

# No One Told You The Rules Changed

A guided workbook for updating old dating scripts, reading evidence earlier, and keeping your warmth without living in ambiguity.

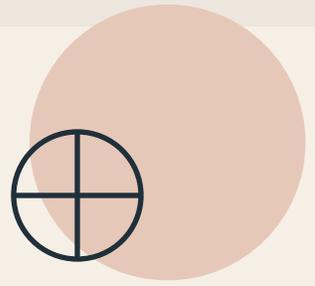
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Inspired by facilitated transformation workbooks, rebuilt for this book's ideas and for real client use.



## **NO ONE TOLD YOU THE RULES CHANGED**

Workbook edition • different questions • different format • built from the book's actual logic



This workbook works best when it is used with specific examples, real dates, and honest pattern recognition.

**Name**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Coach / Facilitator**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Date started**  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Use this workbook to update the rules you are still living by, track what is actually true, and choose what you will no longer fund with your time.*

**What I most want this workbook to help me stop confusing**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# How to work through it

## 1. Read the concept page slowly

Each chapter starts by updating an outdated rule, naming the new reality, and giving you a better question to ask.

## 2. Use the workbook page like a case file

Do not answer in theory. Use a real person, a real connection, or a real pattern. Specificity is what makes the insight useful.

## 3. Track behavior, not only atmosphere

This workbook keeps pulling you back to evidence: follow-through, integration, repair, narrowing, and proportion.

## 4. Let the questions change your terms

The goal is not to sound wiser. The goal is to stop financing ambiguity with warmth, time, labor, and hope.

### A good sign that the workbook is working

*You stop asking, “How do I play this right?” and start asking, “What is this dynamic asking me to tolerate—and is that acceptable to me?”*

# Workbook map

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# Where the old rules are still running me

Rate each one from 1 (rarely true) to 5 (very true). This is not about blame. It is about locating the old operating system.

**STATEMENT**

**1 2 3 4 5**

I keep reading frequency or intensity as proof of trajectory.

I downgrade my needs so I do not seem demanding.

I spend energy explaining why clarity should matter.

I give relationship effort before there is relationship structure.

I wait too long for reality to reveal itself without any pressure from me.

I confuse being warm with giving full access.

**Where do I most want relief, precision, or a new standard?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# ORIENTATION

*The old rules did not fail because you lacked value. They failed because the environment stopped enforcing them.*



This section helps you name what changed before asking yourself to change.

# When Doing It Right Stops Working

*You can act with maturity and still get pulled into fog when the environment rewards drift.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter names the exhaustion of doing many things right—pacing yourself, staying self-respecting, communicating clearly—and still ending up in situations that feel real without becoming real.

### OLD RULE

**If I behave well enough, the situation will eventually honor that.**

### NEW REALITY

**Good behavior does not force coherence in an environment built for convenience.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**Where did I act with integrity and still get no real structure back?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

confusion without self-blame

ecology over self-critique

clarity about the system

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Use the next page like a notebook, not a performance. The goal is clearer reading, not better acting.

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# Case File: What I Did Right — and What Still Broke

Use one recent situation to separate your behavior from the system you were dating inside.

**The situation I keep replaying**

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**Ways I tried to be mature, fair, or self-respecting**

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**What still stayed vague, unstable, or undefined**

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**What this tells me about the environment—not my worth**

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**DECISION**

**One sentence I am taking from this chapter:**

---

# The World Your Instincts Were Built For

*Sometimes what feels too serious is simply a normal human response to closeness without direction.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter validates that many of your instincts were calibrated for a world where intimacy usually implied trajectory, and where social gravity made long-term ambiguity harder to sustain.

### OLD RULE

**If ambiguity bothers me, I am probably being old-fashioned, insecure, or too much.**

### NEW REALITY

**Your discomfort may be an intelligent response to an ecological mismatch.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**What need am I treating like a flaw because the culture makes it sound inconvenient?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

instinct validation

needs literacy

safety as information

---

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# Instinct Audit: What Feels Off — and Why

Name the places where your body, mind, and standards protest even when you keep trying to be chill.

**WHAT I KEEP BEING TOLD TO NORMALIZE**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT I ACTUALLY NEED IN ORDER TO FEEL SAFE AND OPEN**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**A moment where I overrode my instincts to stay easygoing**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**The cost of doing that to myself**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What I need to stop apologizing for**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**DECISION**

**The need I will stop shrinking to look low-maintenance:**

\_\_\_\_\_

# The Visibility World

*Older scripts worked partly because other people, real life, and social overlap used to do some of the enforcing for you.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter explains why community visibility, friction, and accountability once made ambiguity expensive—and why private intensity can now continue much longer without ever becoming coherent.

### OLD RULE

**Time alone will eventually force clarity.**

### NEW REALITY

**Private dynamics can drift indefinitely when nothing external pushes them into the light.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**How visible is this connection in real life—and what stays hidden on purpose?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

visibility matters

private vs integrated

accountability cues

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# Visibility Audit

Map how much of the connection exists only in private space versus normal, integrated life.

## CHECK WHAT IS TRUE RIGHT NOW

- We mostly interact by phone or in private settings
- Very few people in my life have seen us together
- He avoids daytime plans or normal-life contexts
- There is no natural overlap between our worlds
- It would be easy for this situation to disappear quietly

**What parts of this connection live only in private?**

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**What would healthy visibility look like over the next month?**

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**What has stayed hidden for longer than it should?**

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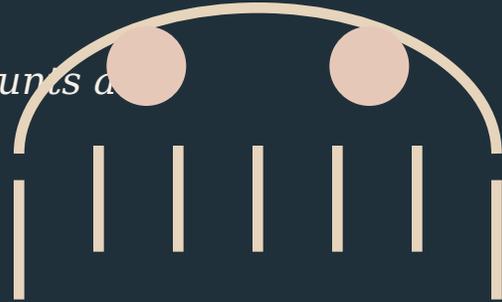
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## DECISION

**The signal of real-life integration I will watch for next:**

# THE NEW SOCIAL ECONOMY

*Today, closeness can arrive before responsibility. That changes what counts as evidence.*



This section helps you name what changed before asking yourself to change.

# The Attention Economy

*In a cheap-intimacy environment, closeness can be delivered quickly without carrying responsibility with it.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter shows how texting, access, emotional intensity, and constant contact can create the feeling of importance while staying structurally inexpensive for the other person.

### OLD RULE

**If it feels close and continuous, it must be building toward something.**

### NEW REALITY

**High contact can be soothing, habitual, or convenient without being costly enough to mean direction.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**Which parts of this connection are cheap to give—and which parts would require real responsibility?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

cheap intimacy

cost awareness

proof over feelings

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Use the next page like a notebook, not a performance. The goal is clearer reading, not better acting.

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# Signal Sorter: Cheap Signals vs. Costly Signals

Mark what has shown up, then notice what your mind may have been overvaluing.

## CHEAP SIGNALS I HAVE OVERWEIGHTED

- constant texting
- pet names and daily rituals
- late-night intensity
- future-sounding talk
- private boyfriend energy
- sexual chemistry

## COSTLY SIGNALS I ACTUALLY NEED

- specific plans
- reliable follow-through
- behavioral consistency
- public integration
- repair after friction
- clear narrowing decisions

What feels different when I compare cheap signals to costly ones?

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## DECISION

The cheap signal I will stop treating as proof:

---

# Courtship as Public Signal

*Trajectory used to be easier to read because movement toward you had a visible, social shape.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter reframes courtship not as a fantasy ritual, but as a public signal that once made intention legible and moved a connection from private feeling toward shared reality.

### OLD RULE

**If he enjoys closeness with me, structure will naturally follow.**

### NEW REALITY

**Without visible movement into real life, enjoyment can remain private and optional.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**What public or practical movement would show this connection is becoming more real?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

trajectory reading

public movement

progress markers

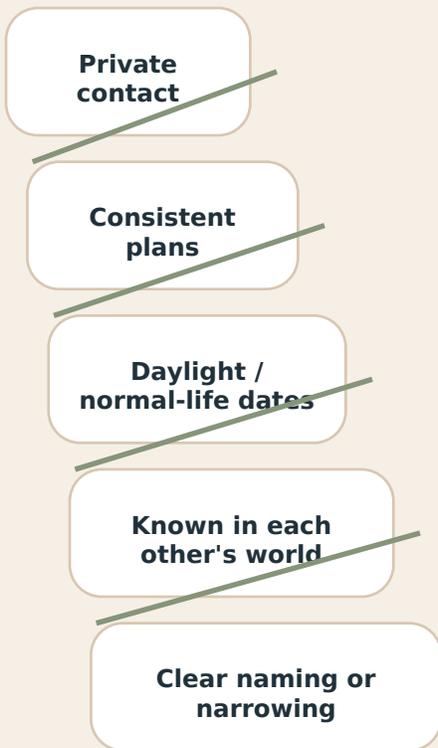
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# Trajectory Ladder

Circle where the situation actually lives right now. Then name the next rung that would make the connection harder to erase quietly.



**The rung we are actually on**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**The next rung that matters**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What real movement would look like**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**DECISION**

**The next sign of trajectory I need to see before I deepen:** \_\_\_\_\_

# The Obligation Gap

*You can receive intimacy, vulnerability, and access from someone who still resists the responsibility that should come with them.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter names the split between intimacy and obligation—the central contradiction that makes modern ambiguity so painful for conscientious people.

### OLD RULE

**If we share enough closeness, responsibility will emerge on its own.**

### NEW REALITY

**Intimacy can now be consumed without any automatic movement toward responsibility.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**Where am I receiving relationship energy without relationship weight?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

intimacy vs responsibility

relationship weight

structural mismatch

---

Use the next page like a notebook, not a performance. The goal is clearer reading, not better acting.

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# Obligation Gap Diagnostic

Check the benefits that exist, then ask whether responsibility matches them.

## RELATIONSHIP BENEFIT

BENEFIT PRESENTS **SOMEWHAT** **COMPLETELY** YES

Daily access / frequent contact




Emotional support and vulnerability




Sex or physical intimacy




Routine / companionship




Future-facing language




Practical reliance on each other




**Where is closeness clearly outrunning responsibility?**

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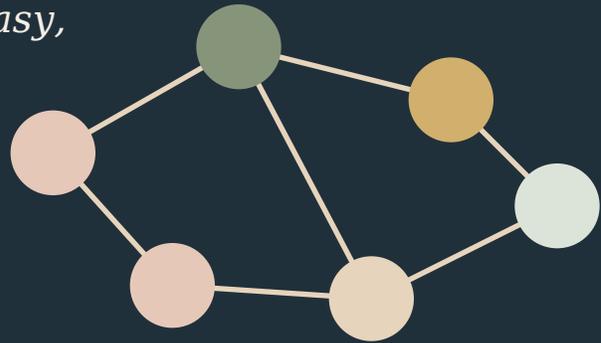
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## DECISION

**The benefit I will no longer treat as meaningful unless responsibility rises with it:**

# WHY DRIFT PERSISTS

*When a system makes ambiguity easy, indecision starts to masquerade as modernity.*



This section helps you name what changed before asking yourself to change.

# Fragmented Graphs

*People can now live in split social worlds, which makes it easier to be different people in different rooms.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter explains how non-overlapping friend groups, apps, geography, and compartmentalized lives reduce accountability and make half-relationships cheaper to sustain.

### OLD RULE

**If something meaningful is happening, reality will eventually connect the dots.**

### NEW REALITY

**Modern life lets people keep connections compartmentalized for far longer than your instincts expect.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**How much of this situation depends on our worlds staying disconnected?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

social overlap

compartment signals

reputation effects

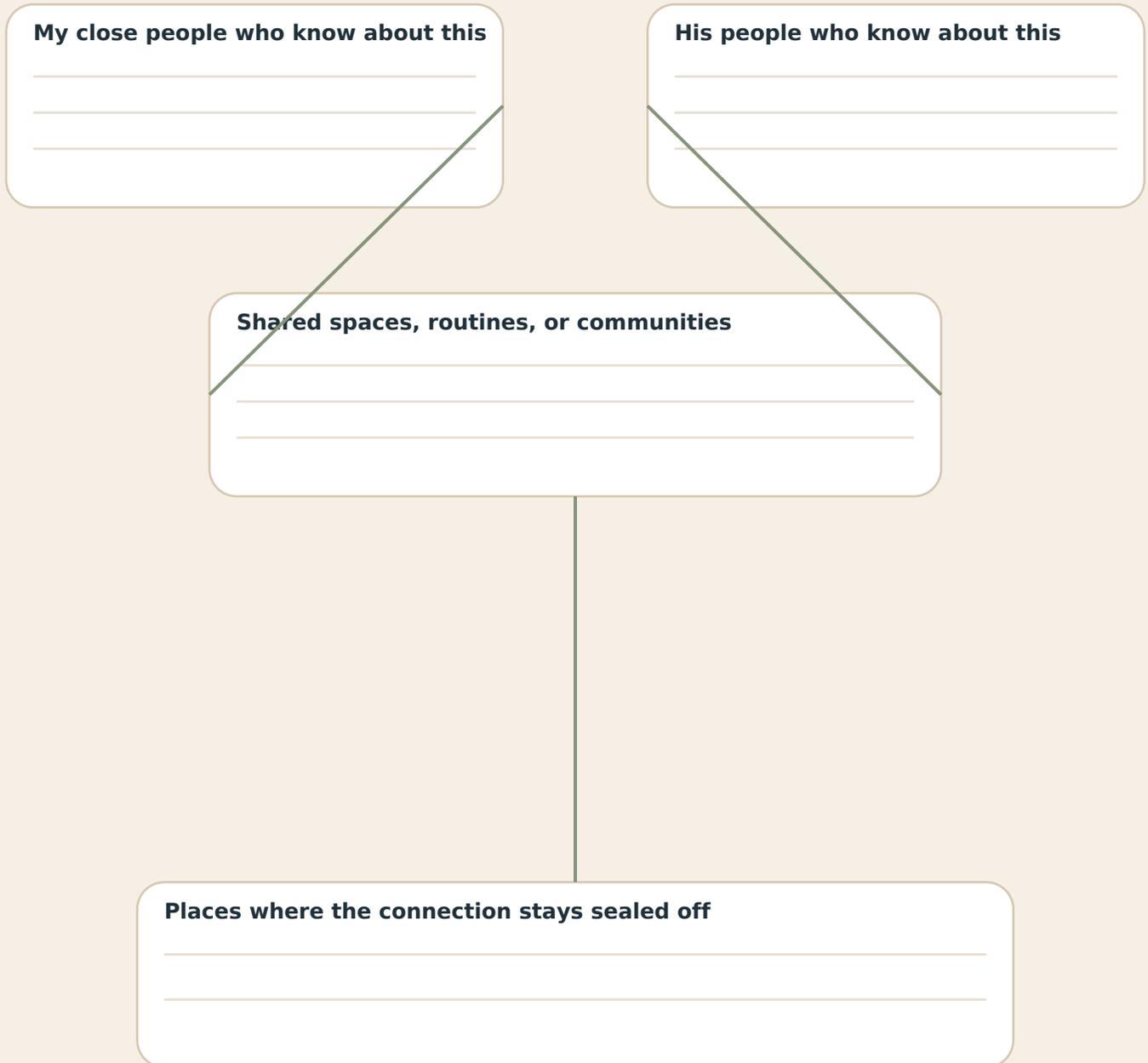
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# Graph Map

Sketch the connection between your world, his world, and the overlap that either exists or keeps getting postponed.



**DECISION**

**One kind of overlap that would make this dynamic more real:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Abundance Logic

*When replacement is easier than repair, even small friction can reveal whether someone wants a bond or just a pleasant option.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter explores how abundance changes posture: not necessarily into cruelty, but into low-stakes non-commitment and quick exits when effort becomes less convenient than novelty.

### OLD RULE

**If we have a good connection, small friction will naturally make us work things out.**

### NEW REALITY

**In a replacement-heavy environment, friction often reveals how disposable the bond is to the other person.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**What happens when things become mildly inconvenient, limited, or less pleasurable?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

repair vs replacement

friction reading

non-commitment posture

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Use the next page like a notebook, not a performance. The goal is clearer reading, not better acting.

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# Friction Decoder

Pick one moment of mild friction and study the response pattern.

## 1. The friction that showed up

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## 2. How he responded in the moment

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## 3. Did he move toward repair, delay, or replacement?

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## 4. What that response tells me about his posture

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---

## DECISION

The pattern I now recognize when discomfort enters the room: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Communication Culture Trap

*Healthy language becomes a trap when it keeps you regulating ambiguity instead of reading it.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter shows how therapy-flavored phrases can be used to keep women patient, self-monitoring, and endlessly reasonable inside situations that never actually narrow.

### OLD RULE

**If I communicate well enough, the situation will become clear.**

### NEW REALITY

**Communication can soothe, reset hope, and still leave the structure unchanged.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**Am I using language to understand reality—or to keep participating in it?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

language translation

self-monitoring traps

behavior over framing

---

Use the next page like a notebook, not a performance. The goal is clearer reading, not better acting.

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# Translation Sheet

Write down a phrase that sounded mature or reassuring, then translate what happened in reality after it was said.

**Phrase or frame that sounded healthy**

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**What it encouraged me to keep tolerating**

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---

**What behavior changed afterward**

---

---

**My new translation of that moment**

---

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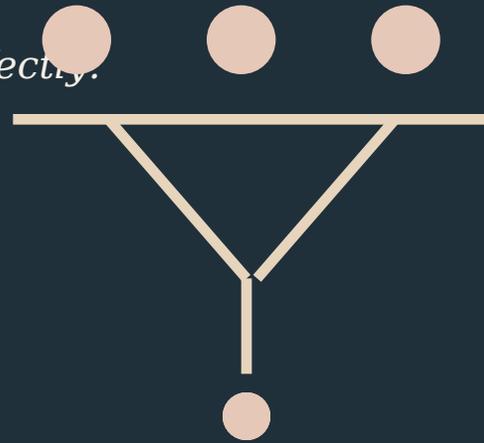
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**DECISION**

**The sentence I will stop using to explain away ambiguity:** \_\_\_\_\_

# A NEW READING METHOD

*Your job is no longer to perform perfectly.  
Your job is to read reality faster.*



This section helps you name what changed before asking yourself to change.

# Replace Ritual With Evidence

*The point is not to become colder. It is to stop grading cheap signals like they are expensive proof.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter gives you a new reading system: ignore the rituals that are easy to perform and track the evidence that requires effort, consistency, and narrowing.

### OLD RULE

**My behavior is the main lever; if I act correctly, I can secure the right outcome.**

### NEW REALITY

**The stronger question is not how perfectly you act, but what the other person's behavior reveals over time.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**What is measurably true here across weeks—not just what is emotionally intense right now?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

evidence system

signal quality

trajectory tracking

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Use the next page like a notebook, not a performance. The goal is clearer reading, not better acting.

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# Evidence Dashboard

Score the connection honestly. Low numbers are not a failure; they are clarity.

METRIC	1	2	3	4	5
Follow-through	<input type="radio"/>				
Real-world investment	<input type="radio"/>				
Integration into normal life	<input type="radio"/>				
Coherence under mild stress	<input type="radio"/>				
Ambiguity decreasing over time	<input type="radio"/>				

**What evidence is strongest? What is still missing?**

---



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**What would one month of reality-based reading look like for me?**

---



---

**DECISION**

**The metric I will trust more than chemistry this month:**

---

# Selection Over Persuasion

*You do not need to become harder. You need to stop turning other people's confusion into your unpaid project.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter shifts the task from converting ambiguous people into clear ones toward selecting for people who already move toward structure, responsibility, and narrowing.

### OLD RULE

**If I am patient, fair, and clear enough, he may grow into readiness.**

### NEW REALITY

**Willingness cannot be argued into existence; it reveals itself in posture and choices.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**Am I reading his orientation—or trying to improve it?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

filtering posture

selection skills

stopping unpaid labor

---

Use the next page like a notebook, not a performance. The goal is clearer reading, not better acting.

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# Filter, Don't Fix

Use the three filters below to evaluate posture, not potential.

FILTER	WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENS?	WHAT THAT REVEALS
<p><b>Response to coordination</b></p>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>Response to responsibility</b></p>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>Response to narrowing</b></p>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**Where have I been trying to improve posture instead of reading it?**

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**DECISION**

**The moment I will stop persuading and start selecting:**

---

# Don't Subsidize Ambiguity

*Warmth is emotional tone. Subsidy is structural. They are not the same thing.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter helps you identify the quiet ways loyalty, availability, soothing, and repeated clarity talks can keep a vague situation comfortable enough to continue indefinitely.

### OLD RULE

**Being patient, giving access, and offering reassurance prove that I am mature and secure.**

### NEW REALITY

**Unmatched benefits can accidentally fund drift by removing the discomfort that would force a decision.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**What relationship-grade benefits am I giving at casual prices?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

subsidy awareness

pricing access

warmth with terms

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Use the next page like a notebook, not a performance. The goal is clearer reading, not better acting.

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# Subsidy Ledger

List the benefits you are providing. Then decide whether the structure actually earns them.

BENEFIT I AM GIVING	MATCHED BY STRUCTURE?		KEEP / REDUCE	
Availability and easy access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotional labor / soothing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Loyalty in practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sexual or domestic intimacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Repeated clarity conversations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Making life space while he figures it out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**What changes when I stop confusing warmth with full access?**

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## DECISION

**The subsidy I am ready to reduce first:**

# The Four Stress Tests

*You do not need games. You need normal moments that reveal whether he moves toward coherence or continued optionality.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter turns discernment practical through four small, ethical stress tests: planning, boundaries, integration, and repair. The point is not to trap someone—it is to see posture sooner.

### OLD RULE

**I should wait for a giant red flag before I let myself conclude anything.**

### NEW REALITY

**Mild friction reveals direction early, often more honestly than intense chemistry ever will.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**What happens when the situation has to coordinate, adapt, integrate, or repair?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

ethical stress tests

early reveals

mild friction literacy

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Use the next page like a notebook, not a performance. The goal is clearer reading, not better acting.

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# Stress Test Planner

Choose one or two tests to run naturally in the next few weeks. Then use the notes line to record what happened.

## TEST

**Planning: does he make and keep real plans?**

How I could run this naturally

---

What happened / what it revealed

---

## TEST

**Boundary: does he adapt cleanly when I say no or not yet?**

How I could run this naturally

---

What happened / what it revealed

---

## TEST

**Integration: does he bring me into normal life over time?**

How I could run this naturally

---

What happened / what it revealed

---

## TEST

**Repair: does he correct behavior after small disappointments?**

How I could run this naturally

---

What happened / what it revealed

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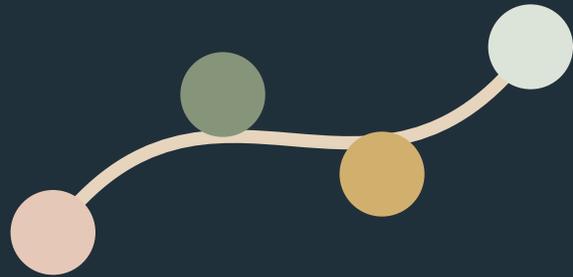
## DECISION

**The stress test that would give me the clearest information next:**

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# DISCERNMENT PRACTICE

*The goal is not hardness. It is warmth with terms, softness with structure.*



This section helps you name what changed before asking yourself to change.

# Disillusionment → Discernment

*You do not have to become cynical to become harder to keep in fog.*

## WHAT THIS CHAPTER HELPS YOU NOTICE

This chapter closes the loop by turning disappointment into a sharper operating system—one that protects your warmth by refusing to keep building inside ambiguity.

### OLD RULE

**To avoid being naive, I need to become colder or more guarded than I want to be.**

### NEW REALITY

**Discernment is not emotional shutdown; it is accurate pricing, cleaner reading, and faster reality contact.**

### BETTER QUESTION

**What does warm, clear, self-respecting participation look like for me now?**

## FOCUS OF THIS CHAPTER

warm discernment

updated terms

future softness

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Use the next page like a notebook, not a performance. The goal is clearer reading, not better acting.

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# My Discernment Code

Write the principles you want guiding you from here—not as slogans, but as lived terms.

**Three things I now know I cannot build inside**

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**Three things I will use as evidence of healthy trajectory**

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**How I want to stay warm without self-abandoning**

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**What I am no longer willing to explain away**

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**DECISION**

**The sentence that captures my new way of dating:**

# My updated rules

Use this page to replace broad advice with your own clean, reality-based terms.

**OLD RULE I WAS LIVING BY**

**UPDATED RULE**

**BEHAVIOR THAT PROVES IT**

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**Which updated rule feels most relieving? Which one will challenge me the most?**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# 30-day discernment practice

Keep the month simple. Each week gets one focus, one thing to stop financing, and one concrete action.

## Week 1 • Read reality faster

MY FOCUS

WHAT I AM STOPPING

ONE ACTION THAT PROVES IT

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Week 2 • Price access correctly

MY FOCUS

WHAT I AM STOPPING

ONE ACTION THAT PROVES IT

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Week 3 • Watch response to friction

MY FOCUS

WHAT I AM STOPPING

ONE ACTION THAT PROVES IT

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Week 4 • Practice warmth with terms

MY FOCUS

WHAT I AM STOPPING

ONE ACTION THAT PROVES IT

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\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Coach / client debrief

**The biggest thing I see differently now**

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**The pattern that costs me the most time or softness**

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**The evidence I will trust more from here**

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**The term, boundary, or standard I am ready to keep**

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**What support would help me practice this cleanly?**

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**Clarity is not the opposite of romance. It is what keeps romance from becoming a long foggy debt.**

*Use the book to understand the environment.  
Use the workbook to change your terms inside it.*

