

Relationship Storms:  
Man Enough to Stay the Course

## Foreword: Developing Trust

Have you ever noticed that, for some couples, arguments can be sexy? For other couples, arguments lead to pain and longstanding resentment. What makes the difference? The answer is the third relationship skill: **trust**. When you have trust with your partner, everything can be expressed fully with passion. You can object, you can get mad, and when the storm passes, you and your partner will be stronger, more in touch with each other, more committed, and more passionate than you were before.

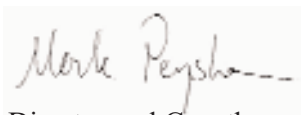
This chapter will take up where the film left off, outlining ways that you can utilize the Seven Master Steps to Lasting Change. We will address the following topics:

- How do I bring my presence to my partner?
- What steps can I take to create change under any circumstances?
- How do I overcome frustration and resentment with my partner?
- How do I take our trust to the next level?

We hope you will take action on what you learn here, commit to develop this valuable relationship skill, and use your commitment to create the relationship that you truly deserve.

Warmly,

Mark Peysha



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## So How Do I Change My Relationship?

If Samantha and Darryl were able to rediscover their trust and commitment to each other within ninety minutes, how are you and I going to create results for ourselves at home? Relationship is important – it may be the single greatest factor in your happiness throughout your life. It is the way that our emotions become magnified through sharing and interchange. It is the way that we build our histories with others, share memories, and taste our experiences. However, it is not always easy. Why? Because there is another person involved – a person with his or her own experiences, preferences, values, and levels of commitment. This can be frustrating at times, no matter how deep, powerful, intense, and passionate the relationship is. In fact, you may say, frustration is often a sign of passion waiting to break free – if you can learn how to harness it. As Tony puts it, there are areas in your life where you may enjoy a great deal of control; in other areas of life, you may even have mastery. In relationship, you have neither mastery nor control – you have influence at best. If you think you can control your partner, you will be frustrated. If you simply expect your partner to be or do things in a certain way, your partner will feel judged and stop cooperating. And if you try to coerce your partner to do things in a way that doesn't reflect his or her free will, you cannot have a happy relationship. So you have influence at best, and you have much less control than you may have thought. Is this bad news? On the contrary, this is the path to the excitement, spontaneity, and interaction that are at the bottom of every truly successful relationship. There is a way to harness the uncertainty of relationship and to let it light up your life. So let's get started.

## Fundamentals: The Six Human Needs

The concept of the Six Human Needs is at the core of Human Needs Psychology. We believe that human motivation is driven by the need to fulfill six basic human needs. These needs are our constant and in some ways our closest companions. They never stop driving us and they never go away. You cannot simply resolve a need – it will be back tomorrow or even in five minutes. Our needs are the primal forces that shape all of our choices. The good news is that there are only six needs and there are millions of ways of satisfying your needs. By understanding how your needs work, you can set yourself up for lasting fulfillment in life.

### The First Human Need: Certainty/Comfort

The first need is for certainty that we can be comfortable – to have pleasure and to avoid pain. For some of us, this means a secure environment, consistency in our relationships. You can also get certainty through physical habits – eating, for instance, can make you feel comfortable and certain – or even through certain beliefs – for instance, you can have faith that your problems will be resolved. What is necessary for someone to feel certain varies from individual to individual. For one person knowing

where the next meal will come from is sufficient certainty, while for another person the need for certainty may be satisfied only by having a million dollars in the bank. Code words for certainty are comfort, security, safety, stability, predictability. When things get rough, what are some things that you do to feel certain?

## The Second Human Need: Uncertainty/Variety

Once we feel certain, however, our second need is for uncertainty – for variety and challenges that will exercise our emotional and physical range. Our bodies, our minds, our emotional being all require uncertainty, exercise, suspense, variety, surprise. Even if you have a lifetime supply of your favorite food, at some point you will want to eat something else. Your emotional and physical state will change. We all value uncertainty/variety to different degrees, but we all need it. You may get variety by pursuing changes, diversions, and pleasures or by undertaking risky projects or challenging commitments. Some people satisfy their need for uncertainty/variety by watching a movie, while others need to race cars or climb mountains. And don't forget a major source of variety for all of us: problems. When things don't go as you planned, when expectations are foiled and things go in a different direction, that's uncertainty/variety as well. What kind of variety/uncertainty do you experience on a regular basis? Code words for uncertainty are fear, instability, change, variety, chaos, refreshment, craving, release, suspense, exertion, surprise, problem, crisis. Are there ways in which the feeling of uncertainty actually serves to give you variety?

## The Third Human Need: Significance

The third need is for significance. Every person needs to feel important, needed, wanted. When we were babies, we all needed to feel that we were number one. If you had siblings, you competed with them for love and attention – you found your niche, whether as the smart one or the scrappy one or the loving one or the obedient one. This need is still with you: Needing to feel special and important in some way has helped shape who you are today. You can feel significant by building or achieving something, or you can feel significant by tearing something or somebody down. In all cases, significance comes from comparing yourself to others – hierarchical pecking orders and superiority/inferiority. In its positive sense, significance leads you to raise your standards. If you overfocus on significance, you will have trouble feeling connected with people, because the comparison game marks out our differences rather than what we have in common. Some people focus on significance in a self-deprecating way – having low self-esteem, doubting whether they are good enough, expecting others to raise them up. How do you get significance? Code words for significance are pride, importance, standards, achievement, performance, perfection, evaluation, discipline, competition, plus any words connected with being “rejected” or being “good enough.”

## The Fourth Human Need: Love/Connection

The fourth need is for love and connection. Everyone strives for and hopes for love, and everyone needs connection with other human beings. If you are alive today, you were loved. You needed to feel loved and touched in order to survive, and that need is still at your core. In this sense, love is the ultimate survival instinct, and it comes before the baby can take care of its own basic bodily needs. So love is a big part of who you already are, no matter who you are. The obstacles to love lie in your belief system about how to get the feeling of love, your rules about how to recognize and appreciate love, and your ability to learn to give love as well as receive it. Some people rarely experience love, but they have many ways of feeling connection with others – in the community or in the workplace. Do you experience love in your life, or do you focus on connection with others, a less threatening form of love? When in your life have you felt really loved? Code words for love and connection are togetherness, unified, connected, passionate, “on the same page.”

These first four human needs are the needs of the personality and must be met at some level by everyone. The last two needs are the needs of the spirit, which are essential to human fulfillment. These are growth and contribution.

## The Fifth Human Need: Growth

When we stop growing, we die. We need to constantly develop emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. There is a universal law about growth: Everything is either growing or dying – there is no middle ground. Anything that you want to remain in your life – your money, your body, your relationship, your happiness or love – must be cultivated, developed, expanded. Otherwise it will degenerate. What does this mean for us? There is no “retirement,” a terminal point where we simply get to keep and enjoy what we have. If your body, your finances, or your relationships are in a good state, be prepared to continue to care for and expand them. If you let them flatline, they will deteriorate.

## The Sixth Human Need: Contribution

Contribution requires you to go beyond your own needs and give to others. Most emotional problems and sources of pain disappear when you focus on serving someone other than yourself. Therefore, contribution is the human need that effectively regulates your other five needs: If you are focused on contribution, you have the certainty of being able to contribute (there is always a way); you have variety in the number of things that can go right and wrong (contribution is highly interactive); you have significance because the commitment to contribution is rare and is the sign of an extraordinary person; you have connection because there is a spiritual connection in helping others; and you have to experience growth because

contribution requires you to go beyond your own needs. From this perspective, the purpose of Human Needs Psychology is not only to take care of your own needs but to expand and serve others in an attitude of leadership and contribution. If you are focused on growth and contribution, it is difficult to get bored or depressed.

Everyone creates their own system of beliefs and actions for satisfying their needs. We call this system their “model of the world.” One person may give himself or herself the feeling of certainty by always controlling the environment, a second person may feel certain by not trusting anyone, and a third person may get the feeling of certainty by holding a spiritual belief. Everyone can meet their own needs in sustainable ways that serve the greater good of themselves and others, or they can meet their own needs in ways that sooner or later harm themselves or others.

When someone loses his or her habitual ways of meeting personal needs, he or she experiences a crisis. For instance, when financial failure comes to a business person who gets the feeling of significance from being financially successful, he or she will experience a loss of significance. When someone who gets the feeling of importance from taking care of others suddenly becomes unable to help others, he or she will also experience a loss of significance. When people lose their usual ability to meet their needs, they react by trying to find other ways of regaining their sense of significance, at least temporarily. Sometimes these temporary solutions lead to long-term solutions; other times they lead to harm. The purpose of Human Needs Psychology is to understand a person's model of the world, to bring about a conscious understanding of personal choices, and to assist the person in finding new ways to meet personal needs in ways that will serve him or her and others in the long term.

## The Three Levels of Relationship

A major purpose of relationship is to meet your and your partner's needs in an expanded way. There are three levels of relationship, that is, three ways that people in a relationship meet their needs. These are selfish love (level one), conditional love (level two), and unconditional love (level three).

### Level One: Selfish Love (My needs come first.)

This is the least mature level. At this level, one or both of the partners are focused on meeting their own needs first. When partners have this focus, the relationship is fragile. If you put your needs first, what happens to your partner? Eventually there will be an erosion of trust and togetherness, and there may even be a conflict or dispute about who gets personal needs met first. Do you ever find yourself with your partner in a situation where you are arguing about who is right, who goes first, who gets their way? All of us do sometimes – and when we do, we are playing at relationship

level one. At this level, you are rarely together; one of you comes first. Occasionally there may be some way that you can meet your needs together in the same way, but this cannot be sustained. Life doesn't work that way – there are always points of choice where if you put yourself first, the other person will suffer. Putting the other first is the essence of trust. When two partners fail to understand each other or put each other's needs first, then trust is being undermined by individual self-interest.

### **Level Two: Conditional Love (I'll give you yours if you give me mine.)**

We call level two “horse trading.” At this level, every gesture, every gift, every concession or compromise has strings attached. Nothing is given out of free will, only out of a wish for barter, fairness, or personal gain. We call a level two player by the shocking term “whore,” because what does a prostitute do? He or she gives “love” in exchange for money; without money, no “love” is given. In a relationship in which love is exchanged for favors, nothing is simple. Everything is a ploy, a calculation, an advance payment creating debt. It is difficult to accept love because we never know what the price might be. Everything is purchased. In order to avoid getting into debt, both parties insist on creating fairness, that is, a model of even exchange. However, plans of even exchange will never create the spontaneous self-expression that leads to a passionate relationship. Trust comes not only from following a prescribed plan but also from feeling that if you should suddenly find yourself in need, your partner will come and serve you. Trust comes from the belief that the relationship is always bigger than any individual exchange or temporary advantage or debt of one partner or the other. Again, all relationships devolve to the level two once in a while when it seems that things are not equal or fair. When we are at level two, we fall into blaming, suspicion, cautious truces, and exchanges. We hesitate before giving while the other person is waiting for us, in need! When that happens, do not stay at that level: It is crucial to communicate, to make needs understood, and to give to each other.

### **Level Three: Unconditional Love (The other's needs come first.)**

This is the level where passion and emotional juice flow. Both partners put each other first. When a partner discovers the other's need, he or she serves that need spontaneously in the best way possible, without calculating a payback. In fact, the partners are constantly studying each other in order to understand how to serve each other better. They become experts at knowing each other's needs. Both partners recognize that, at a deep level, they love each other unconditionally and that nothing is needed for the love to be expressed. At this level, it is easy to please each other and to share, because even if you don't experience the same needs as your partner, you can love what he or she loves. You don't have to worry about your needs remaining unmet because your partner habitually puts you first – all you have to do is give your partner a clue about what you need. At this level of passion, there is enough safety for you to serve each other not

only by giving gifts but by penetrating each other emotionally. When there is a foundation of trust, you can express yourselves in darker and naughtier ways to give your relationship a suspenseful edge. Of course, all relationships devolve occasionally. We all have panic moments when we think that we will not be loved or that we will fall short of expectations; in those moments, we will ask for “fair exchange” or will even focus on getting our individual needs met first. However, if the “center of gravity” of your relationship is at level three, you are enjoying one of the rare experiences of life.

## Transforming Your Relationship

So how do you and your partner get there from here? The challenge is how to build up the trust in each other that will take your relationship to a steady level three. The challenge in making this transformation is that, in most cases, your relationship is a reflection of the level you are playing at individually. The level of your relationship depends on the level of trust, safety, and service built up between you and your partner. For example, if one partner plays at level three – meeting his or her partner's needs spontaneously – and the other partner plays at level one – focusing consistently on meeting his or her needs only – then the relationship cannot remain at level three. The “selfish” level one partner will take advantage of the “unconditional” level three partner's goodwill and trust, and eventually the level three partner will lose trust. At this point, the level three partner may begin to wonder about the fairness of the arrangement (which is level two – “horse trading”) and stop giving spontaneously. Of course, it is extremely unusual for a level three and a level one to be in an intimate relationship. People usually attract partners who are at a similar level. Someone playing level three, with an expert knowledge of his or her partner's needs, is not likely to be found in relationships based on selfishness and frustration. To give another example, if the relationship has been at level two for some time and one partner decides to study the other partner's needs in order to understand how and when to serve him or her and then begins to give to that partner without any plan for getting back, then the other partner will notice. A beautiful feature of the Six Human Needs is that when we notice our bottom four needs (certainty, variety, significance, love/connection) being fulfilled, then we naturally begin to consider expanding into growth and contribution. As you commit yourself to a consistent level three, your partner will be inclined to take notice and raise his or her level of trust and commitment to you.

Now ask yourself, When Samantha stood up to speak with Tony, what level was she playing at?

**Samantha** *How am I meant to be true to myself and do what I want to do and pursue things that I want, that I want to do and need to do for myself, if I have four children who rely on me and a controlling husband?*

Tony            *How do you define “controlling”?*

Samantha's question regards fairness: How can I still be who I need to be while giving what needs to be given? In other words, the question is at level two: When do I get back? When will my sacrifices pay off? It's possible that Samantha has been playing at level three for her husband and that he has failed to reciprocate, and now she feels exploited. So is she at level two? Suddenly Samantha turns back to her husband and makes a wisecrack.

Samantha    *Oh, did that hurt?*

Tony            *That was very warm!*

That's Samantha going to level one where partners are in dispute about who gets their needs met. “Oh, did that hurt?” – said in that teasing tone – shows the natural result of level one: rivalry, disputes, competition. Tony instantly calls her on it, asking her to honestly acknowledge that in that moment she was focusing on her own needs.

Tony            *When you turned around and went “Oh, did that hurt?” and looked at him like that, which one of those six needs were you pursuing?*

Samantha    *Number three, significance.*

Tony            *Yes. Thank you. Give her a hand for that honesty. That's very nice.*

As Samantha identifies the need she was going for, Tony reinforces her honesty and asks her what is upsetting her.

Tony            *What pissed you off the most?*

Samantha    *That things can change in a heartbeat.*

Tony            *Why did that piss you off? Because they haven't for you?*

Samantha    *No.*

Tony            *Then why would that piss you off?*

Samantha    *No, because it hasn't. It hasn't. It doesn't.*

Tony            *It doesn't, or it hasn't?*

Samantha    *It doesn't.*

Tony *How do you know? If you haven't done it yet, how do you know that it doesn't? How do you know it just hasn't, since you haven't done it yet?*

Samantha *Because I've tried for the past six weeks.*

On one hand, Samantha is upset that things haven't changed for her; on the other hand, she claims that because things haven't changed, they don't change. This is conflicted logic: If she has hopes that things will change, she shouldn't declare that they can't. Yet people use that kind of logic – that things should change but can't – in order to save face when they are being ineffective. In this case, Samantha wants things to change, wants to be right, but she also doesn't want to take the blame for where things are. Implicitly, she is blaming her husband, Darryl. While this is understandable – and Tony still doesn't understand the whole story – Samantha must first become accountable for the state of her relationship.

Tony *Yes, and what were you trying? Trying something with Darryl? I assume it has to do with Darryl. Is that right?*

Samantha *Yeah.*

Tony *What'd you try? By the way, “trying” never works, does it?*

Samantha *No.*

Tony *So you knew that before it started that it wouldn't work as long as you “tried.” Cause if I asked you to try to pick up that chair – go ahead, try to pick it up. The chair you were sitting in, try to pick it up.*

If Samantha has become habituated to frustration and ineffectiveness, it is time to break that habit. By asking Samantha to merely try to pick up the chair, Tony is asking Samantha to make explicit what had been implicit in her complaint. Her frustration with ineffectively “trying” to change her relationship has actually served as a source of significance. Tony's exercise demonstrates both the ineffectiveness of that frustration and the fact that she has the ability to completely change her approach and commit herself to getting the result she wants. Specifically, her struggles implied that the relationship problems are to be found in her husband's controlling behavior and not in anything she does. Whether or not this is factually true, Samantha must be accountable for her own behavior before laying blame on her husband, and Tony already saw her rebuke her husband as he sat in the audience.

Tony *I'm going to request if I'm going to go forward that, to be fair to both of us, you stop “trying.” And what I mean by that, so I'm being very clear, is you either do it or you do*

*not do it. You don't "try" to do it because I know you're more powerful than that. I also know your level of hurt and frustration and sadness is huge, and I really honor you for the level of honesty. You snapped at him not because you don't love him; you snapped at him because you felt hurt by him. And it sounds like you have a lot of hurt, which you've converted into anger to protect yourself – like you did about your mom leaving you at age twelve because you weren't as close to your father as your mother, and the person you were closer to left. Is that true?*

In order to raise your relationship to a higher level, it is crucial that you become honest about your needs. Most of us have a habit of not acknowledging our emotional needs, because we like to think of ourselves as being independent. In Samantha's case, she was so focused on recovering her self-esteem that she certainly was not ready to acknowledge her needs – what she was asking for. However, Tony acknowledged the pain that Samantha had been in and therefore made a step to recovering her trust.

## Questions

What are your partner's favorite ways of meeting his or her needs (work, relationships, other activities, etc.)?

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How often do you see opportunities to meet your partner's needs?

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How often do you do something to meet your partner's needs?

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What are your top two needs?

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How often does your partner do something to meet your needs?

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Do you give your partner opportunities to meet your needs?

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How often do you communicate your needs to your partner?

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What level of relationship have you and your partner been playing? How do you know?

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## The Seven Master Steps to Lasting Change

Tony says that every one of his interventions is based on the Seven Master Steps to Lasting Change. Derived from two decades' study of different techniques for change, the Seven Master Steps are designed to strategically deliver you from a point of crisis or dilemma, put you in a constructive state of understanding your needs and the needs of others, and give you the options to make an informed choice about what to do. Of course, Tony as an interventionist utilizes the Seven Master Steps in a very different way than you would in your relationship. Tony begins in a position of authority and trustworthiness, whereas in your relationship, you may not yet have earned your partner's full trust. The following chapters feature ways to apply the Seven Master Steps to create change from within your relationship with your partner. The best way to do this is to first apply the Seven Master Steps to yourself before asking your partner to participate. You cannot expect to have a level three relationship without your being a level three player. Begin improving yourself first; then approach your partner.

### Step One: Understand Your Partner's World

First, which two needs is your partner craving now? Remember, these are the Six Human Needs:

Certainty/Comfort

Uncertainty/Variety

Significance

Love/Connection

Growth

Contribution



Darryl *She needs me to be there.*

Tony *And how will you be there? When it's easy?*

Darryl *When it's easy, when it's hard – every time, all the time!*

Tony *How would you be there when it's easy, when it's hard, all the time? How will you be there? What would you do differently than you've done in the past?*

Darryl *Listen to her.*

Tony *And how would you listen? Would you listen in fear or listen where you kept sending energy into her body; where the more energy she sent at you, the more you turned around and sent it into her; loving her where you saw a little girl inside of her and you just kept loving her; where she could see it in your eyes; where she could breathe it? Come up on the stage! Come here now!*

What does “leverage” mean? It means to get maximum access or use out of your resources. In the film, Tony found what Samantha and Darryl both cared about most. When they understood what was at stake in the conversation, they both became committed to the intervention. In your case, you need to begin by leveraging yourself, getting in touch with what matters most to you in the relationship. Decide in advance: What do you want for the relationship? Take a moment to daydream. What would bring you pleasure, satisfaction, and fulfillment? Write down your vision for your relationship.

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What kind of effort are you ready to undertake in order to realize your vision?

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How will your partner feel, knowing that you are doing everything in your power to love and serve him or her?

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What will the consequences be if you do not make this commitment to your partner?

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### Step Three: Interrupt Habitual Patterns

**Tony**      *Samantha, tell him what you were afraid to tell him. And Darryl, stay here and remember whatever she says, she worships you and you worship her, and everything that's happened for years doesn't matter a bit because the moment you come to her with presence, she will feel you. And when you're willing to love her when she seems crazy, then she'll trust you. And when she trusts you, she'll open to you, and when she opens to you, you're going to feel like a man again, totally alive. And you're going to be able to heal her heart with your love. And then as soon as you think you got it made, she's going to test you. She's going to say something to hurt you. Her job is to try to hurt you. Your job is to show "Nothing will ever hurt me because I love you. You can fake all you want. You can scream. You can yell. You can smack me. I own your soul and you're never getting away. I will take care of you forever!" Or something like that.*

Tony interrupted Samantha's habitual pattern of righteous annoyance and blaming of Darryl, and he interrupted Darryl's pattern of defensiveness and withdrawal. All of us have habitual patterns that take us away from level three unconditional love and lead us into "horse trading" and selfishness. The question is, what we do we do to interrupt those habitual patterns and prevent them from sabotaging the progress in our relationships?

You are almost ready to ask your partner what his or her top two needs are, how he or she would like each of those top needs to be satisfied, and what you could do to satisfy those needs. Before you do so, however, you have to make what we call the "listening choice" – to choose how you are going to listen to your partner. When lovers express their true feelings to each other, it is to be expected that there may be some tenderness and hurt. It is a sign of intimacy. As you listen to your partner, be prepared to hear some things that will sound like complaints, criticisms, or accusations. You will have a choice at this point whether to hear these statements as criticisms of you or to hear them as requests to meet your partner's needs. The fact is that people do not complain like this to people they don't care about. These kinds of requests are usually reserved for one's lover, as the person who has been chosen to fulfill the deepest intimate needs. Before asking the question, then, decide how you are going to listen to any comments on your partner's part that seem hurtful: Are you going to hear

them as criticisms or as requests? If you hear them as hurtful criticisms, you will devolve to level two – you will think about whether the comments are fair or not; you'll defend your own past behaviors and calculate just how much effort on your part should make your partner happy. If you hear the comments as requests, you may feel a tinge of pain or sensitivity as you hear the words, but this is the feeling of waking up emotionally. If you are strong enough, you will turn your partner's words into a determination to fulfill your greater purpose of serving your partner and to think about how to satisfy your partner better, thereby satisfying both of you.

What are some of the emotional patterns you go into that make you a lower level partner? How are you feeling when you focus on fairness, exchanges, or your own needs?

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What are some of the triggers that take you into emotional patterns of reaction? What does your partner have to do to throw you off center?

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What could you do to interrupt your emotional patterns of reaction? What could you do with your physiology, your focus, and your language when you find yourself slipping into a selfish frame of mind?

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## Step Four: Define the Problem in Solvable Terms

In Human Needs Psychology, there is basically one global solution to all relationship challenges: Upgrade your level of commitment and caring for each other. Most major relationship problems cannot last in a relationship that is at a level three. You may have disagreements, moody times, stresses of children or work, interference of worldly issues or extended family, but these would not disturb the integrity of your relationship. It's that simple. If you are not playing at level three with your partner – if you are “horse trading” or meeting your own needs first and foremost – then it is difficult or impossible for your partner to sustain a level three commitment to you. However, if your partner has been accustomed to a level two game of exchanging services for favors, you can positively influence your partner by going to the unconditional level with him or her. By meeting his or her needs on a regular basis, without asking anything in return, by figuring out

what he or she needs to feel loved and giving it on a regular basis, you can inspire your partner to upgrade his or her own commitment as well.

Early in his conversation with Samantha, Tony decided to define her problem in solvable terms. Instead of dealing with the details – the raising of the four kids, their moving to a remote area, etc. – he went on to describe their fundamental needs in the relationship.

**Tony**      *This woman's a lover. She's been waiting her whole life to be with a man she can trust and give her soul to. She couldn't even trust her own father. And I know you love her. I can see it in your eyes. So you've got a great woman. This woman's been hurt, and some part of you knew it and probably saw her at a time she was sensitive and wanted to give to her. That's my bet. My bet was she has a beautiful face and a great body and all those things. I'm sure you saw those things, but my bet is you saw a heart that was hurting, and as a man, you felt called to give to her. But now Darryl feels like a failure. He's clueless as to what to do with all this anger in you, Sam, and he's probably scared. So what he probably does is meet your anger with anger or just shut down – one of the two is my bet. Or he tries to please you so much that you don't respect him. That would be the other option.*

If there is goodwill and basic compatibility on both sides of a relationship, there is a way to define the problem in solvable terms: The two partners need to find a way to upgrade their commitment, to find ways to serve each other's needs without asking for anything in return. You must be honest about your own needs. When your partner serves your needs, be appreciative – no focus on exchange or sense of entitlement. Do not give unless you do so of your own free will. If you do decide to give, commit to give unconditionally – not because you have calculated how much you're going to give back. Give because it's part of who you are: This will take you to level three.

## Step Five: Create New Options

**Darryl**      *You won't let me into your heart.*

**Samantha**   *Why? What do I have to do?*

**Tony**      *Now, Darryl, I want you to come back to being a man, because for a moment you went to being a little boy, which is totally understandable because you have worked so hard to be in her heart. But you as a boy think that she's your mama, and mama's are going to give love no matter what. Mama's don't do it the way wives do and lovers do. Lovers*

*push you like this to see whether you really love them. And you just went, "Oh, I'm hurting," and you left. But you know, in football, somebody hits you because he respects you. Unless you hit back – in this case, to hit back is love through it – you never get to the touchdown. You've been so afraid, and you've expected her to open up. Her job is not to open up. Your job is to open her, and there is a way: eyes, words, touch, hands, and actions. And I respect you so much for what you said because no human being, especially male, would ever admit that he hadn't given her the respect.*

One of the beautiful things about the Six Human Needs is that they can always be met now. There are no hard-wired requirements. In fact, the fewer requirements, the better. All of us have programming and preferences on how to meet these needs. However, it is never too late to decide to meet your needs in a new, more effective, and sustainable way. In fact, this is necessary because life tends to change the ways we can meet our needs. Jobs are eliminated, stock markets crash, relationships change, our children grow up – you know the story. From a relationship perspective, there are always challenges and common patterns that you will come across time after time. In Darryl's case, he feels that Samantha won't let him into her heart. His response is to withdraw, focus on work, or become melancholic about their lack of connection. His failure to solve this relationship challenge led him to fewer and fewer occasions when he felt he was in her heart. One of the purposes of the slapping exercise is to force Darryl into a situation where he must create new options. Now he cannot simply withdraw when Samantha is angry or dissatisfied. He must stomach the discomfort and love her through the struggle. He may also wish to generate even more options in times when Samantha seems overwhelmed. He may want to learn how to make her laugh, take her out for an ice cream, give her a present, or help her with some of her duties. Whenever anyone feels deprived of the ability to meet one or more personal needs, you should practice helping him or her to find new ways to meet the same need.

What is your favorite way of meeting your top two needs?

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Name five other ways you could meet your top two needs.

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Name five ways that you could meet your partner's top two needs. Include some surprises and some new experiences. What kind of message do you want to deliver to your partner? What does your partner need to feel, hear, and understand from you?

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### Step Six: Condition the Change

Unless you have made it an object of focused attention and dedication, there is a good chance that your relationship has been at level two. Most people in relationships – especially over time – start to worry about having their needs met, comparing their needs to their partner's needs, calculating how their efforts should be rewarded. Behind all of this is the concern for how one can get one's needs satisfied – not at anyone else's expense, of course, right? Spouses begin to compete for opportunities to meet their needs, and trust and commitment wane. If you are already at level three, then you are exceptional. And if you take advantage of this film and Action Book and make a conscious decision to play at level three with your partner from this point forward, you're even more exceptional.

In the big picture, it is a rare opportunity when someone or something in our environment encourages us to reach this level of commitment in our relationship. It won't happen often. If you are having some feelings of devotion and commitment, it is important to put those into practice immediately. Conditioning yourself to be unselfish and devoted is quite difficult unless you back it up with actions that cause pleasure for you and the person who will receive your generosity. The very best thing to do is to develop your present insight into a ritual, a way of embodying a greater standard in life and love. What are some rituals that you can commit to with your partner?

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When something comes up and those rituals don't work or when your partner is not in a state of mind to practice those rituals, what are some other ways that you can meet your partner's needs?

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## Step Seven: Relate to a Higher Purpose

When making any big change, any significant new commitment, it is essential to relate that new commitment to a higher purpose, your highest hopes for your relationships, and the benefits for your life plan as a whole. When we take on a responsibility that requires effort or sacrifice, it is essential that we remind ourselves of the meaning and function of that new choice in our lives. Take a moment to ask yourself these questions: What is the greater purpose of committing to your partner at a level of unconditional love? Who is to benefit? If you have children, what will this do for them? What will this do for them as an example of how to live? How will it influence your children, your grandchildren, and great-grandchildren?

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What were your examples of love when you were growing up? What did you learn that was valuable? What did you learn that created challenges for you?

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What improvements and modifications are you making by taking on this commitment? How can you honor your ancestors by living as an example of unconditional love?

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Imagine yourself thirty years from now. If you can truly love your partner unconditionally and build a level three relationship, how will you feel about it down the road? What will you think about the decision you made today?

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If you find yourself slipping into old patterns or if you experience a feeling of failure to act out this decision, what can you do to get back on track? Remember: Progress consists of innumerable tiny adjustments, mistakes, and corrections. What kind of corrections can you make when things get hard? What can you remember about your decision right now?

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## Exercises for Couples

Here are two exercises that you can do as a couple to strengthen your skills in sustaining a level three relationship of unconditional love. The prospect of creating change, especially within a relationship, can be intimidating. These games are designed to allow you to “practice” with your partner in a fun context while also giving you opportunities to explore and experiment with each other. Remember to have fun and to laugh! By having fun, you will open up more, enjoy each other more, and grow more as a couple.

### Exercise 1: Stand Up for Each Other

1. Decide on something you will enjoy doing together after the exercise. A little food, drink, entertainment, change of scenery, some privacy, some physical interaction – try to choose something that you both will enjoy doing together.
2. Face each other. Set your clock for five minutes.
3. In this game, the guy goes first. He will find his center and hold his presence for his lady. What does this mean exactly? Guys, it means simply this: Be here and nowhere else in the world, and put your consciousness entirely on being wherever your lady is. Look into her eyes. If she looks like she's thinking, go to what she's thinking about. If she's having an emotion, “go inside” her and share her emotion. If she looks like she's opposing you, go to her feelings. Don't try to change her; just be with her. While staying physically solid and still, imagine going into her body and feel what she's feeling, experience what she's experiencing. Did she say something before you started the game that might be a clue to how she's feeling at this time? Use any clues to figure out how she's feeling, without being distracted. It's an interesting challenge, isn't it? Do not work too hard on projecting yourself into her, on creating an appearance, or of appearing to be anything that you are not. If all you do is keep your center – focus your total attention on feeling and understanding her and (in a sense) “owning her” – then you'll be succeeding at this game.
4. For the lady, the task is to go to your heart and be open to him. You do not have to do anything – just observe and feel his full presence. If he seems to be distracted, slipping, scared to commit, going internal, or getting stuck in language and thoughts, then slap him on the arm. You are the better judge of whether he is fully engaged in this game – your job is to bring him to full attention. If he seems half-hearted or only partially present, then your job becomes even more important. Slap him only enough to wake him up, not to hurt him. Give him a little smile, if it helps. Don't placate him – give him the honest feedback that he needs and that you need to give. Remember, the goal is not to get judgmental here – stay in your heart and listen/feel sincerely and openly.

5. When time is up, smile at each other. Share a kiss, and go spend some fun time together.

Tony *Enjoy going into her and feel her. Feel what she's feeling right now. Feel what she's feeling. Feel her. Look at her eyes and feel her. Feel what's going on inside her, not what she tries to do with her face, not what she says. What's really going on in her? What's she really feeling? Feel her. Don't just think it. Feel it. When was the last time you had this much presence from him?*

Samantha *I don't think I ever truly have.*

Tony *How does it feel?*

Samantha *Good.*

Tony *Good?*

Samantha *F\_\_king fantastic.*

Tony *Darryl, you can smile and enjoy that and keep taking her in. Keep taking her in. Now, Samantha, tell him what you were afraid to tell him. And you, Darryl, stay here and remember whatever she says, she's lying. She worships you and you worship her and all that's happened for years doesn't matter a bit because the moment you come to her with presence, she will feel you. And when you're willing to love her even when she seems crazy, then she'll trust you. And when she trusts you, she'll open to you, and when she opens to you, you're going to feel like a man again, totally alive. And you're going to be able to heal her heart with your love. And then as soon as you think you've got it made, she's going to test you. She's going to say something to hurt you. Her job is to try to hurt you. Your job is to show this: "Nothing will ever hurt me because I love you. You can fake all you want. You can scream. You can yell. You can smack me. I own your soul and you're never getting away. I will take care of you forever." Or something like that.*

What is critical to this game is for the man to provide the direction, the focus, and the goal. The woman only needs to be open and to feel sincerely what she feels. Repeat this game on a regular basis as well as anytime the man is having trouble bringing his full presence to his woman. Most people are not used to bringing their full presence to bear on another person, and it may be scary at first. Practice makes perfect.

You'll remember that in the second half of the exercise between Samantha and Darryl, Tony encouraged Samantha to tell Darryl everything that she's been feeling, including her negative experiences. This is crucial in order to break through emotional constrictions and secrets to arrive at open, passionate honesty. It is often the case that in a relationship there has been so much holding back of emotion that there is a pattern of withholding even when the partners have agreed to fully commit. This exercise is a way of releasing emotions, apprehensions, concerns, and criticisms while also regulating and disciplining these emotional impulses. Here are the rules and procedures for the Ten-Minute Time Slot exercise.

## Exercise 2: Ten-Minute Time Slot

1. Decide on a leisure activity, something pleasurable that you will do together when the game is over. Rent a video and pop some popcorn. Get a favorite dinner. Give each other massages. Workout together. Have some ice cream. Take a walk together. It's important to choose something that you will both equally look forward to.
2. Face each other. Decide who will take the first turn. Get a timer or a watch with an alarm, and set it for ten minutes.
3. One person will begin by complaining about the other person's behavior. Now there are some important guidelines to follow here: Every sentence must begin with the phrase "I feel that." You cannot accuse, label, or attack the other person. You will talk about your feelings regarding the things that are bothering you or causing you concern.
4. Continue complaining without stopping for the entire ten minutes. You may not stop and think – only complain. If you run out of things to complain about, repeat yourself in order to fill in the full ten minutes of your turn. Think to yourself, "This is my only chance to tell the person everything that's bothering me."
5. When the first person's turn is over, the other person may say one thing only: "I'm sorry, dear."
6. Now the other person sets the clock and complains for ten minutes straight. Same rules apply. When time is up, the other can only say, "I'm sorry, dear."
7. This is your allotted "complaining time." Under no conditions may you complain, nag, bother, criticize, attack, correct, or remind during any other time. All of these communications must be concentrated in your ten-minute time slot.
8. When the second person is done, smile at each other and go straight to your leisure activity. You will both be free of any nagging, complaining, or criticism until your next ten-minute time slot, about

twenty-four hours later. If one of you slips and begins to break this rule, the other one says to stop and hold that thought for the next ten-minute time slot.

## Conclusion

Trust can be the biggest obstacle in a relationship, but when it has been well-developed, it can be a great source of pride and comfort. Use the Seven Master Steps to guide yourself into a position of trustworthiness for your partner, and the results will be tremendous! We look forward to being with you in the next chapter.

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Anthony Robbins and Cloé Madanes continue to work together perfecting new methodologies of indirect negotiation to foster greater harmony and effectiveness in social systems ranging from families to corporations and government organizations.

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