

# Relationship User Manual: Building Intentional Relationships

A framework for improving your relationships. This template will help you and your significant other understand you better. It can be used at any time in a relationship and helps you think about yourself and your interpersonal relationships.

**Take what resonates**, don't feel like you have to fill out every single section. Feel free to skip, combine, and delete sections at your discretion. This is **your** manual so make it work for you and **it is all about you** so, don't only write down what you would share. Create a private version just for yourself, then later you can modify a version that you are comfortable sharing with others. So be as honest as possible with yourself and if there is something you don't feel comfortable sharing with a partner just yet then you can edit that out of the version you give to them later.

**Take your time**. This is a long template, don't attempt to fill it out all at once. Schedule a few days to think about your answers and fill it out slowly. Then periodically review and update your answers as they and your relationships change.

Questions or comments? E-mail me at [info@rekindlerelationships.com](mailto:info@rekindlerelationships.com)

## Preamble:

This is my relationship operations manual; it can help you understand who I am, how I work, and why I do that thing I do. This is my personal playbook; it will help me know and accept myself which will in turn make me a better partner. However, the focus is not on who is the perfect person for me, but rather how can I use what I have written here to be the best version of me in all of my relationships.

**If I have shared this document with you, please do not change yourself to fulfill expectations. I want an honest and organic connection not manipulation.**

## Mantras:

“Know thyself”

“I am not the right person for everyone and not every person will be right for me. That's okay”

“Boundaries are my friend”

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## THE BASICS

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### Upbringing:

Describe your family background, history, and upbringing. Explain your quirks and where you come from. Do you have any noteworthy strengths or triggers that you carry from your childhood? How were you raised?

### Identity:

What identities do you use that people need to know in order to “get” you?

What labels do you use to identify yourself and how do you define those labels? (Gender expression, sexuality, culture etc.)

### Personality:

Describe your personality and how others can expect you to behave.

How does your personality change in response to different situations?

### Beliefs & Principles

What beliefs do you hold, or principles that you live by, are important for others to know? (religion, politics, ethics etc.)

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## PRIORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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What are your current priorities in life?

What goals are you trying to achieve?

How much time/energy do you have left given your current responsibilities? (Work, kids, parents etc.)

Schedule:

What does your available time look like and how do you prioritize and allocate that time to others?

Do you live by your calendar or are you spontaneous and free flowing?

How much alone time do you need?

Hobbies & Free Time:

What do you enjoy doing in your free time? Any hobbies? Who do you enjoy spending it with?

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## RELATIONSHIPS

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Relationship goals and labels:

What are your existing relationships like?

What is your relationship with your family and friends?

Are you non-monogamous?

What makes a relationship different from a friendship?

Prior Relationships:

What significant past relationships should others know about?

What did you take away from those relationships, both good and bad, that you bring into your current relationships?

## POLYAMORY

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What is your relationship dynamic with your significant other(s)? How do those relationships affect each other?

How do you handle STI's? When/how do you talk about those?

Testing frequency?

Limitations you know about?

Are you looking for a specific type of relationship? (a nesting partner? Someone to raise kids with? Marriage?)

How do you label your partners/loves/relationships? What do those labels mean to you?

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## COMMUNICATION

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What is your preferred way to communicate (in person, phone calls, text)?

Do you prefer communicating your thoughts & feelings verbally or in written form?

Frequency:

How often do you like to communicate? What times are particular good or bad?

Roles:

Does it matter who initiates the communication?

What does it mean to you when someone does or does not initiate communication often?

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## CONNECTION AND INTIMACY

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How do you express that you care and how do you know that your partner cares?

What are the different ways you feel connection in your relationships?

Commitment:

How do you define commitment? What different types or levels exist for you? What behaviors or communication do you interpret as support or lack of support for those types?

Trust:

How do you define trust? What different types or levels exist for you?

What behaviors or communication do you interpret as support or lack of support for those types?

Respect:

How do you define respect in relationships?

Support:

How do you define support? What different types or levels exist for you?

What behaviors or communication do you interpret as support or lack of support for those types?  
Under what circumstances do you need certain types?

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## CONFLICT

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### Feedback:

Do you respond well to feedback and constructive criticism? What ways do you like to give/receive feedback?

What types of feedback do you struggle with?

How can others help you be more receptive to feedback?

### Slights:

How do you handle minor conflicts and slights you have with others? Do you talk about them or ignore them?

How do you handle minor conflicts and slights others have with you?

### Fights:

How do you prefer to fight? What are your rules of engagement and disengagement? When in a fight, do you need to remain engaged until it is resolved, or do you need time away?

### Conflict Resolution:

How do you prefer to resolve conflict? (Cooperation, compromise, forcing, accommodation, avoidance)?

Do you have any experience with conflict de-escalation?

How have you de-escalated conflicts in the past?

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## TRIGGERS:

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What are your biggest triggers and where do they come from?

Do you have any trauma that when triggered affects your ability to be a good communicator?

What behaviors or situations push your buttons or put you into a negative space? How can these be avoided?

What's the best way to support you when you've been triggered?

Apologies:

What makes a good apology?

How do you prefer to apologize to others?

How do you prefer to receive apologies?

## PATTERNS & BEHAVIORS

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What positive patterns or behaviors do you have that help support, nurture, and build your relationships?

What negative patterns or behaviors do you have that harm or destroys your relationships?

How are you working on these? How can others help support you?

Which of these have you accepted that you cannot or will not change?

Struggles:

What are the things you struggle most with in a relationship? What, if anything, are you doing to overcome these struggles? How can others help?

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Strengths:

What are your greatest strengths in a relationship?

How does it make you feel when others appreciate those strengths?

How can others use your strengths most effectively?

## BOUNDARIES & LIMITS: HEALTHY BOUNDARIES CREATE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

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What are your hard boundaries or limits, that once crossed would severely harm the relationship?

What are your soft boundaries or limits that put stress on your relationship?

Security:

What makes you feel secure in a relationship? What makes you feel insecure?

Do you burden your partner(s) with your insecurities, or do you manage them on your own?

What, if anything, would you like to change in how you feel secure?

What can others do to help?

Jealousy:

How often do you get jealous? What fears come up the most for you in relationships and how do you manage them?

How do those fears get expressed in how you interact with others?

Fidelity:

What level of fidelity do you require from someone you are involved with?

Can they flirt with others, kiss others, have sex with others? What about platonic friendships?

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Stressors:

What things in life give you stress? What aspects of relationships in particular give you stress?

How can someone tell when you are becoming stressed?

Operating Under Stress

How do you change in how you relate to other people under stress? How can people best interact with you when you're stressed?

Recharging & Relaxation:

How do you relieve your stress? How can others support you in relieving your stress?

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## LOVE

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How do you define love?

Do you have any healthy examples of love in your life or couples that you know personally that have healthy and thriving relationships?

What are the different types of love to you, and with which people do you express that love?

Love Languages:

What is your Love language? How do you best give and receive love? Don't know? Take [5 love languages](#) quiz.

Romance:

What does romance mean to you and how important is it to you?

What gestures do you find romantic?

How often do you need dates and what counts as a date to you?

Progression:

How do you like a relationship to proceed?

What stages do you want a relationship to go through? At what pace?

What are your relationship markers and how do you determine when a relationship becomes serious?

Note: non-monogamous individuals may want to read "[Stepping off the relationship Escalator](#)"

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## SEX

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Type & Frequency:

How do you define sex? What kinds of sex do you love? What kinds of sex do you hate?

How do you define foreplay?

Do you have a strong preference for one gender?

What types of sex are off-limits? How often do you like to have sex?

Turn-Ons:

What turns you on Physically and emotionally?

What gets you in the mood for sex?

What gets you in the mood for flirting or foreplay?

Turn-Offs:

What turns you off physically and emotionally?

What kills the mood for you for sex?

What kills the mood for flirting or foreplay?

Flirting

How do you define flirting? What types of flirting do you like/ dislike? How much do you like being flirted with?

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Kissing, Touch, and PDA:

Does how you like to be touched differ in public vs in private? What amount and type of public displays of affection are you comfortable with? Kissing? Touch?

How do you like to be kissed? Where do you like to be kissed? How does this change in different situations? How do you like to be touched? Where do you like to be touched/kissed? How does this change in different situations?

Emotions:

How do your emotions interact with your sexuality? What emotions must you feel to engage with someone sexually? What emotions force you to disengage?

Kinks:

What kinks or specific types of sex, if any, are a requirement or strong preference to be in a sexual relationship with someone?

Rules of Engagement:

What types of consent (non-verbal yes, verbal yes, enthusiastic verbal yes) do you require? How does this differ for different types of interaction (kissing, foreplay, sex)?

Behaviors that I will not tolerate.

- Non-consensual physical violence. Full stop.
- ...

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## RESOURCES

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### Links:

Links to articles or books that can help others understand my viewpoints toward relationships.

### Quotes:

Relationship quotes that resonate with me, or excerpts from articles and books, that can help others understand my viewpoints toward relationships.

### Notes:

Things not mentioned otherwise in this document that are important to mention.