



4

I Know and Like Him

Knowing and liking him means you are confident he is the guy you want and you treat him in a way that shows you like and respect him.

In the last chapter we showed you how to identify and meet your own needs whether you're currently in a relationship or not so that you can develop your personal power. The next step in the journey is to begin assessing your needs specifically in relation to the guy you're interested in or in a relationship with. Developmental psychologists—those who study how people develop over their life span—tell us that one of the key questions people need to figure out is this: Given the kind of person I am, what kind of person do I wish to have as a partner? Therefore, in this chapter, we focus on the question “Who do I want to be with and why?”

On the dating/sex scene, it can be very easy to focus solely on the question “Does he want to be with me?” We can get caught up in wondering things like “Does he really like me?” and “Am I hot enough for him?” and “How can I make him want to be with me?” Refocusing on the question “Do I want to be with *him*?” shifts your perspective to your needs, not just his, so you can really decide whether *you* know and like *him*. This is a more mutual, healthy way of approaching relationships.

Many women think they really know and like a guy (that is, they're confident he is the guy they want) after they meet him in a bar or read his profile or creep on his Facebook page or even after a date or two. When asked to describe him they might list things like “He's smart and has a job,” “He's got good father potential,” “He's kind and attentive,” “He's physically fit,” “He's so much fun,” or “We're so alike.” These are all good things, but they don't really cover the bases on meeting potential needs. Furthermore, some of them are things you can't truly know about a guy until you have more data—until you really observe his behavior and get to know him over

time and across situations. Doing so will help you develop insight you can use to decide whether a guy is really the one you want.

To help you with this, we're going to describe each "I know and like him" need and provide examples from the seven women's story lines as they assess and observe their guys' behavior. As we do this, think about each need and start to select ones you think might be key for you (use the checkboxes we provide). In a healthy relationship, all the needs are met satisfactorily. However, you might find there are some that are priorities for you. You may not know which they are. In fact, you may not figure this out until you see they're not met. Don't worry about your answer being right or wrong; just use your gut, and if you're not sure, that's okay. You'll have plenty of time throughout the rest of the book to fine-tune your Key Needs List (provided at the end of this chapter) as you see how each need plays out in the women's relationships and, if you're in a relationship, as you start to assess whether they're actually being met in yours. As you do this, you'll be further developing personal power and increasing the chances of being with the guy who is really right for you.

At the end of the description and illustrations of each need, we offer a space for you to jot any thoughts you have about that need to help you figure out whether it might be key for you.

Familiar: "Do I know his best and worst traits? Do I understand how they make him who he is, influence how he acts, and affect the way he gets his needs met?"

KEY
NEED?

Mia's answer reflects insight into Corey. For best traits, she says, "Corey is really funny, extremely considerate, and one of the most passionate people I know. His passion drives him to want to engage fully in things, but his considerate nature lets him recognize other people's needs. Like this issue we're dealing with about him wanting to hook up with other women. He's really into the idea, but he gets that it's important to consider my feelings about it too."

For worst traits, Mia says, "He's not that patient, so he can get frustrated with things sometimes. For example, he was making pie once, and it was taking a long time to work the dough, so he started to curse out the pie. Then, of course, he calmed down and realized he was being impatient. I see this with his behavior with me sometimes. Like one night, before he moved, we were leaving to go meet up with friends, and he wanted to take the recycling out on our way. Well, it's my job to sort it out, and I hadn't done it yet, and when he saw that he got really annoyed and was like 'What the fuck? The recycling isn't separated, and now we're gonna be late! Can you just hurry up and do this! I really want to get out of here!' So I just told him to relax—it's just one bin of stuff—and I did the job quickly,

and I knew in a few minutes he would calm down and see he was being impatient, just like he did with the pie, and that's exactly what happened. I know not to take it personally because it's not personal. I just let it go."

Mia is able to use what she knows about Corey to understand him—both the good and the not so good—and she has factored all of it into her decision about whether to be in a relationship with him. Lauren, on the other hand, is not insightful about her partners' traits, especially their worst ones, nor does she know how to use them to make relationship decisions.

Lauren/Dan/Lucas Recap: When Lauren was struggling to decide whether she wanted to be with Dan or Lucas, she was confused; she felt a connection to both, but in different ways. She used what she was familiar with: "Dan is affectionate, confident, funny, generous, and outgoing." She believed he could bring excitement into her life. "Lucas is conscientious, disciplined, and organized." She believed he could bring structure into her life. So Lauren felt as if she was trying to choose between two different positives, excitement and structure.

However, Lauren wasn't focusing on Dan's and Lucas's negative traits, or at least not considering them in her decision. Negative traits may not be apparent at the start of a relationship, but we all have them, and if you're looking for them (which you should be) you'll see them. For example, Dan's worst traits are that he's jealous (remember in Chapter 1 how he pulled the business card out of Lauren's hand when she was at a party?), demanding (he expects her to attend all of his events), and controlling (he insists she do what he says). Lucas's worst traits are that he's rigid and self-focused (he lives his life in a particular way with no interest in modifying it for Lauren, including his ongoing attachment to his ex-wife).

If Lauren was focusing on these traits and factoring them into her decisions, she might understand, for example, how in getting structure from Lucas she also has to live with the fact that he may be interested in only his own structure. Or in getting excitement from Dan she also has to live with the fact that he may want full control of her. Are either of these situations what Lauren really wants? Might she find someone whose best traits can result in excitement and structure and who doesn't come with worst traits that hurt her? If Lauren was truly familiar with Dan's and Lucas's best and worst traits, she might be making different decisions.

What are your guy's traits (use the checklist on the facing page)?

Authentic: "Is he fully open to showing all aspects of himself and to facing whatever fears he has about doing so?"

 KEY
NEED?

"Yes. Corey is 100% real with me," says Mia. "I've asked him to be real with me from the start because I know it's a key need for me. I told him, 'I want

		Best	Worst			Best	Worst			Best	Worst
Adventurous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Energetic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outgoing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Affectionate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enthusiastic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outspoken	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Even-			Passionate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Ambitious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	tempered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Passive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Anxious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Excitable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Patient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Assertive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Excitement			Perfectionistic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Attention			seeking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pessimistic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
seeking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fearless	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quick-					
Calm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Focused	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	tempered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Cautious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Funny	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reliable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Close-minded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Generous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reserved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Competitive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Honest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Responsive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Confident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Impatient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rigid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Conscientious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Impulsive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Selfish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Controlling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inflexible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Courageous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Irresponsible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Creative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jealous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sociable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Critical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kind	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spontaneous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Daring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manipulative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stubborn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Deceitful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moody	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Submissive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Demanding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Open-minded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suspicious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Disciplined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Opinionated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thoughtful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Disorganized	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Optimistic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unselfish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Easygoing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						

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you to share what you're thinking—tell me straight up. I want you to be honest, not lie to protect my feelings.' And he does what I asked. He tells me what's in his head about everything—when he wanted to be exclusive, when that girl from back home contacted him, that he was moving but wanted to stay together with me, that he wants to move to whatever city I move to after graduation, that he wants to explore the idea of free passes. He told me he did not want to hurt me, he cares about me, and he knew how difficult it would be for both of us not to have sexual experiences, which is why he brought up the idea of free passes. He wanted to continue to be honest about what was going on in his life while in our long-distance relationship. Even though he felt he was taking a big risk telling me everything he thought, he did so because he loves and really cares about me.”

Corey's authenticity allows Mia to know him and, importantly, to trust he will be open and honest. Consequently, she doesn't have to worry that Corey will lie to her, say one thing and then do another, or keep some

deep-down secret hidden from her, or that she'll get blindsided by something she didn't expect. Being with someone who is authentic helps a person feel a sense of security and satisfaction. When Lauren was with Lucas she didn't have the benefit of being with someone who was fully authentic. He sent her mixed messages by staying with her while at the same time continuing to express his wish to be with his ex-wife. A lack of authenticity on the part of your partner, particularly when it manifests in mixed messages, can be crazy-making. Why? Because it results in your questioning his honesty and wondering what he really thinks or who he really is, and because it can then lead to your questioning yourself, your own feelings, and your own sense of reality. You might find yourself thinking, "He says he wants to be with me, but then he says he needs his space. I don't really feel loved, but he tells me he loves me. What's real? Is he being honest with me? Am I missing something? Is it me? I don't understand! I don't get him!" If you find yourself ever saying these kinds of things to yourself, it's a sure sign that your partner is not being *authentic* with you.

Thoughts:

Attracted: "Do I like his physical appearance just as it is without wanting it to change?"

KEY
NEED?

Olivia answers, "I love Zach's physical body. He's very attractive—blond hair, beautiful blue eyes, his hands, his smile—all man. He's exactly what I want."

Lexi has a thing for athletic guys with broad shoulders who play sports. She really likes it when a guy plays hockey so she can watch how his body moves when he skates. That is so not James! But she's absolutely okay with James's body: "He works out every day. He takes good care of himself, and he always looks good. Yeah, he doesn't have broad shoulders or play hockey, and his body type is not what I actually envision as the body type I'm most attracted to, but he is who he is, and I'm happy with that."

Both Olivia and Lexi are meeting their need to be *attracted*. Olivia is fortunate to be with someone who meets her exact physical ideals. Lexi is not, but she recognizes that not everyone will do so, and she's happy with James's appearance. Lexi's example shows that there may be multiple ways to get one's need met. For Lexi, having a broad-shouldered hockey player is

an extra goodie—an ideal way of getting her need to be attracted met, but not a necessary way. We call these ideal preferences for the ways to get a need met “pet wants”—great if we can get them, not a problem if we can’t. If it turns out you’re not willing to get your need met in any way other than your ideal and your partner can’t meet it, it might be an unreasonable demand in your relationship (we’ll give you more examples of this in Chapter 6).

Can you imagine what would happen if athletic guys with broad shoulders who play sports were not an extra goodie but a necessary requirement for Lexi and she wasn’t happy with James’s body? We can, and it isn’t pretty. First, she might not enjoy being sexually intimate with him. If that were the case and she stayed with him anyway, then she would be sacrificing her satisfaction in an important area. She also might be sending subtle, or not so subtle, signals to James—like not wanting to have sex often or not touching him in certain ways—that might make him feel confused or hurt. Even worse, if she tried to change him by asking him to lose weight or work out more—or even just conveyed that he didn’t meet her ideals—it would likely lead to James feeling judged and hurt and, ultimately, to conflict in the relationship. The moral of the story: if you’re not attracted to a guy’s looks or body, just the way he is, right from the beginning, you’ll want to think carefully about your decision to enter a relationship with him. For example, if Olivia likes only blond-haired, blue-eyed guys, then that’s who she should date.

Thoughts:

Desire: “Do I want to be sexual with him, and do I feel comfortable telling him about my sexual interests and needs?”

KEY
NEED?

Olivia says, “After I followed Zach to his room and he got me on the bed, I was really into what was happening. I loved touching him, being touched by him, feeling close to him. I had never even made out with a guy I wasn’t in the ‘seriously talking about love’ phase with. Then he started to move too fast for me, so I worked up the courage to pull away and say, ‘I usually don’t do this, move this fast.’ He said, ‘Do you want to slow down?’ and I told him I did. I told him I was a virgin. He said, ‘You just need to be clear

with how far you want to go when we're hooking up.' And then he backed off and we kissed for a while and went back down to the party together and hung out the rest of the night."

It took courage, but Olivia voiced her preferences. She knew she wanted to be sexual with Zach, and she also knew and communicated her limits, and he respected her, although it could have gone the other way, with Zach not being respectful. And Olivia doesn't know how he will ultimately respond—he is known as a player. Olivia is getting clear on what she needs and on being able to say it. So far, so good, Olivia!

Julianne's answer to the *desire* need question is "Sometimes." Sex with Gregory is moving from great to just okay. That's what typically happens with Julianne because she's not comfortable at the beginning telling a guy about her preferences and interests. She starts a relationship, and the sex seems great because it's new and she's so into him, and then it moves to okay because she hasn't voiced her preferences and therefore she's not getting them met. Remember the research from Chapter 2 about how being able to successfully communicate your sexual needs is associated with greater well-being? Julianne is a great example of someone who isn't following the research because she's afraid of what Gregory will think. Therefore, she doesn't give herself the opportunity to see if successful sexual communication is even possible. Every time she starts a new relationship she *promises* herself she's going to share what sex and intimacy mean to her. She likes reading sex stories in erotica books, and she likes to have a clitoris orgasm, which can take some time for her. Yet so far in this relationship, she hasn't told Gregory.

Worse yet, she's led Gregory to believe that he gives her clitoris orgasms *all the time*, when in fact he doesn't. The first time Gregory played with her clitoris she said, "I really like it when you touch and kiss me there." He was into it, and he likes to do it with 69s, so they did that, but it's hard for her to focus on herself in that position. Not surprisingly, then, he came first. Her self-talk was "OMG! I need to come; I'm taking way too long; he's probably

I/ME

Necessary Requirements or Extra Goodies?

Julianne doesn't know whether erotica or clitoris orgasms are extra goodies or necessary requirements—things she really needs. Until she figures this out, she won't expect to get them and she won't be able to set her standards. When we don't understand our own needs, we can't communicate them to others, and that hurts mutuality.

thinking there is something wrong with him. I have to fake it—*no, don't do it!*" She fakes it. And then he thinks everything is great.

Needless to say, there are things she's afraid to tell and ask Gregory. For example, "I've been faking orgasms with you all along. I'm sorry, I was afraid to tell you. Can we start over with that?" And "I like to read stories about other couples having sex. I find it arousing. Wanna try that, see if you like it too?" Until she does communicate clearly with him, she won't be meeting her own *desire* need, and she will never find out whether Gregory can meet her sexual needs.

Thoughts:

Interesting: "Am I interested in his life (whatever it happens to be), and do I want to be a part of it?"

KEY
NEED?

Emily is really trying to use her feelings and needs to be honest with herself, and her answer is "Yes and no. Even after all this time, I wake up every single day with him in my head feeling excited about him. It's as if I'm under some sort of spell or something! I really feel we're lucky to have found each other." In addition, she finds Will's premed major fascinating. She loves to hear about what he's studying, and she enjoys the conversations they have about his coursework. She feels like she learns a lot from him. At the same time, even though she knows she wants to be with him in the long run, she's worried she'll feel as if her personal life is on hold if they live together while he's in school. He'll always be studying and working, and they probably won't have a lot of time to see friends and have fun together. Despite the fact that she'd be working and focusing on her career too, she's really not that interested in the med-school girlfriend lifestyle, but she knows that's what it might take to get to the life she is interested in sharing with him. So Emily is really conflicted.

Lexi is not conflicted as she thinks about her relationship with James. They've been dating for six months, and the first few were great—he played sports with her, they went to a lot of games, and once it became clear that he did, in fact, want a monogamous relationship, they had a lot of good sex. But things changed over time, as sometimes happens. Now she says, "I'm finding I'm not really into James's lifestyle. He and his friends just do nothing. They go to someone's house, drink, watch sports, and get hammered.

It just doesn't feel fun for me. It's nice sometimes, but lately he always wants to do the same thing, never something new and exciting. I like to get out and do things more, like we did at the beginning. It's as if he and his friends are stuck in a rut." Lexi's need to find James's life interesting is clearly not being met, and, if this is a key need for Lexi, this does not bode well for their relationship.

Anna's answer to the question is "Yes." First of all, she enjoys all the things Eric likes to do—boating, going to the beach, taking long walks together, going camping—she loves sharing those parts of his life. She also loves his plan for family life. After they decided to get married and have the baby, there were so many exciting things to talk about, plan, and do—a wedding, buying a house, moving in, setting up things for the baby. Doing so became their complete focus. Right at the beginning, Anna and Eric spent time talking about how they each viewed life with a baby, and Eric was clear he wanted to spend time with and provide for his family—that this was his first priority. As soon as Anna heard that she was thrilled and told him she would be very happy to stay at home to take care of the baby so he could focus on making money. Eric seemed so pleased that she was interested in sharing his goals, so they left it at that and went forward with getting everything in place. Anna remembers Eric's expression when Emma was born—she'll never forget his face, how happy he was. Now she loves being in the wife/mom role that complements Eric's husband/dad role.

Emily, Lexi, and Anna are all in different places with regard to their need to find their partner's life *interesting*. At the moment, Anna's the one whose need is most well met. Emily is conflicted, and Lexi is seeing that her need to be interested in her partner's life is not being met. When this need is not being met, it may signal that you and your partner don't want the same things in life. Research shows that partners feel less close to one another and experience more conflict and greater relationship dissatisfaction, as well as reduced individual well-being, when the things they like to do or the goals they have for themselves are mismatched or conflicting. This suggests that getting this need met is an important component of a healthy relationship.

Research also shows that people who are bored in their relationships become more dissatisfied over time. Their boredom leads them to feel less close to their partners and, consequently, less satisfied.

Another reason the need to feel *interested* in your partner's life is important comes from self-expansion theory. This theory, developed by Art and Elaine Aron, social psychologists who study love and relationships, says that people are motivated to expand their sense of self by learning new things and engaging in new activities, and when the self is expanding in these ways people are happier. One way in which people engage in self-expansion is through their partners, by including aspects of the partner

and the partner's life in their own sense of self. For example, if your partner is an avid wine collector and teaches you all about wines (and, of course, if this is of interest to you), then you will include these aspects of your partner in your sense of self ("I know a lot about wine now too"), increasing your personal growth and your sense of excitement about your partner and making your relationship more fulfilling.

Lexi is a good example of someone who feels bored and has no sense of self-expansion in her relationship. This is a recipe for dissatisfaction. But if you have found yourself in a similar situation, don't despair. The research shows that when couples actively engage in novel, exciting activities together, they can feel more satisfied—energy returns. So if you can get your partner to engage in this way, hope remains for meeting your *interesting* need.

Thoughts:

Support: "Is he my go-to person in good times and bad times?"

KEY
NEED?

Emily knows *support* is one of her key needs, but she doesn't feel Will is being her go-to person right now. If a guy is your go-to person, you include him in your day-to-day life, so he knows what's going on with you. When something really great—or not so great—happens, he's one of the first people you call to share it with or work through it. But Will's not that available right now. He's always in class or studying, and she knows he doesn't always have the time or energy for her. Emily knows this isn't good for their relationship in the long run, so she finally decides to raise the issue with him. This is a good idea. Being honest and asking direct questions will help Emily determine whether she's going to be able to get her needs met:

Emily: I got that test back the other day but didn't call you. I called Lexi instead.

Will: What?! How'd it go? Why didn't you tell me you had gotten it back?

Emily: Lately, I stop myself when I feel like calling or texting you a flirty message, an exam mark, anything.

Will: Why? What's going on?

Emily: I don't feel like you're my go-to person anymore. You're not available. You have so much else going on.

Will: Emily, I have your back. Let's talk about this when I get there.

Emily: I want to talk about this now.

Will: Do you not want me to come next weekend?

Emily: Of course I want you to come.

Will: If we talk about this now, we may fight. I don't want that. I'd rather talk in person. I need to see you. I miss you. I love you.

Emily: I know you say that, but I need your support. I don't feel like myself with you anymore.

Will: I want to be your go-to person. I get that it looks like I'm not because that's how I'm acting. But I want to be.

Emily: Agghh! I want you to be, but you've got to act it!

Will: Please, let's work this out when I see you next weekend.

Emily: Okay, I can wait until then, but we need to keep talking about this. It's really important to me and our future.

Emily is right that it's important to their future. Research shows that support from one's partner is one of the most important relationship qualities that predict whether couples will be satisfied and whether they will stay together. When people are not good at providing support and when their partners don't experience them as being supportive, both partners are less satisfied. So getting the support you need from your partner is really important.

Mia definitely sees Corey as her go-to person. For example, when her cat died, she took it really hard, and he was right there for her, holding her when she cried and helping her cope with the loss. Now that he's moved away, depending on what the issue is, Emily or Lexi serves as her go-to person because he's not physically there, and Mia is just fine with that. Corey is still a support person over the phone, and in texts and e-mail, but Mia is comfortable turning to her friends if Corey isn't available. She never gets upset with him about this and doesn't have particularly high expectations about his availability in this regard. *Support* is not that key a need for her. In this way, she's very different from Emily. This is a good example of how there's no right or wrong when it comes to what people need in a relationship. People have different key needs. What matters is knowing what yours are so you can make sure you're getting them met. And getting the amount of support from your partner that is right for you is what's important.

Thoughts:

I/ME

Why Do People Have Different Key Needs?

Because each of us has different ideas of what a good relationship is and key needs reflect your idea. Clearly you can see how much work Emily is putting into getting her support need met. It's part of her idea of a good relationship, but it's not for Mia.

Care: “Am I attuned to his feelings and do I respond in a helpful rather than hurtful way?”

KEY NEED?

Emily says, “Yes, I deeply care about Will’s feelings. Early on in our relationship, Will told me, ‘It’s really hard for me to communicate how I feel. I need you to know that about me.’ He was so right! For example, I used to think that we’d moved on after an argument because he would drop the subject, but he hadn’t moved on at all. He just wasn’t able to tell me how he was feeling, even if I asked. And then I remembered what he had told me, so I realized I needed to learn Will’s nonverbal signals for when he’s upset. I now see that if I say something that upsets him he’ll get quiet and his responses will get short. If he’s really upset, he’ll take a shower. Now that I know these things, I can go to him and tell him I know he’s upset, rather than asking him. It really helps our communication. I also know better what makes him upset, so I can predict when it will happen, like if he doesn’t do well on an exam. And I know what’s important to him, so I don’t bring up things that I’m unhappy about before an exam because I know he won’t sleep, and that will get in the way of him doing well, which only makes things worse. So even though he doesn’t voice his feelings, I’ve learned how he does communicate them.”

Emily provides a good example of being really attuned to her partner’s feelings. She’s learned how to identify them—which was not a straightforward process and took some time—and she really shows Will she cares by being willing and able to modulate her own behavior in a way that respects his feelings.

Mia provides a good example of a lapse in care. Mia answers the care question with “Um, I think sometimes I’m a little bit too honest. I say things without thinking about how Corey will feel. The other day he posted a photo, and I made some comment about how he had gained some weight since moving. I think it hurt his feelings. I said I was sorry, but there was nothing I could do to take it back. Ultimately he said, ‘You’re right,’ but I still feel bad that I didn’t consider his feelings more before saying it.” These

kinds of lapses can happen. When they happen frequently or in areas of particular vulnerability for your partner, they can be very damaging and leave your partner feeling extremely hurt. For example, if Corey was very sensitive about his weight or appearance, such a comment from Mia could have a very negative effect on him and how he feels about Mia. We show our partners we like them by being aware of their feelings, particularly their vulnerabilities, and not saying or doing things that will hurt them.

Lauren presents an interesting case of the *care* need gone awry. Lauren's answer to the care question is "I completely care about Dan's feelings. I always ask how he's doing, how he's feeling. I won't push him to get what I want, and if I hurt him by doing something inadvertently and he points it out to me, I'll make sure to stop." That sounds really caring, right? Well, Lauren also says if she's feeling hurt or angry at or confused by Dan, she doesn't care about his feelings at all and will purposely ignore them. Lauren goes to extremes with her care behavior. For her, it's all or nothing: she is either in excessive care-giving mode or in full ignore mode. Neither of these is healthy. Excessive care-giving can lead to feelings of resentment in the caregiver because it often means she is sacrificing herself in the process. Eventually that leads to anger and resentment, which then can lead, as it does in Lauren's case, to a hostile lack of care.

Why does someone engage in excessive care-giving? Most of the time it's because she wants to be liked and believes her behavior will keep her in her partner's good graces. This type of care-giving is not driven by a healthy "I know and like him" process. It's driven by an unhealthy "I want him to like me" process. If you engage in excessive care-giving and sacrifice your own needs, and then find yourself feeling resentful, it will be important to examine the motivations for your behavior and work toward a more balanced, healthy approach to caring for your partner's feelings.

Thoughts:

Listen: "Do I try to hear what he is expressing and what he means in order to understand who he is?"

**KEY
NEED?**

Julianne cares about Gregory. She doesn't want to hurt him. She knows she is hurting him right now by taking so long to get back to him with

an answer to his “Marry me?” question. She’s listened to him carefully all along so that she can really understand him.

At the beginning of their relationship, out of the blue at dinner one night Gregory had suggested they each ask the other questions they wouldn’t dream of asking this early in a relationship. She was so in:

Gregory: What are you looking for in a guy?

Julianne: Someone who appreciates and accepts my career goals, how hard I work, and wants an equal relationship. Someone with a similar intellect, background, and interests.

Gregory: Do you see yourself ever settling down and being a mom, a wife?

Julianne: I’m not sure. If I find the right person and I want to have a family with that person, then settling down would be right for me. You?

Gregory: I used to think I’d be married and settled down after I put a couple of years into my career, but I got really invested in it and realized it was worth making sure I was stable work-wise and financially given that I do want to settle down. So now I’m seriously looking for a long-term partner to get married and have a family. That’s what I really want.

So Julianne was not surprised by his proposal, and she knows he’s serious and deserves an answer. She just is not certain she wants to marry him—there are so many good things and also so many problems—and as much as she’d like to tell him he caught her off guard with his question, and that’s why it is taking her so long to decide, she knows that wouldn’t be honest. She heard him loud and clear from the beginning, and she really does understand.

Remember when Lauren was with Lucas and after two dates he stopped texting her and told her it was because he was still not over his ex-wife? Lauren did not hear Lucas loud and clear. If Lauren were really listening and trying to understand Lucas, she would have realized he wasn’t ready for a relationship with her. He was giving her that information by continually talking about his ex-wife and through his inconsistent behavior, like when he kept going back and forth between “I’m happy being with Lauren” and “No, I’m sad missing my ex-wife. This is not working for me.”

When you start a relationship with someone who doesn’t want to be with you, what do you think is the most likely outcome? And how would being with someone who loves someone else make you feel about yourself? If you said you’d feel terrible and that, most likely, the relationship would not work, you’d be right. But Lauren couldn’t see that because she was not listening to Lucas. She was paying attention only to herself and where she was. She wanted him to love her, and she set about trying to make that happen. Out of her own need to be loved she pursued a person who was really telling her he was not looking for a serious relationship with her.

Had she listened to and heard him, she would have had the opportunity to decide whether she really wanted to be with someone who was in love with someone else. Instead, she acted from a place of “I will make him love me,” which leads to the faulty assumption “I need to be who he wants” rather than “I know and like him.” In doing so, she relinquished her personal power.

Thoughts:

Important: “Do I consider and value his needs in my choices?”

KEY
NEED?

Mia says, “When Corey brought up the idea of an open relationship, I decided to consider what he wanted. I valued our relationship. If I had immediately said no, who knows what would have happened? We probably would have continued our relationship, but maybe Corey would have cheated. When I feel connected to a person, I don’t feel jealous of what I know about; it’s when I stop feeling connected that I feel jealous. Or maybe I would have cheated. When I get stressed, I want sex because it calms me down. Either of us cheating would have been a much bigger mistake and much harder to deal with than trying to work out an open relationship.”

Lexi answered, “With some things I definitely do, but other things are harder. For example, we live 45 minutes apart, and we always have trouble figuring out who is going to drive to who, especially on weekdays. James has to get up earlier than me, so he likes me to come to him. But I work later than he does—I get off at five, and he gets off at two—so I think he should drive to me. He says I’m being selfish, but if the tables were turned, I’m sure he’d want me to come to him.” However, when Lexi told him this he said, “Actually, I’d want to balance things out. Neither of us loves the long drive, so it’s only fair we share it. So yes, I’d want you to come to me sometimes, but I’d also be willing to come to you.”

“Oh,” Lexi thinks to herself, “maybe I haven’t really been thinking of him in this situation. He’s right. It is only fair if I go to him sometimes. If he doesn’t want to drive out because it’s a long drive, maybe I shouldn’t get mad.”

Lexi realized she wasn’t treating James in a way that showed him his needs were important. This is critical information for Lexi. If she really

likes James, she has to consider his needs in her choices. This is where the skill of mutuality comes in. Maybe they can compromise, trading off on who drives so that it equals out over the week or the month.

Thoughts:

Trust: “Do I trust in his availability, consistency, and commitment, and do I trust him not to treat me in whatever way would be considered a betrayal in our relationship?”

KEY
NEED?

Relationship scholars all agree that trust in your partner is at the core of security in a relationship. As you saw in Chapter 1, when Emily stops feeling secure, she starts playing the “He loves me, he loves me not” game. Whenever there’s a lapse in Will’s communication, Emily goes to the worst-case scenario: “He doesn’t love me as much as I love him. I can’t trust his feelings for me.” Emily doesn’t trust Will to follow through on her plan for them to communicate daily, but Will also has been clear he doesn’t actually agree with her plan and he can’t follow through on it because of how busy and exhausted he is.

Therefore, the first step for Emily and Will, if they want to work this out, is to clarify their commitment to the relationship and define what a betrayal would be in a way they can both agree and act on. Will needs to be clear about what he is capable of and follow through with it so Emily can develop trust. Emily needs to work on not going to the worst-case scenario as her default. She needs to develop realistic self-talk about the situation, such as “I may not like Will’s behavior, but it’s not an indicator that he doesn’t love me or can’t be trusted.” Emily also needs to assess with herself whether daily communication is an unrealistic expectation and whether what Will can offer is enough to meet her *trust* need. If not, she needs to consider whether this is the right relationship for her.

Mia also is struggling with trust issues with Corey as they navigate their free-pass situation. The free-pass plan sounded like an adventure to Mia—a way for her and Corey to work through what they wanted from sex and love, with respect and mutuality, and a way to build trust in their relationship. They’ve had to work on figuring out and revising their limits with the plan. The initial plan was that free passes would be hookups with no emotional connection. However, last night Corey Skyped Mia and asked

for a big compromise. He wants to be able to have drinks, talk, get to know a woman, feel mutual attraction and desire, find her interesting, and feel a small emotional connection. Mia wasn't sure she was comfortable with this, but she agreed, and he told her to check out his OkCupid profile so she would feel included in what he was doing, just like she asked.

When Mia read the profile, she felt a little better. She was pleased to see he was clear that he is looking for a casual relationship. He explained that he has a girlfriend with whom he is in a long-distance open relationship and that the plan is to move to his girlfriend's city once she graduates. Still, she's just not sure about his need for a "small" emotional connection—what's small?

Mia's not sure Corey's request is a betrayal of trust—it sounds as if he wants an FWB relationship, but her concern about him doing that with the friend who originally suggested it to him was how they ended up deciding on hookups with no emotional connection. Plus, an FWB relationship is the way she and Corey started out. Might his having an FWB relationship with someone else lead to more? Can she trust his commitment to her? Corey and Mia have always been open and honest with one another; they have always met each other's need for *authenticity*. They're going to really need to keep doing that now. And Mia is going to have to consider carefully whether she can take the risk to trust Corey.

Mia and Emily are both dealing with serious issues pertaining to trust. They are asking good questions about whether they can trust, and this is a reflection of their awareness of how important it is to accurately assess whether their *trust* need is being met. They are also both trying, as hard as they can, to figure out how to best weigh what their partners say and what they do. Mia and Emily are trying to make sense of the real evidence they have for trust. It's extremely important to do this. One mistake people can make is just to use their feelings of love or lust as a basis for trust. Olivia is a good example of this mistaken trust. She trusted Zach was committed to her without their having any kind of conversation about the nature of their relationship and despite the evidence that he's a self-described player. Anna also is a good example. Despite the fact that Eric treated her poorly in the first go-around of their relationship (remember how he was so into her and then just stopped calling her and started seeing someone else?), Anna trusted he was committed to her this time—enough to marry him—after just hooking up. She completely ignored potentially important evidence that speaks to whether her *trust* need could be met. Indeed, Eric is now starting to show some confusing behavior. Remember how he said his priority was to provide for his family? Now he wants her to go back to work because he wants a new truck, despite the fact that his "old" one is only two years old. Anna is confused by this, and rightly so. They made a plan

together, and Eric is not following through on the commitment he made. This should be a big signal to Anna that her *trust* need is not being met.

Thoughts:

Accept: “Can I let him be who he is and not try to change him or make him into something he’s not, doesn’t want to be, or can’t be?”

KEY
NEED?

Relationship scholars also agree that acceptance of one’s partner is a key factor in making a relationship work. Emily swings back and forth between accepting and not accepting how focused Will is on schoolwork. It’s contributed to his academic success. However, it also has resulted in his losing sight of other things when he’s focusing on work—like staying in contact with Emily the way she wants him to. It’s the reason he doesn’t take five minutes to call her or to check in with a quick text to say “Good night and I love you” after he’s finished studying or even in between periods of studying. The following is a typical conversation:

Emily: I don’t understand why you do not take five minutes to call me to say good night after you’ve finished studying.

Will: I just don’t think like that.

Emily: But you know I want you to, so you should be making the effort. Don’t you care about what I need?

Will: Yes. It’s just hard for me. I’m focused on my studies right now.

Emily (interrupting): I know. It’s because you’re so focused—you give 110% to anything you do and you forget about everything else when you’re doing it. Then you probably feel so spent afterward that you just want to zone out, watch TV, listen to music, recharge. Let’s forget about it. Can we talk about something else?

Will: Why? You can’t forget about it! You are always wanting to fix me or change me.

Emily: I don’t think you’re broken! I think you’re amazing, and I’m trying to accept you. It’s just that the thing that makes you successful is also something that hurts me, and I don’t know how to handle that.

Emily wants to accept Will for who he is, but she’s having a hard time with it. And Will has tried to make some changes, but he can’t sustain

them. So what to do? If Will really cannot or does not want to change, despite knowing his behavior has a negative impact on Emily, Emily has a decision to make. Can she accept him for who he is, or is his behavior a deal-breaker? If it's not a deal-breaker, then Emily may want to work on better regulating her emotions so she can handle Will's behavior in a healthier manner. For example, if her self-talk continues to be something like "He's doing it again! He doesn't care about me. I'm not important to him!" then Emily will never be able to accept Will, and she and their relationship will suffer. They'll have the same argument over and over for the rest of their lives. However, if Emily uses what she knows about Will and his perspective on things, her new self-talk could be something like "He's acting pretty distant again, but it has nothing to do with me. It's just that exams are coming up and he's focused on his goals for the future. It's not a sign that he doesn't care about me or that I'm not important. He loves me and shows me that in many other ways." If Emily can do this, not only will she feel better—her hurt and angry emotions will be calmed—but Will will feel better and their relationship will be strengthened because of it.

Julianne answers the *accept* needs question with a yes and no. Gregory had told her right from the beginning he was devoted to his career and that other women he had dated hated how focused he was on it, but Julianne is totally accepting of that. She understands the need to work late, the last-minute canceled plans when a work crisis comes up, and the recurring out-of-town trips. It's all part of the business, and she gets that in a way that Gregory's other girlfriends have not. It is not an issue in their relationship at all. However, she is starting to realize that she cannot accept the way he criticizes her for everything. As she's worked on the *familiarity* need, Julianne's recently recognized that one of Gregory's worst traits is being critical, and he uses it to get his needs met:

Gregory: You don't know how to make the bed right!

Julianne: Okay, show me how you make the bed.

(Gregory shows her how he folds the corners tight so his feet stay inside the covers at night.)

Julianne: How come when I do something different from you it's wrong?

Gregory: It's wrong for me.

Julianne: It's as if you expect me to do things the way you do without knowing how. I generally do what's expected of me, but when you're critical I feel as if I want to do the opposite of what you want.

Gregory: Don't you want to tuck in the sheets for me so I can sleep right?

Julianne: Of course I do. Try asking, "Can I show you how I tuck in the sheets? I wake up if they come untucked in the night" rather than telling me that I'm doing something wrong.

After this conversation, Julianne can tell he's trying. For example, instead of saying, "You're in the wrong lane," Gregory asked, "Can you drive in the slow lane unless you're passing?" She's trying too. When he is critical, instead of thinking, "He makes me feel as if nothing I do is good enough," which makes her angry, she's regulating her emotions by using new self-talk, saying, "He just doesn't know how to turn that criticism into a request." Still, it's hard for both of them, and they fall into the same old pattern:

Gregory: You don't know how to handle people.

Julianne: What?! Okay, tell me *how to handle people!*

Gregory: What I meant was you handled that conversation with your client all wrong.

Julianne: I have an MBA, I run a team, I get high marks in my performance reviews, and you think you can teach me how to handle people?

Gregory: I'm looking out for your best interests!

(And then it gets ugly; it goes around in circles. This is so not her. She doesn't want such a conflict-ridden relationship.)

In the end, Julianne knows that when she defends herself by saying things like "I have an MBA. I run a team," she's having the same old experience—"I feel less than I am. I feel not good enough, and I'm angry about it." Can Julianne let Gregory be who he is without feeling less than she is? Can she accept him without it hurting her? That's the key question to ask. If a woman cannot accept her partner without hurting herself, then she cannot get the *accept* need met.

Thoughts:

Forgive: "Do I forgive him for mistakes he has acknowledged and move on?"

KEY
NEED?

Research shows being able to forgive one's partner contributes to greater relationship satisfaction and sincere amends lead to greater forgiveness. Mia and Corey's situation is a good example of this.

Mia's concern about what might result from Corey wanting a "small" emotional connection is proving valid. On OkCupid, Corey met Other-

Woman, and they now have an FWB relationship. They get together at least weekly, and Mia has the sense that their interactions reflect much more than a small connection, at least more than what Mia thought a small connection would be. For example, one night Corey suggested to Mia they include OtherWoman on their Skype call and engage in some “Skype sex.” Mia was intrigued. She thought to herself, “I don’t know my limits on this until I test them out,” so she agreed. When OtherWoman kissed Corey and they started to make out, Mia felt really, really aroused. She really liked it. However, in watching Corey and OtherWoman interact, Mia was aware of their emotional connection and wasn’t comfortable with it. Mia then learned that Corey and OtherWoman were frequently texting and sexting. It happened when Corey was next visiting Mia. She asked if she could look at his OtherWoman texts. They had a minor spat, but he finally agreed. She saw all the texts from OtherWoman, which pushed her concerns over the edge, and she confronted Corey, saying “Is this what you meant by a ‘small’ emotional connection? It really seems to me that you two are much more emotionally involved than you let on and this is not what I thought I was agreeing to.”

Corey heard the pain in Mia’s voice. He apologized that very moment, saying he was sorry he had hurt her, and telling her the texts were reflective of the newness of the physical connection with OtherWoman and nothing more. He told Mia that OtherWoman was in a poly relationship with two other people to whom she was committed, and he reassured Mia that he was completely committed to her. He also told her he would decrease the frequency of the sexting and the texting because he could see it hurt her. He said he didn’t want to keep doing something that would increase her fears of his developing a more serious relationship with OtherWoman. Initially Mia was stunned and hurt. Yet Corey immediately and genuinely acknowledged he had made a mistake. He showed that he understood and cared about her feelings. Given all of this, how could she not forgive him? So, although it was hard at first, she did forgive him, and it gave them the opportunity to refine their limits on free passes and to understand each other’s needs better.

Thoughts:

I/ME

What Does a Genuine Apology Look Like?

Check out this video to find out!

In “Getting Called Out: How to Apologize” (<http://everydayfeminism.com/2013/11/how-to-apologize>), Franchesca “Chescaleigh” Ramsey says, “A real genuine apology is made up of two parts: the first part is you take responsibility for what you’ve done, and then the second part is you make a commitment to change the behavior.”

The problem she’s dealing with (what to do when you say or do something that upholds the oppression of a marginalized group) isn’t relevant to this book, but the process of how to apologize definitely is.

Help: “Am I willing to respond to his requests for help with things he has to do?”

KEY
NEED?

Mia’s answer: “Yes. Corey’s not very organized with his personal papers and finances, and I tend to be really organized with mine. He asked me to help him make a budget so he can follow through with his plans to move here once he gains some experience and he can find a job in my city. I did.” Mia’s willingness to respond when Corey asks for help shows she likes and respects him.

Lexi is struggling with whether she’s willing to help James as much as he wants. Lexi likes helping people, and with James she’s always been willing, but lately she finds herself feeling ambivalent about being helpful. For example, the other day they were going to her parents’ house for dinner and he asked her to pick up flowers because he was running late, but she didn’t want to do it. In these types of situations, it’s important to use the insight skill to examine your motives. Why wouldn’t Lexi want to get the flowers when it seems easier for her to do it? If Lexi just wants James to do it so she doesn’t have to, she’s not treating him as though she likes and respects him. But of course there may be other reasons she doesn’t want to help him. It turns out Lexi is concerned that James isn’t meeting his own *help* need. She thinks he’s not self-reliant enough, not taking responsibility for what he needs to get done in all sorts of ways in his life. So she now feels resistant to anything he asks for help with. If Lexi wants to treat James as if she likes and respects him, she might want to work on separating appropriate requests for help from less appropriate ones. She can then respond positively to the former—picking up the flowers so they’re not late to her

parents' dinner—and talk with him about the importance of meeting his own *help* need when his requests seem inappropriate.

Thoughts:

Safe: “Do I make choices to help keep him emotionally, physically, and practically safe?”

KEY
NEED?

Mia and Corey are working hard to navigate the challenges of their long-distance relationship and free-pass agreement. Corey had told Mia he didn't want to know any of the details about how she was using her free passes because it would make him jealous and be emotionally painful for him. Mia, however, found it extremely difficult not to share information with him. She felt inauthentic, which led her to feel emotionally disconnected. In an attempt to feel more connected to Corey, she told him all about her OtherGuy (like Corey, she started hooking up regularly with one person). What she didn't realize was that in doing so she was putting Corey in an emotionally dangerous situation, one where he didn't feel safe because he was left to deal with serious jealousy. As you will see in the coming chapters, Mia's “He knows and likes me” need to be *authentic* with Corey and her “I know and like him” need to keep Corey *safe* have come into conflict. This can happen; needs often conflict. In Chapter 6 we're going to tell you a lot more about how Mia and Corey handle conflicting needs; for now, it's important to see that Mia's choice did not keep Corey safe.

Lauren says she wants to keep Dan safe, but her behavior is not consistent with her words. When Dan gets upset with Lauren or treats her in a way that she's unhappy with, she threatens him with ending the relationship, and sometimes she even does it. However, the break is always temporary; she'll go right back to him to make up. Take the following example:

Lauren is out with Julianne and Anna for dinner. They're catching up, laughing, and drinking. Her phone rings:

Dan: Where are you?

Lauren: I told you, I'm out to dinner with the girls.

Dan: I can tell you're drunk. I'll send Michael [his driver].

Lauren: I don't want that. I'm fine. We're having fun.

(Julianne and Anna are both yelling in unison while laughing, “We’re planning the wedding—leave her alone!”)

Dan: I’m sending Michael!

Lauren: I gotta go, talk to you tomorrow.

Dan: What do you mean? You live with me. I want you home safely.

Lauren: I don’t even want to come home! I’ll spend the night at Julianne’s.

Dan: Lauren, what are you talking about?

Lauren: You’re treating me like a child. I’m not coming home. Maybe I never will.

Dan: What?!

Lauren hangs up and turns off her phone. Later that night she looks out the window from Julianne’s and sees Dan’s car parked outside and him staring at the window making sure she’s inside. The next day she goes home, takes him a present, and tells him how much she loves him.

Lauren is playing the breakup/makeup game with Dan, and she does so repeatedly. Imagine how this might feel for Dan. He’s likely to start to fear that at any minute Lauren might leave him. He may become anxious about this, angry at her, and fearful of making any “wrong moves.” When this happens repeatedly, it erodes the partner’s—in this case Dan’s—sense of safety in the relationship, leading to insecurity and an emotional rollercoaster. A sense of security is one of the keys to a healthy relationship, and it cannot exist when a partner does not feel safe.

Thoughts:

I/ME

Do You Think Lauren’s Behavior Could Make Dan Rethink His Behavior?

How could it? Dan thinks Lauren is being unreasonable. He has no idea she thinks he’s being controlling. She’s not told him, so no mutual problem solving is going on. Neither person is walking away with a deeper understanding of what the other person wants. That’s why her behavior won’t lead to change in his.

How Does Meeting the “I Know and Like Him” Needs Give You Personal Power?

Simply put, when you're confident you really know and like your guy and you treat him in a way that shows that, you're another step closer to being able to have a relationship that meets your needs and another step closer to having that relationship be a healthy one.

In this chapter, we drew your attention to the question “Who do I want to be with and why?” By reading this book you are now well on your way to having the tools to answer that question. First, in Chapter 3, you began to learn about yourself—about what your best and worst traits are, about your needs, and about how to meet them for yourself. In this chapter, you began to learn about what to look for in a partner so that you can set your standards to guide your expectations. You learned about how knowing who he is can help you understand his behavior, about the kinds of needs you may have that you want him to meet, and about how your treatment of your partner reflects whether he is the kind of person you really want to be with. You can now start to assess “identity fit,” which reflects a personalized connection with a partner: Does who he is fit with who you are? Does what he has to offer meet your needs? And given who you are, do you want him as a partner? If you haven't done so already, this might be a good time to start to answer these questions. We encourage you to start completing your Key Needs List, and if you're in a relationship, the needs that are and are not getting met. Doing so will prepare you for the next step in assessing identity fit and taking that next step to personal power.

KEY NEEDS LIST

Needs	I know and like him. (I am confident that this is the guy I want, and I treat him in a way that shows that I like and respect him.)	Key need?	Being met?
What I need:			
Familiar	Do I know his best and worst traits? Do I understand how they make him who he is, influence how he acts, and affect the way he gets his needs met?		
Authentic	Is he fully open to showing all aspects of himself and to facing whatever fears he has about doing so?		
Attracted	Do I like his physical appearance just as it is without wanting it to change?		
Desire	Do I want to be sexual with him, and do I feel comfortable telling him about my sexual interests and needs?		
Interesting	Am I interested in his life (whatever it happens to be), and do I want to be a part of it?		
Support	Is he my go-to person in good times and bad times?		
How I treat him:			
Care	Am I attuned to his feelings, and do I respond in a helpful rather than hurtful way?		
Listen	Do I try to hear what he is expressing and what he means in order to understand who he is?		
Important	Do I consider and value his needs in my choices?		
Trust	Do I trust in his availability, consistency, and commitment, and do I trust him not to treat me in whatever way would be considered a betrayal in our relationship?		
Accept	Can I let him be who he is and not try to change him or make him into something he's not, doesn't want to be, or can't be?		
Forgive	Do I forgive him for mistakes he has acknowledged and move on?		
Help	Am I willing to respond to his requests for help with things he has to do?		
Safe	Do I make choices to help keep him emotionally, physically, and practically safe?		

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