genuinely happy for them



- Create positive moments together

When they share good news:

"That's amazing! Tell me everything!"

"I'm so proud of you!"

"This is so exciting! How do you feel?"

Your practice:

Boundary Skills

HEALTHY BOUNDARIES = HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

TYPES OF BOUNDARIES:

1. Physical boundaries:

- Personal space needs
- Affection preferences
- Sexual boundaries
- Privacy needs

Your physical boundaries:

2. Emotional boundaries:

- What you will/won't tolerate emotionally
- How you handle your emotions
- Not taking on their emotions
- Protecting your emotional well-being

Your emotional boundaries:

3. Time boundaries:

- Time together vs. apart
- Time for yourself
- Time with friends/family
- Work-life balance



Your time boundaries:

4. Communication boundaries:

- How you communicate
- Frequency of contact
- Topics that are off-limits
- Respectful communication standards

Your communication boundaries:

5. Values boundaries:

- What you won't compromise
- Deal-breakers
- Core values
- Non-negotiables

Your values boundaries:

COMMUNICATING BOUNDARIES:

Formula:

"I need [boundary] because [reason]. I'd appreciate if you could [request]."

Examples:

"I need alone time to recharge because I'm an introvert. I'd appreciate if we could have one evening a week where I can decompress on my own."

"I need us to speak respectfully even when we're upset because I can't handle yelling. I'd appreciate if we could take breaks when things get heated."

Your boundary script:



MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES:

- State them clearly
- Be consistent
- Don't apologize for them
- Enforce consequences if violated
- Revisit and adjust as needed



PART 3: BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP HABITS

Daily Connection Practices

SMALL DAILY ACTIONS BUILD STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

DAILY PRACTICES:

Morning connection:

- Kiss goodbye
- "Have a great day"
- Morning text or call
- Share intention for day

Your morning practice:

Throughout the day:

- Check-in text
- Share something funny or interesting
- Express appreciation
- Stay connected

Your throughout-day practice:

Evening reconnection:

- Greet with hug and kiss
- Share highlights and lowlights of day
- Give full attention (no phones)
- 20-minute conversation minimum

Your evening practice:

Before bed:

- Express appreciation
- Physical affection
- "I love you"



- Go to bed together (when possible)

Your bedtime practice:

Weekly Connection Practices

WEEKLY PRACTICES MAINTAIN INTIMACY

WEEKLY PRACTICES:

Date night:

- Once per week minimum
- Quality time together
- Try new things
- Keep romance alive

Your date night plan:

State of the union:

- Weekly check-in conversation
- What's working/not working
- Upcoming week planning
- Address small issues before they grow

Your check-in time:

Physical intimacy:

- Regular sexual connection (frequency that works for both)
- Non-sexual physical affection
- Maintain attraction and desire

Your intimacy plan:

Individual time:



- Time apart for hobbies, friends, self-care
- Maintain individual identity
- Come back together refreshed

Your individual time:

Monthly and Ongoing Practices

MONTHLY PRACTICES:

Relationship review:

- How are we doing?
- What do we need more/less of?
- Goals for next month
- Celebrate progress

Your review schedule:

Adventure or novelty:

- Try something new together
- Break routine
- Create memories
- Keep things exciting

Your adventure ideas:

Appreciation practice:

- Express what you appreciate about each other
- Acknowledge effort and growth
- Celebrate wins
- Build positive sentiment

Your appreciation practice:



PART 4: TRANSITIONING FROM DATING TO PARTNERSHIP

The Exclusivity Conversation

WHEN TO HAVE IT:

- After 2-3 months of consistent dating
- When you both feel ready
- When you want to commit to each other
- When you're on the same page about the relationship

HOW TO HAVE IT:

Bring it up directly:

"I'd like to talk about where we are and where this is going. I'm really enjoying getting to know you, and I'd like to be exclusive. How do you feel about that?"

Questions to discuss:

- Are we on the same page about being exclusive?
- What does exclusivity mean to each of us?
- What are we building toward?
- What do we each need in this relationship?

Your script:

Defining the Relationship

WHAT TO DISCUSS:

Relationship status:

- Are we boyfriend/girlfriend?
- Are we partners?
- How do we introduce each other?

Expectations:

- Communication frequency
- Time together



- Physical intimacy
- Meeting friends/family

Goals:

- What are we working toward?
- Same page on future (marriage, kids, etc.)?
- Timeline for next steps

Boundaries:

- What's okay/not okay
- Deal-breakers
- Non-negotiables

Your DTR conversation plan:

Meeting Friends and Family

WHEN TO INTRODUCE:

- After exclusivity
- When relationship feels stable
- When you're both ready
- Usually 3-6 months in

HOW TO INTRODUCE:**Prepare your partner:**

- Tell them about your people
- What to expect
- Any family dynamics to know
- How to navigate

Prepare your people:

- Tell them about your partner
- Ask them to be welcoming
- Set expectations for behavior

Start small:

- Meet one or two people first
- Low-pressure situations
- Brief first meeting
- Build from there



Your introduction plan:

Integrating Lives

AS RELATIONSHIP DEEPENS:

Gradual integration:

- Introduce to different friend groups
- Include in regular activities
- Meet each other's families
- Share more of your lives

Maintaining balance:

- Keep individual friendships
- Maintain hobbies and interests
- Don't lose yourself
- Balance couple time and individual time

Building shared life:

- Create traditions together
- Shared activities and interests
- Common friend group
- Shared goals and vision

Your integration plan:

Navigating Challenges

EARLY RELATIONSHIP CHALLENGES:

First conflict:



- Normal and expected
- How you handle it matters
- Use conflict resolution skills
- Repair and reconnect

Meeting expectations:

- Communicate needs clearly
- Adjust expectations as needed
- Be flexible and understanding

Pace differences:

- One person moves faster/slower
- Communicate about pace
- Find middle ground
- Be patient

External pressures:

- Friends/family opinions
- Work stress
- Life circumstances
- Support each other through challenges

How you'll navigate challenges:



PART 5: MAINTAINING HEALTHY PARTNERSHIP

The Relationship Bank Account

GOTTMAN'S CONCEPT: EVERY INTERACTION IS A DEPOSIT OR WITHDRAWAL

DEPOSITS (BUILD CONNECTION):

- Acts of kindness
- Expressions of appreciation
- Quality time
- Physical affection
- Emotional support
- Keeping promises
- Showing interest
- Celebrating together

WITHDRAWALS (DAMAGE CONNECTION):

- Criticism or contempt
- Broken promises
- Neglect or distance
- Disrespect
- Dishonesty
- Taking for granted

GOAL: MAKE 5 DEPOSITS FOR EVERY 1 WITHDRAWAL

Your daily deposits:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Keeping Romance Alive

ROMANCE REQUIRES INTENTION

ROMANTIC PRACTICES:

Regular date nights:

- Weekly or bi-weekly
- Variety (new and familiar)
- Quality time focus
- Keep courting each other

**Physical affection:**

- Daily kisses and hugs
- Hold hands
- Cuddle
- Sexual intimacy

Thoughtful gestures:

- Surprise notes
- Small gifts
- Acts of service
- Remembering important things

Flirting and playfulness:

- Compliments
- Playful teasing
- Inside jokes
- Keep it fun

Your romance plan:

Growing Together

HEALTHY COUPLES GROW TOGETHER

GROWTH PRACTICES:

Shared goals:

- Dream together
- Set couple goals
- Work toward common vision
- Support each other's individual goals

Learning together:

- Try new things
- Take classes
- Read books
- Grow skills

Challenges together:

- Face difficulties as team
- Support through hard times
- Celebrate victories
- Build resilience



Evolving together:

- Allow each other to change
- Grow as individuals
- Adapt to life stages
- Stay curious about each other

Your growth plan:

When to Seek Help

COUPLES THERAPY/COACHING ISN'T JUST FOR CRISIS

SEEK HELP WHEN:

- Communication breaks down
- Conflict escalates or goes unresolved
- Feeling disconnected
- Major life transition
- Considering next step (engagement, marriage)
- Want to strengthen relationship
- Patterns you can't break alone

PREVENTIVE CARE:

- Premarital counseling
- Annual relationship check-ups
- Skill-building workshops
- Coaching for specific goals

Don't wait until crisis. Get help early.



PART 6: YOUR PARTNERSHIP PREPARATION PLAN

Skills to Develop

BEFORE OR DURING EARLY RELATIONSHIP:

Communication skills I'll work on:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How I'll practice:

Conflict resolution skills I'll develop:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How I'll practice:

Emotional intimacy skills I'll build:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How I'll practice:



Habits to Establish

RELATIONSHIP HABITS I'LL CREATE:

Daily:

Weekly:

Monthly:

How I'll stay consistent:

Personal Growth to Continue

ONGOING PERSONAL WORK:

Therapy/coaching for:

Self-care practices:

Individual growth goals:

Support system:

I commit to continuing my personal growth even in relationship.



Your Partnership Vision

WHEN I'M IN HEALTHY PARTNERSHIP:

How I'll show up:

How I'll treat my partner:

How I'll communicate:

How I'll handle conflict:

How I'll maintain myself:

What I'll contribute:

The kind of partner I'll be:



Your Commitment

I COMMIT TO:

- ☐ Continuing my personal growth
- ☐ Developing healthy relationship skills
- ☐ Communicating openly and honestly
- ☐ Handling conflict maturely
- ☐ Being vulnerable and emotionally intimate
- ☐ Maintaining healthy boundaries
- ☐ Making daily deposits in relationship bank account
- ☐ Keeping romance and connection alive
- ☐ Growing together with my partner
- ☐ Seeking help when needed
- ☐ Being the partner I want to attract
- ☐ Building healthy, lasting love

WHY THIS MATTERS TO ME:

Signed: _____

Date: _____



REFLECTION AND INTEGRATION

What You've Learned

FROM THIS RESOURCE:

Most important insight:

Skills I most need to develop:

Habits I'll establish:

What I'm excited about:

What I'm nervous about:

How I'll prepare:



Your Action Plan

THIS WEEK:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

THIS MONTH:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

ONGOING:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____



FINAL REMINDERS

You're Preparing for Something Beautiful

HEALTHY PARTNERSHIP IS:

- Two whole people choosing each other
- Growing together while maintaining individuality
- Supporting each other's dreams
- Navigating life as a team
- Building something meaningful
- Experiencing deep love and connection

You're preparing for this. That's powerful.

The Right Relationship Is Worth the Work

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS REQUIRE:

- Effort and intention
- Communication and vulnerability
- Growth and change
- Patience and commitment
- Skills and awareness

But they give back:

- Deep connection and intimacy
- Support and partnership
- Love and belonging
- Joy and fulfillment
- A life shared with someone special

It's worth it.

You're Becoming the Partner You Want to Attract

BY DOING THIS WORK:

- You're becoming emotionally healthy
- You're developing relationship skills
- You're healing your patterns
- You're preparing to love well
- You're ready for healthy partnership

The right person will recognize and appreciate this.



Healthy Love Is Possible

YOU CAN HAVE:

- A relationship that feels safe and secure
- A partner who treats you well
- Communication that works
- Conflict that gets resolved
- Deep emotional intimacy
- Lasting, fulfilling love

You're preparing for it. Keep going.

You've Got This

YOU HAVE:

- Self-awareness
- Relationship skills
- Healthy habits
- Clear vision
- Commitment to growth
- Everything you need to build healthy love

When you meet the right person, you'll be ready.

NEXT STEPS

AFTER COMPLETING THIS RESOURCE:

- Review all four Dating Coaching resources (2.1-2.4)
- Implement skills and practices
- Continue personal growth work
- Date with intention and awareness
- Apply what you've learned
- Seek support when needed (coaching, therapy)
- Trust the process
- Believe in healthy love



ABOUT HVL CONNECT

Dante Yigael, Certified Life & Relationship Coach

Specializations:

- Dating Coaching
- Relationship Skills Development
- Healthy Partnership Building
- Communication and Conflict Resolution

Approach:

- Evidence-based (Gottman Method, Attachment Theory, EFT)
- Practical and actionable
- Supportive and encouraging
- Focused on sustainable growth

Contact:

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You're ready. Go build the love you deserve.