



*"Physical intimacy isn't and can never be an effective substitute for emotional intimacy."*

~ John Green

*"In the end, the feminine search for love and the masculine search for freedom reach the same destination: the unbounded and infinite ground of being who you are, which is both absolute love and freedom." ~ David Deida*

# CLEANSING ATTACHMENT PATTERNS

## WILL I EVER LOVE AGAIN?

You may feel disappointed by relationships overall... or have dealt with many dating let-downs. Or you may be going through a divorce or painful break-up. Those in relationship endings universally express fears that they will never find another. It is this fear above all that makes breakups so anguishing. **Almost anything is bearable if we know it is temporary.** This worksheet allows you to identify possible attraction issues getting in your way of the love you desire, while providing a map for navigating the dating world when you ready.

Not everyone's heartbreak is part of destructive patterns, or maybe this is your first heartbreak, yet it is imperative to find out if there is anything you CAN CHANGE in order to increase your chances of finding the right partner and enjoy a successful loving relationship (while decreasing the risk of heartbreak again and reducing the possibility of never finding love again). Transform this let-down into a mission to transform your relating patterns.

**This worksheet, along with "Building Real Connection" plus additional self-reflection work will provide you with opportunity to explore the following. Solve the mystery and it destroys its power of you... so you may establish healthier, more connected relationships.**



**PATTERNS:** You may be caught up in patterns in which you keep getting let down over and over. You may also be clinging to a past love or even suffer from fear of trying again due to repeated failures.



**IDEALIZE:** We tend to idealize those who have rejected us or disappointed us in love, thinking we will never find anyone as wonderful as this person. Identify why your mind tends to put your ex on pedestal so you may heal and move on.



**INTERNALIZE:** We may internalize rejection as if we are unworthy of love, or we may be looping in memories, regrets, pains, if-only's, and sadness. This can cause feelings of isolation and even symptoms of depression.

**FEARS:** Although you may not feel ready to face your fears and patterns of behavior and CHANGE... now may prove to be the best time to realize your patterns to prevent them from sabotaging your love life in the future. Opportunity for a clean, fresh start!

## OPENING WINDOWS OF LOVE OPPORTUNITY

Even if you are going through a relationship ending, realize that it is perfectly normal to ONLY be thinking and yearning for your ex right now. However, it is well worth your time to examine your attraction patterns.

### A few examples of behaviors and patterns that stifle loving attraction are as follows:

- You may have had the propensity of overlooking people that are amazing and capable of a loving relationship... and be subconsciously choosing those that are emotionally unavailable, long-distance, or unattainable.
- You may have experienced love-bombing... a stir of intense love, mixed with confusion and heartbreak, causing "love withdrawal," and longing for it again and again. Realize that love-bombing is not real love.
- You may not be entirely ready due to having subconscious fears surrounding love and marriage, so you pursue unavailable partners to keep the intensity or the fantasy of love alive.
- You may also equate insecurity, push-pull dynamic, pursuit, or passion with love. You may be on a search for that INSTANT ATTRACTION AND PERFECT CHEMISTRY which can resemble an addiction in many ways.
- You may have built fears surrounding love on either side of the spectrum: **Fear of Abandonment or Fear of Engulfment**. Take this opportunity to balance your beliefs and expectations surrounding love.
- You may be perceived as "cold" or too unaffectionate, so as to, stifle the natural attraction process. Relationships are built on EMOTIONAL CONNECTION. If you tend to stuff your emotions down, or fear emotional connection you are likely blocking real love. Embracing your feelings and communicating them clearly and authentically with words in a way that does not blame or criticize, is not only healthy... it creates ATTRACTION! Vulnerability takes courage. When authentic communication lines open, this leads to a closer, more connected, trusting relationship.

## FEAR OF ABANDONMENT VS. FEAR OF ENGULFMENT

It only takes one painful breakup... or relentless disappointing, failed dating, to develop what attachment-based researchers refer to as "fear of abandonment" or "fear of engulfment." Because breakups are so painful, the fear of this pain happening again can essentially turn into a phobia. A phobia of love that can sabotage opportunities of real love and healthy connection. It is imperative to identify fears in order to overcome them.

Awareness is key. Plus you can rebuild a more "secure attachment style," through mindfulness, practices, inner connecting and more. Leaning into your own fears and working through them takes time and practice... yet it is possible and certainly worth the work to cultivate relationships based on trust and connection.



**Fear of Engulfment** presents itself when another shows GENUINE interest in you, but this triggers the love phobia so you effectively shut down emotionally. You may be overly critical in order to devalue the person to force yourself into no longer wanting them. You may want out of the relationship because you feel burdened by the emotional responsibility of an available, viable, healthy partner.



**Fear Abandonment** You may sabotage a wonderful potential relationship, run from it, or even act in overly "needy" clinging ways but this neediness can end up pushing the other person away. FEELING ATTRACTED TO SOMEONE WHO YOU CAN SEE YOURSELF FALLING IN LOVE WITH, CAN TRIGGER AN INTENSE FEAR OF LOSING THAT PERSON. Your anxiety and neediness can turn reactive and destroy a loving, real relationship.

## IDENTIFY Check what MIGHT be possible for you

I tend to choose hard-to-get partners that keep me feeling on-edge (or excited) and unsure if they like me

I keep trying long-distance relationships

I have tried forming a relationship with someone who is married or says they are breaking-up with their partner

I am afraid to risk the closeness of a real relationship, now that I think about it

I have been completely single for more than 2 years

I like an emotional challenge to sustain my interest. Hard to admit, but I like a little drama

I have never truly felt in love before

I am afraid of getting engulfed when someone wants me too soon

I feel attracted only when I'm chasing/pursuing a potential partner; I lose interest once I attain their real interest

I need hot, fresh, new love to keep me always on the move

Now that I think about it... I do find it attractive when I have the push-pull dynamic

Most of my relationships last about 6 months to a year at most

I am willing to continue to have sex even though my partner refuses a real relationship

The hottest is when you're trying to seduce a hard-to-get lover, or get an ex back

I'm unable to tolerate the sober dynamics of a mature relationship built on trust, honesty, and partnership

My partners in the past were boring... I want exciting!

I'm afraid of someone getting too close as they may see I'm not as perfect as needed for love

I'm unable to make the decision to leave a partner who is not committing to me (or lying to me)

I need to feel wanted by someone in order to feel good in life

I'm not able to handle the emotional responsibility of being needed and wanted

I seem to keep repeating the same patterns... I feel as if I am stuck repeating these patterns

I keep texting or seeing my ex because it feels good in the moment, even though it keeps me in pain overall

It's possible, I am feeling so lonely that I smother potential partners with too much neediness too fast

I prefer the ideal relationships in my mind to the realistic ones I see around me others have

I have rejected at least one viable potential relationship because he/she seemed too interested in me too soon

I'm accustomed to being on the outside looking in – and mostly listening rather than sharing much of myself

I see unrealistically attractive partners to compensate for something I don't like about myself... at least this might be a possibility whether I've thought of this before or not

Being in the "grayish"... or the unknown while dating someone new is so uncomfortable, I rush into relationships fast, usually within the first 6 weeks to 8 weeks, and fill in the blanks without really knowing them

## THE SCIENCE OF A CHALLENGE: MIMICS "LOVE ADDICTION"

Being with someone who is a challenge stimulates surges of catecholamines (adrenaline, norepinephrine) which combined with your endogenous opiates and other hormones cause you to feel infatuated. INFATUATION IS A COCAINE-LIKE EMOTIONAL HIGH THAT INTENSIFIES YOUR SEXUAL FEELINGS AND MEDICATES THE RIGORS OF INTIMACY.



Caught up in the heat of passion medicated by these neurochemicals, two people just getting acquainted are able to be intimate without embarrassment. There are certain individuals who may subconsciously, continuously seeking this high, confusing it with "love," but continue to end up let-down.



This "high" decreases once partners have settled into more of a stable relationship, which may trigger some into protective mode (flight, fight, freeze) as they fear the "love" is gone. Rather than allowing the time, conversation, vulnerability, and genuine connection to unfold naturally, many people nowadays can end up seeking uncommitted partners.



When someone comes along who is available your body doesn't produce enough catecholamines to support the "high" you have been accustomed to. You experience this as having no chemistry and go into withdrawal from your "love addiction."



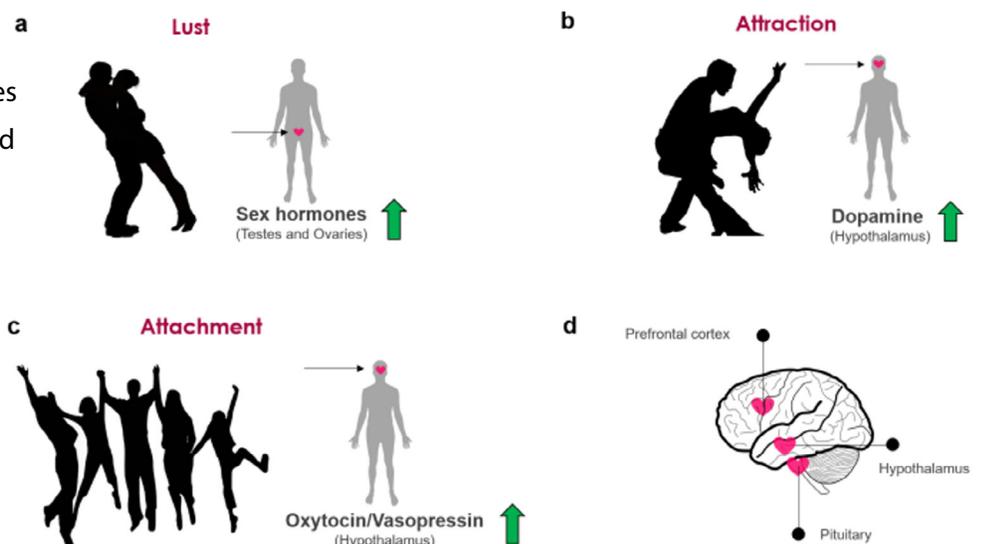
Unless you're inebriated on love chemicals, you can't tolerate the intimacy of a real relationships. So you run (flight fear response). Like a junkie desperate for a "love fix," you search for another lover who arouses just right dose of fear (challenge) to get you emotionally loaded. You're in denial when your body is attracted (addicted) it tells you you're in love. When your partner becomes available, your "pursuing/ chasing hormones" stop flowing. You think you are falling out of love. This is a painful pattern to be in.

## WHAT IS REAL LOVE AND CONNECTION?

It turns out that genuine, loving connection, built on trust and the feelings of REAL LOVE we all crave deeply, is not an "addiction," at all. The highs and lows associated with the initial attraction period does not stand the test of time. And it certainly does not cultivate the necessary trust and emotional bond required to produce solid, healthy attachment.

It has been scientifically proven over and over that intense feelings of attachment, love and trust develop as you spend more quality time with someone. For example, biological mechanisms are at play to create love, such as sleeping in proximity, skin-to-skin contact, kissing, caressing, hugging, intimate physical and sexual activity. Attachment hormones and neurochemicals such as Oxytocin and Vasopressin continue to increase over the years in REAL LOVE, creating deeper, trusting, loving connection with time.

Plus, socially we bond through companionship, caring for each other, working towards common goals, celebrating milestones, holidays, etc. This is what real love is made of.



## IDENTIFY POSSIBLE ATTACHMENT PATTERNS

Do you see yourself showing any of the behaviors described above in dating or in past relationships?

Do you suspect any of your friends are looking for love in the wrong places? Provide an example.

How does it feel to watch your friend push someone away just because he/she didn't stir up chemistry in just the right way – yet you knew in your heart that this person may have been perfect?

Has there been a time in which the opportunity for love showed up in your life, but you weren't able to see it?

Describe how you want love to feel?

What are you afraid will happen if you give someone a chance to get to know each other more... even though you don't have that instant passion and chemistry? Are you willing to let go of these fears?

Have you ever been hurt in the past, to the point that you may fear getting hurt again? Describe the pain and the possible fears that you may have now.

Describe when you felt no chemistry with a person who seemed to be right in every other way.

Name a time when following your passion for someone ended up in heartbreak.

Addiction is when you want something that you know is not good for you. Has this ever happened in a relationship? It's not your fault... as it typically takes an experience of this to learn from it. Describe your experiences with continuing to communicate and/or trying to have a relationship with someone that you know isn't available to you or good for you.

## IDENTIFY POSSIBLE ATTACHMENT PATTERNS

Name qualities you are attracted to, but have ended up backfiring on you and causing turmoil.

Name the qualities you are attracted to that you know are good qualities to have as they are in-line with your value system.

Has it been hard to find someone available that has these qualities and values?

Describe your experiences pursuing or dating someone that has everything you are looking for. What regrets do you have?

Next time you come across a potential love interest that has all of the qualities and values you are looking for, what do you hope you do differently?

Name a strength you have that will help you learn about attraction and relationships so you may have a higher chance at success moving forward.

How does awareness of this all help you?

What questions or concerns you about having this awareness?