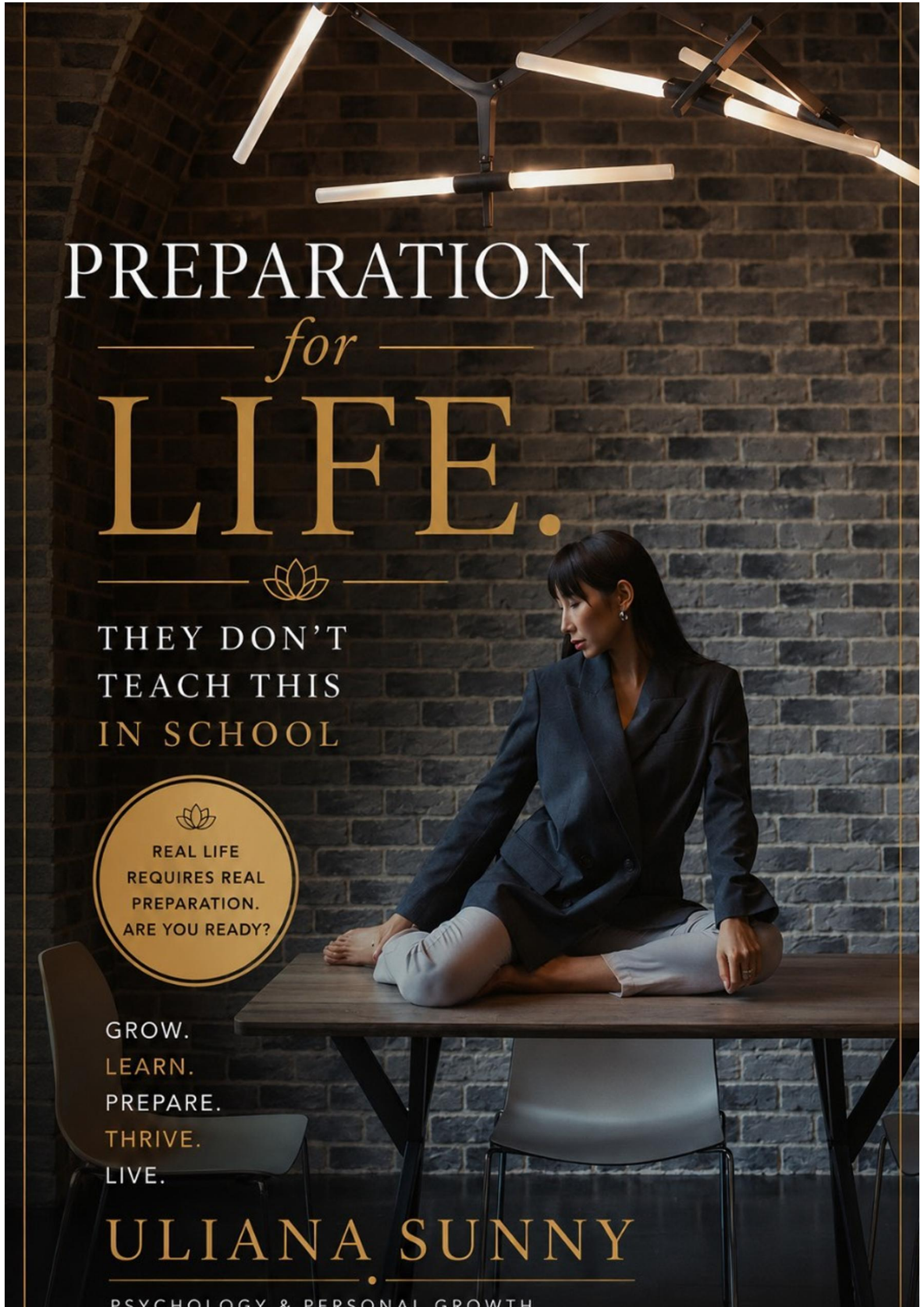




PREPARATION *for* LIFE.



THEY DON'T
TEACH THIS
IN SCHOOL



REAL LIFE
REQUIRES REAL
PREPARATION.
ARE YOU READY?

GROW.
LEARN.
PREPARE.
THRIVE.
LIVE.

ULIANA SUNNY

PSYCHOLOGY & PERSONAL GROWTH

Uliana Sunny

**Preparation for life.They
dont teach this in school**

«АВТОР»

2026

Sunny U.

Preparation for life.They dont teach this in school / U. Sunny —
«Автор», 2026

A book for girls and women who want to understand themselves, others, and life before it starts to present its most difficult lessons.For young women aged 17–25 who:Know the rules of the Russian language but struggle to articulate their desires and boundaries.Solve math problems but dont know how to manage their own money.Can write essays but haven't learned to express their opinions confidently in real life.Spot errors in text but dont always notice manipulation in communication.Know whats right according to textbooks but dont know how to do whats right for themselves.Get grades for knowledge but lack the skills truly needed in adult life.I wrote this book because the question how should I do whats right? often hides a desire to stop making mistakes in the most important things..When I moved to the capital, I had one small suitcase with cheap clothes and an unwavering belief that if I worked hard, life would be fair.I was wrong..

Uliana Sunny

Preparation for life.They dont teach this in school

Preparation for a Life Not Taught in School

A book for girls and women who want to understand themselves, others, and life before it starts to present its most difficult lessons.

Who this book is for:

For young women aged 17–25 who:

Know the rules of the Russian language but struggle to articulate their desires and boundaries.

Solve math problems but don't know how to manage their own money.

Can write essays but haven't learned to express their opinions confidently in real life.

Spot errors in text but don't always notice manipulation in communication.

Know what's "right" according to textbooks but don't know how to do what's right for themselves.

Get grades for knowledge but lack the skills truly needed in adult life.

I wrote this book because the question "how should I do what's right?" often hides a desire to stop making mistakes in the most important things.

Ahead of you are insights born from my life experience (hitting rock bottom and subsequent rebirth), logic (thanks to a mathematical mind that helps structure chaos), spiritual wisdom (through working with energy and intuition), and ideas from books that once helped me preserve myself and may help you too.

The Birth of This Book

When I moved to the capital, I had one small suitcase with cheap clothes and an unwavering belief that if I worked hard, life would be fair.

I was wrong.

After school, I could solve logarithms, but I couldn't say "no," or "this is my limit." I knew the Pythagorean theorem, but I didn't know how to protect my boundaries. I calculated percentages in problems, but I couldn't manage my money to keep it from slipping through my fingers. I knew how to derive a formula, but I didn't know how to extract myself from a toxic relationship.

The greatest irony was that, having become a teacher and master of mathematics, I was perfectly capable of explaining to others how to find correct solutions. I taught schoolchildren and students, helping them understand complex problems, but for years I tried to solve life with the same formula.

I thought that if I was smart, kind, patient, and diligent enough, life would surely reward me. That good people get good results. That effort always pays off, and justice eventually prevails.

But life turned out to be much more complicated.

Instead, I got:

- * a job where I was used and unappreciated;
 - * ended relationships where I was "convenient," and later "suffering over them";
 - * a 15-year mortgage and a loan for a failed business, where interest grew faster than my salary;
 - * no close family nearby and no good friends;
 - * a complete lack of understanding of how to understand people (especially men), how to become financially stable, how to start a relationship with a man, and many other questions concerning human relationships;
 - * a feeling that I was doing everything right, but the result was not at all what I was striving for.
- Over time, I understood something completely different: life's difficulties always helped me move forward. They weren't bad for me. On the contrary, they forced me to look for the next step, make decisions, and continue the journey, even when there was no clear outcome ahead.

I couldn't undo what was happening to me, but I could choose what to do next. Gradually, I began to feel that difficulties were my engine, definitely not a punishment. If not for them and my drive to find solutions, I might have remained stuck in place.

My parents were not wealthy people. On the contrary, our family struggled to cope even with basic household needs. So, difficulties accompanied me from childhood. For a long time, they came so often that I literally got used to living in a state of constant stress and fear. This became my norm, my usual mental and moral state. It's scary, but that's how it was.

I had to cope with everything myself—quickly, at my limit, often without the right to make a mistake. Of course, this lifestyle affected my health and psyche. But it was precisely this that led me to a deep study of myself, people, and life itself.

Today I can say: it was the ability to continue the journey after each fall that led me to a happy outcome. The readiness to act after each obstacle gradually changed my life.

And yet, it was then that another part of my story began. I started accumulating knowledge from books, my thorny experience, and conversations with completely different people: men and women, and acting within the circumstances I had. Study, work, mistakes, and returning to what I started gradually opened new opportunities. The help of loved ones was important to me, but the next step, the decision, and the responsibility for my own life still remained mine.

That's how I became convinced: true support is not born from another person's material resources. It appears when you yourself see options, make decisions, and continue your journey.

I realized for the first time: for years in school, college, and university, we are taught to solve other people's problems, but almost never taught to solve our own lives. We leave those institutions completely "incapable" of saying "no," recognizing manipulation, handling money, choosing ourselves, or leaving situations where we are constantly made to doubt our own worth.

And, perhaps, these are the very insights that should have been given much more time than yet another formula from a textbook.

One day I was sitting in my first rented apartment in the capital, watching YouTube, and I saw a very memorable video in which a psychologist talked about how school knowledge is not enough for young men and women. After school, many leave completely unprepared for real life. I thought about this for a long time and projected the situation onto myself. Indeed, it's true. I caught myself thinking: Smart. Educated. Unprepared for life. I grew up in a family where my parents worked all day and didn't dedicate themselves to me. Outside, I only saw school, which didn't teach the main thing. And then it finally dawned on me, simple but very unpleasant: you can have a lot of knowledge, but life doesn't get easier because of it.

I opened my notebook, looked at the pages with formulas, and wrote: "Formulas exist. But the desired life does not." I needed completely different knowledge. The kind that, for some reason, no one taught.

Living and making mistakes due to a total lack of understanding of life, I saw that true success is not only made up of money and status, which I had been striving for.

I am writing this book for young women who want to know more about the life they will live as adults. I am writing it so that they don't go through this journey alone, without preparation and knowledge. Not just about mathematics and other sciences taught in school, college, and university, but about life itself. About how the world is structured without rose-tinted glasses and unicorns. And most importantly: what to prepare for and what to do?

It seems that most young women understand everything without reading such a book. But, for example, no one explained to me at 17-18 that a "good girl" in real life can become convenient for others if she doesn't have her own boundaries. That diligence without strategy sometimes leads you somewhere you don't want to go. No one taught me that you can be friends with money, not fear it. That a mortgage or loan requires sober calculation. That savings provide freedom. No one showed

me how to choose a man, rather than just agreeing to whoever asks. How to be friends without losing yourself. How to communicate without losing yourself, and so on.

How did I come to this, besides my knowledge from school and university (friendship, science, peace, chewing gum) and intuition?

By reading books. A book is the cheapest way to buy someone else's experience. Mistakes that the author of a book made over 10 years, you experience in 10 hours of reading. You get a concentrated summary of victories and defeats without the risk of going broke or losing your health. It's like "downloading" a successful person's neural network directly into your head. Books break the "cycle of poverty" in your mind. When you don't know where to start, your brain is paralyzed by the fear of the unknown. A book gives you a map. A structure appears: "Aha, first I need to do A, then B." Chaos disappears, a plan emerges.

Of course, looking back today, I see: education and work helped me open doors I hadn't even noticed before. And that's important too. It can't be said that school, university, or work taught me nothing. Of course, they did. But diplomas themselves didn't make me happy, while experience, wisdom, learning new things, drive, and readiness to act led me to new people, solutions, and opportunities. A happy outcome was made up of many steps, mistakes, attempts to start over, and the ability to keep going when things were difficult.

When happiness and success appeared, I was able to see the entire complex path. Now, I joyfully want to share with you ways to solve and overcome problems.

And I thought: if I encountered this, then thousands of other young women did too. Those who moved to the capital from a small town, who fear loneliness, who work hard and don't get recognition, who tolerate relationships and don't know how to leave.

I am writing this book for them. And for myself—the one who sat in a small room and didn't know what to do.

Now I can consciously look at this entire journey. It was difficult for me, but gradually I came to a life where there is love, family, a job I chose, and a sense of inner support. I want to share with you the experience of how to think and act when familiar methods no longer help. Perhaps some of these ways of thinking and steps will help you navigate your obstacles a little more consciously and not wait for life itself to explain what can be learned in advance.

Module 1. THE SCIENCE OF PEOPLE

Chapter 1. Karpman's Drama Triangle. How to understand your most characteristic role?

It's better to look not at what you are generally like, but at what you usually do in a conflict or when a loved one is having a hard time.

From my life:

A personal story:

One of my friends was telling me for the third time about the same guy who was cheating on her. I spent half the night sleepless, devising a plan of action for her, helping her formulate what to say to him, and writing long messages of support. A week later, she was back with him—and it was as if none of it had happened.

When I was working as an assistant to the head of a large holding company, my colleague from the Directorate again "forgot" to do his part of the report and flew off on a business trip. Without a word, I finished it for him—because "there was no other way," "I can't let the team down." A month later, I found myself angry at everyone around me, even though no one had asked me to do it.

My aunt kept saying, "You never think about me"—even though I had recently paid for her expensive wardrobe, helped her with her bath, and spent the entire weekend with her. I felt guilty, even though I hadn't done anything wrong.

You'll surely recognize at least one of these scenes—or something very similar from your own life.

This is the work of a very old and very sticky psychological model—Karpman's Drama Triangle. It's useful to make a note right away: everything I write below is a working framework for observing yourself, other people, and situations—no more, no less. It helps you notice a pattern, and that's already a lot.

What is Karpman's Triangle?

In short: it's a model of unhealthy relationships where people unconsciously get stuck in one of three roles: Victim, Persecutor, or Rescuer.

The Victim feels helpless, wronged, and is convinced that "this always happens to me." In reality, they often avoid responsibility for their own life: it's easier to say "I can't do anything" than to change something.

The Persecutor blames, criticizes, and pressures: "it's your own fault," "you should have thought about it sooner." They act through control and reproaches.

The Rescuer rushes to solve other people's problems, even when not asked. From the outside, this looks like care—but often it's a way to feel needed and to escape their own difficulties through others'.

Knowing this model can help you notice several important things. For example, not taking on the role of Rescuer from the belief that "this person is difficult, but I will change them." Not getting used to the role of Victim and not convincing yourself that you need to endure because they had a difficult childhood. Not confusing control with care—a Persecutor can easily appear as someone who "just worries and knows what's right." And noticing unhealthy dynamics sooner: when relationships with a friend, parents, or partner repeatedly turn into the same cycle—one blames, the other justifies, then they switch roles. And, perhaps most importantly, learning to differentiate: I am responsible for my feelings and actions, and you are responsible for yours.

Why is it a trap? The roles are not fixed; people jump between them. A Rescuer, tired of helping an "ungrateful" Victim, suddenly becomes a Persecutor themselves. A Victim, criticized for too long, begins to manipulate through pity—and also turns into a Persecutor or back into a Victim in a new cycle. The circle is closed, and no one in it matures.

Psychiatrist Karpman described the pattern that underlies almost any prolonged conflict or codependent relationship. There are only three roles in it—and all of them are traps.

The Victim feels that life happens "to them," not "because of them." Their main phrases are: "this always happens to me," "I can't do anything about it," "well, what could I have done?" It's important to understand: real helplessness and the role of Victim are different things. The role of Victim is a position in which a person refuses responsibility even when they have a choice. Hidden within it is a secret benefit: if I am helpless, nothing can be asked of me, and those around me are obligated to save and pity me.

The Persecutor blames, criticizes, and controls. Their phrases are: "it's your own fault," "I told you so," "you should have thought with your head." They may appear strong—but essentially they are also avoiding, only hiding their vulnerability behind an attack.

The Rescuer rushes to help before being asked. Their phrases are: "let me do it," "she'll be lost without me," "I can't just stand by and watch her suffer." From the outside, this looks like care. In reality, the Rescuer often solves their own anxiety through someone else's problem—and subtly deprives the other person of the chance to learn to cope themselves.

Why does everyone get drawn into this triangle?

The main trick of Karpman's Triangle is that the roles are not fixed. The same person can go through all three in one evening. Here's what it looks like in life:

My friend, the Victim, complains about her boyfriend. I, the Rescuer, give advice. My friend doesn't listen to it. I get tired and irritably say, "Well, then suffer by yourself." I've become the

Persecutor. My friend gets offended and falls silent—a Victim again. I feel ashamed, and I rush to comfort her again—a Rescuer again.

The circle is closed, and neither of us has matured one bit. The problem isn't solved—it's just played out in a loop. This is the main danger of the triangle: it gives the illusion of action ("we're talking, we're doing something"), but in fact, it preserves the situation. None of the three roles involves a direct, honest conversation about needs.

Therefore, it's more useful to look for your typical transition scenario rather than trying to permanently assign yourself one role. It's important to catch the moment when you stop acting from an adult position and automatically enter the scenario.

How do you know what role you're in right now?

Try asking yourself three questions in the moment of conflict or a difficult conversation:

Am I waiting for someone to come and solve everything for me, even though I could solve it myself? — you're in the role of the Victim.

Do I want the person to feel guilty instead of saying what I need? — you're in the role of the Persecutor.

Am I doing something I wasn't asked to do, and then expecting gratitude or getting offended if I don't get it? — you're in the role of the Rescuer.

An honest answer to these questions is already half the way out of the triangle. It relies precisely on unconsciousness: until the role is named, you cannot leave it.

How to exit the triangle: the adult position

The way out is to leave the game altogether and take a fourth, healthy position—the position of an adult who is responsible for themselves and respects the right of others to be responsible for themselves.

Instead of being a Victim—state your needs directly. Not "this always happens to me," but "I'm having a hard time, and this is what would help me." This requires courage: the Victim role offers protection; nothing can be asked of them. The adult position removes this protection—but in return gives real control over your life.

Instead of being a Persecutor—talk about your feelings using "I" statements, not accusations. Not "you never listen to me," but "I get upset when I'm interrupted." The difference seems small, but it's what determines whether a dialogue or defense will begin.

Instead of being a Rescuer—help only when genuinely asked, and ask yourself: "Am I doing this because the person needs it, or because I'm anxious watching their difficulties?" Sometimes the greatest support isn't solving someone's problem for them, but believing that they are capable of handling it themselves.

Exercise: "My Role in the Triangle"

Take the last situation where you left a conversation feeling upset, offended, or guilty for no apparent reason. Answer in writing:

1. What did I tell myself at that moment? (write down verbatim if you remember)
2. What role does this phrase reveal—Victim, Persecutor, or Rescuer?
3. What would an adult, who is responsible for themselves but doesn't accuse or rescue, say in my place?
4. How can I say this next time the situation repeats?

Try doing this exercise once a week for a month—and you'll start noticing the role even before you're in it. And that's already the beginning of exiting the triangle.

Chapter 2. Types of People: Who Is Really in Front of You?

Have you ever said, "He seemed so good, but he turned out to be..."? Or: "I didn't expect her to do that"? Or: "How could I not have noticed this sooner?"

All of this is the result of the same trap. Without a system, we judge people by first impressions: by status, by how they speak. We believe words, not actions. We project our ideas of "how things should be" onto others. And then we're surprised when reality doesn't match.

I've been through this myself. Through relationships where it seemed that love was a constant seesaw: one moment soaring, the next falling. And only years later, when I learned to see actions, not words, did I understand what calm closeness is—the kind where you don't have to lose yourself and sacrifice your boundaries.

We make a big mistake when we trust the wrapping. Only actions determine who is in front of you.

Here, I offer a simple and honest classification of people based on life practice. It will help you understand: who is in front of you, what to expect from them, and how to build communication so you don't get hurt.

Four Basic Types of People (by energy and motivation)

At the heart of everything are two questions:

1. Does the person take or give? (Energy, attention, resources)
2. Does the person build or destroy? (Relationships, projects, life)

By crossing these axes, we get **four basic types**. It's important to note right away: people are rarely "pure" types; behavior changes depending on the context and where the person is in their life. But the scheme below helps you notice patterns, and that's already a lot.

Type 1. "The Creator" (gives + builds)

This is a person who creates the world around them. They don't wait for someone to come and save them—they build it themselves. They rejoice in others' successes, because for them, "another's success" doesn't diminish their own. They know how to support, inspire, and help. They are reliable, but they don't "rescue"—they help you get on your feet, rather than carrying you.

How to recognize them:

- They talk about their plans and execute them.
- They don't devalue your achievements; they celebrate them.
- In conflicts, they look for a solution, not someone to blame.
- They have friends, hobbies, their own life.
- They don't try to "change" you—they accept you.
- They are willing to invest in relationships, but not at their own expense.

How to communicate with them:

- Value their time and energy—they are not an infinite resource.
- Reciprocate—they don't like "one-way streets."
- Reciprocate—he doesn't like "one-way streets."
- Be honest—he respects the truth, even if it's uncomfortable.
- Don't try to manipulate—he sees it, and his trust will be lost.

Should you be friends? Yes. This is the best friend; they won't betray you.

Should you build a relationship? Yes, if you're ready for a healthy partnership.

Type 2. "The Consumer" (takes + doesn't build)

This is a person who comes into your life to take. Attention, care, money, resources, time. He is often charming, knows how to be liked, and quickly gains trust. But he doesn't invest back. He doesn't build—he uses. His relationships with people are transactions. He isn't necessarily malicious; he just doesn't know any other way. He feels that the world should give—because inside, he himself feels no support.

How to recognize:

- He talks a lot about himself, listens little.
- He often asks ("do this," "lend me," "help me"), but rarely offers.
- He doesn't remember details of your life, because you're not his focus.

- His promises aren't kept if it's not to his advantage.
- He appears when he needs something and disappears when everything is fine.
- He considers your care for him "normal," and his care for you a "gift."

How to communicate:

- Clearly define boundaries: "I can do this, but not that."
- Don't give more than you receive. This isn't selfishness—it's balance.
- Don't expect him to change while you continue to give him what he wants.
- If he doesn't invest—don't you invest either.

Should you be friends? Only if you're ready for superficial relationships and don't expect reciprocity.

Should you build a relationship? No. You will be his "donor."

Type 3. "The Destroyer" (takes + destroys)

This is the most dangerous type. He doesn't just take—he destroys. With words, actions, silence. He devalues, criticizes, humiliates, controls. His self-esteem is built on making you feel small. This could be an abuser, a narcissist, a toxic person. He doesn't always realize what he's doing—but that doesn't make him less dangerous. Often, behind such behavior is deep internal pain that he doesn't know how to cope with otherwise. Understanding this is useful—but it's not a reason to stay close.

- He devalues you: "you're too emotional," "that's not an achievement."
- He criticizes without being constructive.
- He is jealous, controlling, restrictive.
- His mood changes suddenly; you walk "on eggshells."
- He doesn't admit his mistakes—others are always to blame.
- He doesn't respect your boundaries, probes for weak spots.
- Don't. Stay away. If it's impossible (work, family)—minimize contact.
- Don't engage in explanations—it's pointless.
- Don't show vulnerability—he will use it against you.
- Seek support from other people so you don't face him alone.
- If you're in a toxic relationship—prepare an exit plan.

Should you be friends? Absolutely not.

Should you build a relationship? Absolutely not. It's dangerous.

Type 4. "The Rescuer" (gives + doesn't build)

He is good, generous, responsive. Ready to help everyone. He rescues homeless animals, colleagues, friends, men. But he doesn't build his own life. He lives through the problems of others because he doesn't know what to do with his own life. He helps to feel needed. He often burns out, suffers, but continues—because "they'll be lost without me." In reality, they would manage. And he would be left alone with emptiness.

- He is always ready to help, but rarely asks for help.
- He often says: "I can't refuse."
- His life is solving other people's problems.
- He feels guilty when he doesn't help.
- He often chooses partners who have problems.
- He doesn't know what to do with himself when everything is fine.
- Don't let him solve your problems—learn to cope yourself.
- Don't abuse his kindness—it's not an infinite resource.
- Ask what he needs and offer support.
- Tell him: "You have the right to think about yourself."

Should you be friends? Yes, but remember that he doesn't know how to ask. Offer help yourself.

Should you build a relationship? Only if you're ready to support him, not take advantage of his kindness. And if he himself is ready to learn to think about himself.

Additional Psychotypes (by behavior in conflict and in life)

These are "superstructures" over the basic types. They show how a person acts in specific situations. And again—this is a working framework for observation. No diagnoses or unshakeable judgments of anyone or anything.

Type "I Am the Center of the Universe" (narcissistic)

He considers himself special. He expects admiration, attention, recognition. He may be successful, beautiful, intelligent. But he is incapable of empathy—his world revolves around him. You are only needed in this world to reflect him. Behind this often lies a very fragile self-esteem that he doesn't know how to build except through others' admiration.

- He talks only about himself.
- He doesn't remember what's important to you.
- He cannot tolerate criticism.
- He demands special treatment.
- He devalues your achievements to remain "on top."
- Don't give him power over your self-esteem.
- Don't expect support from him—he doesn't know how.
- Praise, but don't flatter—he senses insincerity.
- Don't enter into competition—you will always lose.

Type "The Victim" (always suffering)

She or he is always in the role of the injured party. Life is cruel, people are unfair, the boss is a tyrant, the ex is a scoundrel. They complain a lot, but change nothing. Because the role of "victim" gives them: attention, avoidance of responsibility, the right not to act.

- Constant complaints about life.
- "Circumstances" are always to blame.
- They don't look for solutions—they look for sympathy.
- They often say: "I can't," "I won't succeed."
- Don't fuel complaints with sympathy—this reinforces the position.
- It's helpful to ask: "What are you going to do about it?"
- Don't take responsibility for their life—that's their task.

Type "The Rescuer/Hero" (carries everything on their shoulders)

They take on an unbearable burden. They care for everyone, but not for themselves. They are proud of their "indispensability." But behind this often lies fear: if I stop being needed, I won't be loved. They suffer from burnout and don't know how to ask for help.

- Always ready to help.
- Often tired, but don't allow themselves rest.
- Don't know how to say "no."
- Feel guilty if someone nearby is suffering.
- Don't let them rescue you—it's not their duty.
- Tell them: "You also have a right to rest."
- If they offer help—sometimes accept it, so they feel their value.

Type "The Shadow Personality" (hides their true desires)

They say one thing, do another. They fear conflicts, so they agree, smile—and then sabotage. They are passively aggressive. You don't know what they actually feel and want.

- Words diverge from actions.
- They often say "yes" against their will.
- Their behavior is mysterious, their reaction is difficult to predict.
- They avoid direct questions.
- Ask directly, but without pressure.
- Pay attention to actions, not words.

- Don't trust completely until you verify.

How to Understand Who Is In Front of You in Five Minutes?

Here are a few quick "tests" you can perform in any situation.

Ask the person for a small favor—not critical, but something they can easily do. See: will they do it? How? With joy or with irritation? Will they remember later that you asked?

- The Builder: will help, without reminding.
- The Consumer: will help if it benefits him or to "close" your issue later.
- The Destroyer: will refuse or help, but humiliate you in the process.
- The Rescuer: will help, even if it's inconvenient for him.

Tell them about your achievement. Observe their reaction.

- The Builder: genuine joy, questions, support.
- The Consumer: a formal "congratulations" and a shift of the topic to himself.
- The Destroyer: devaluing ("that was easy," "but I..."), envy.
- The Rescuer: joy, but with a slight sadness ("I wish I could do that").

Tell the person "no" in something small.

- The Builder: will accept, ask if there's another option.
- The Consumer: will be offended, try to pressure you ("oh, please").
- The Destroyer: will blame you, devalue your refusal, manipulate.
- The Rescuer: will say "of course, I understand"—but may later worry that he let you down.

Ask what he thinks about his exes, colleagues, friends.

- The Builder: speaks respectfully, even of those he didn't get along with.
- The Consumer: talks about what others "gave" or "didn't give" him.
- The Destroyer: criticizes, devalues, blames.
- The Rescuer: justifies even those who hurt him.

Ask about his mistake—not in an accusatory way, but neutrally. Or simply observe how he reacts to failure.

- The Builder: admits the mistake and says how he will fix it.
- The Consumer: looks for culprits or excuses.
- The Destroyer: blames someone, doesn't admit his role.
- The Rescuer: takes the blame on himself, even if it's not his responsibility.

How to Use This Knowledge in Life

In friendship:

- Look for Builders. They will support you, won't betray you.
- Don't expect reciprocity from Consumers.
- Pity Rescuers, but don't let them sacrifice themselves for you.
- Avoid Destroyers—they are not friends.

In relationships:

- You can only build a relationship with a Builder.
- A Rescuer will build a relationship where you are his project. This is exhausting.
- A Consumer will use you.
- A Destroyer will destroy you.

At work:

- A Builder is the best colleague.
- A Consumer is someone who takes your ideas and passes them off as his own.
- A Destroyer is a toxic colleague who creates conflicts.
- A Rescuer is someone who takes on other people's work and then burns out.

In family:

· This is more difficult, because we don't choose relatives. But if you understand the type—you understand what to expect from them, and you won't be disappointed.

What if you yourself are not a Builder? It's helpful to honestly ask yourself: who are you in this classification?

What if you yourself are not a Builder? It's helpful to honestly ask yourself: who are you in this classification?

- If you are a Consumer, you know how to take but not how to give. This is not a final verdict. You can start to notice what you take and compensate. Start small: listen, don't just talk; offer help, don't just ask; give, don't just receive.

- If you are a Destroyer, you need help. Perhaps you don't realize how you affect others. Consult a psychologist. Work on yourself. Because destroying is easy, building is hard.

- If you are a Rescuer, you need to learn to think about yourself.

Try practicing "no." Help when you have the strength and desire, not just when you feel bad saying no. You don't have to save the whole world to remain a good person.

Before we move on, it's useful to say a few words about what is generally meant by different types of people in your environment. Treat this as a working framework for observing yourself and others. The same person can exhibit different traits in different circumstances. But some patterns are still discernible, and noticing them is already a big step.

If you yourself are a Builder, you are most likely in harmony with yourself. Just remember: not everyone around you is built the same way, and expecting others to give what you give is a path to disappointment. Don't think this is cynicism... it's just honesty.

People are complex. The same person can behave completely differently depending on the situation, mood, fear, or fatigue. But there are basic patterns—for example, how a person reacts to others' difficulties or how they behave when they need something from you. If you learn to notice these things, you will stop being surprised when people "turn out not to be who you thought." You will simply start to see them for who they are sooner.

And one more thing, perhaps the most important: you have the right to choose. You don't have to be friends with everyone. You don't have to build relationships with those who aren't right for you. You don't have to tolerate those who destroy. You can choose consciously and without guilt. And live among those who build, not destroy.

Your assignment:

1. Think about five people in your life—friends, colleagues, family members, exes. Assign each a type from the classification. What did you learn?

2. Now, honestly: who are you? Not ideally, but in reality. What can you change in your behavior to become closer to a Builder?

3. Write a list of your personal rules for interacting with each type. For example: "With a Destroyer—don't argue; with a Consumer—don't lend money; with a Rescuer—remind him of his own boundaries."

Chapter 3. The Ability Not Just to Hear, But to Listen—The Most Important Skill in Life

Have you ever complained to a friend, and she started showering you with advice—and you felt even more alone? Or vice versa: you tried to help, but the person got angry and said, "You're not listening to me!"? What does this mean? You thought one of you was a bad conversationalist. Most likely, you were simply confusing empathy with problem-solving. The difference between them is the topic of this part of the book.

Why Aren't We Taught to Listen?

In school, we are taught to speak, write, and count. In college, at university—to analyze. But not to listen. And yet, the ability to listen is perhaps the most underestimated skill in life. It is more important than the ability to speak beautifully.

Why? Because:

In friendship, without the ability to listen, you will be alone, even with a crowd of friends.

In relationships, without the ability to listen, you will feel lonely next to a man.

At work, without the ability to listen, you won't understand a client, a boss, a colleague—and you won't advance.

In negotiations, without the ability to listen, you won't be able to reach an agreement, because you won't hear what the other person truly needs.

But most importantly: the ability to listen is the foundation of respect. When you listen to someone, you tell them: "You are important. Your feelings are important. You have the right to be heard." When you interrupt, give advice, or devalue—you say something completely different: "I know better. Your feelings can wait." This destroys everything: friendship, love, career.

Let's clarify the terms right away. Empathy and active listening: what's the difference?

Empathy is the ability to feel what another person feels. Imagine that you briefly put on their "emotional clothes": you can imagine what it's like for them, you empathize. But you don't become them. You remain yourself—just present, in their emotion.

Active listening is a skill that allows you to understand exactly what a person is saying and feeling, and to show them this without imposing your solutions.

The main mistake: many people think that empathy is when you "feel someone else's pain." But true empathy is when you don't immerse yourself in someone else's pain, but remain grounded in yourself while still being able to be present.

The second mistake: confusing "understanding" with "solving." When a person talks about a problem, they are not always looking for a solution. More often, they are looking for support—the feeling that they are not alone. Validation—that their feelings are normal. Understanding—that they are heard.

If you immediately give advice, you deprive them of the opportunity to express themselves. It's as if you're saying: "Your feelings aren't important, only the problem is. I'll solve it now, and you'll shut up."

Think about this: when you're crying, do you want an algorithm of actions? Or do you want to be hugged and told, "I'm with you"?

Three Levels of Listening—And Why Most People Get Stuck at the First

I distinguish three levels. In real life, we switch between them, but most people live at levels 1 and 2, unaware of the existence of level 3. Remember, what I'm writing about is a working framework for observing yourself and other people. Just a tool to notice what's happening in a conversation.

Level 1. Listening to Reply

This is the most common mode. You listen, but you don't actually hear the other person—you're preparing your own reply. You catch the end of their sentence to insert your own.

What it looks like:

She talks about a problem with her boss, and you're already thinking: "Oh, I had a similar experience! I'll tell her about it now."

He talks about his feelings, and you're already formulating advice in your head.

A child complains about school, and you immediately say: "Well, when I was your age..."

Result: the other person feels unheard. The conversation shifts to you, not to them.

Level 2. Listening to Understand Facts

You are focused on the content: what happened, who said what, what are the deadlines, what are the numbers. Emotions remain out of frame. It's as if you're collecting data, not talking to a living person.

She's crying, and you say: "And when did this happen? And what exactly did he say? And did you answer him?" You're gathering information, not feeling her pain.

He's irritated, and you clarify: "Why did you decide that? What evidence do you have?"

Result: the person feels interrogated. They don't feel better, even though you "understood the facts."

Level 3. Listening to Feel and Be Present

This is what truly changes a conversation. You hear not only the words, but also the feelings behind them. You don't give advice, you don't look for facts, you don't try on the situation yourself. You are simply present. You hold the space where the person can be anything.

She says: "I was fired." You don't say: "Don't worry, you'll find something better." You say: "That's so painful. I hear your confusion. You have the right to feel this right now."

He says: "I can't cope." You don't say: "Everything will be fine." You say: "You're having a hard time right now. I'm with you."

Result: the person feels accepted, seen, not alone. They can breathe out. And then, perhaps, they will find a solution themselves.

The Active Listening Algorithm

This can be learned. Here's the sequence I suggest you try.

Step 1. Stop Your Inner Dialogue

This is the hardest part. A voice inside says: "How should I respond?", "I felt the same way," "He's wrong." Try to quiet it. Tell yourself: "Right now, I'm just listening—without judgment or comparison." If you can't do it immediately—just breathe and focus on the other person's face.

Step 2. Visual Attention

Look at the person. Not at your phone, not out the window. Turn your body towards them, uncross your arms, lean slightly forward. Your body says: "I'm here, I'm with you."

Step 3. Be Present with Your Body and Voice

Use short responses to show you're engaged: "Uh-huh," "Mmm-hmm," "Yes, yes." Don't interrupt, don't interject with "Oh, that's nothing!" Just let the person speak.

Step 4. Show That You Hear—Reflecting Feelings

This is a very simple and very effective technique: name the feeling you think the other person is experiencing.

"You look upset."

"It seems like you're angry."

"I think you're feeling very sad right now."

"You feel betrayed."

If you're unsure, add a qualifier: "It seems that...", "I hear in your voice...". If you're wrong, the other person will correct you—and that's good too: they'll clarify what they're actually feeling.

Step 5. Ask Clarifying Questions—Not "Why," But "What" and "How"

The main thing here is not to turn the conversation into an interrogation. Ask questions that show genuine interest.

"What's going on inside you right now?"

"How do you feel in this situation?"

"What's the hardest thing for you right now?"

"And what would you like me to hear?"

It's best to avoid "why" questions—they can easily sound accusatory. Instead of "Why didn't you leave your job?", try: "What kept you there?"

Step 6. Don't Give Advice Unless Asked

This is rule number one. If you're not asked "What should I do?"—don't advise. You can offer: "Would you like me to share my experience?"—and only if the person says "yes."

People often want to be understood more than they want a solution. Unsolicited advice often feels like you're saying: "I know better than you."

Step 7. Ask: "Do You Need Support or a Solution Right Now?"

This is one of the most useful questions I know. When someone starts talking about a problem, I say:

"Listen, I want to support you. Tell me—do you need me to just listen right now? Or do you want us to think about a solution together?"

This removes all awkwardness. The person will tell you what they need. And you won't make a mistake.

Step 8. Mirroring — Brief Summarizing

At the end of the conversation, or in the middle when the other person has finished speaking, briefly state what you heard:

"If I understand correctly, you're worried that your boss doesn't appreciate your contribution, and you're afraid you won't get a promotion because of it. Is that right?"

"You feel lonely in this city because you haven't found close connections yet. Did I understand you correctly?"

Summarizing shows that you're truly on the same page. And it gives the other person a chance to correct you if something isn't quite right.

What Not to Do—Anti-Examples

There are phrases that kill a conversation. It's helpful to know them—not to judge yourself if they burst out, but to notice and gradually replace them.

"Don't worry so much"—devalues feelings. The person is worried, and that's normal.

"Everything will be fine"—false hope that doesn't help right now.

"It's your own fault"—an accusation that removes support.

"Well, I had it worse"—shifts attention to you, not the other person.

"You just need to..."—unsolicited advice. You become "smarter," and the person feels "stupider."

"Don't pay attention to it"—devalues the problem.

"I know how you feel"—no, you don't. You might know something similar, but not their unique experience.

"You're too emotional"—this is devaluing, and it hurts especially deeply.

How This Helps in Friendship, Love, and Work

****In Friendship:****

How many times have you left a friend feeling misunderstood? Or, conversely, felt used when a friend dumped all her problems on you and wasn't interested in yours? Active listening transforms friendship into a safe space. You're not competing, not rescuing—you're just present. Friends who know how to listen stay for life.

****In Relationships with Men:****

Men are often not taught to talk about feelings. But if you learn to listen without giving advice, he will start to trust you. He will stop being afraid that you will criticize his "weakness." This creates a deep connection. And, by the way, you can teach him this technique in return—ask him: "Please, just listen to me, don't try to fix anything."

****At Work:****

The ability to listen is a real superpower. You will understand clients better than your competitors. You will hear what your boss **really** wants, not just what he says. You will resolve conflicts within the team because people feel heard. This leads to career growth without burnout.

Practice Exercise

Try this for the next three days. Find someone—a friend, colleague, mom—and practice active listening according to the algorithm. After the conversation, ask:

"How did you feel when I was listening to you?"

"What could I have done better?"

Write down your observations. This is important so you can see for yourself what changes.

****Important: Empathy Without Self-Sacrifice.**** Listening isn't easy. Sometimes you get tired of other people's emotions. That's normal. You don't have to be a "shoulder to cry on" for everyone.

****Your Boundaries:****

You have the right to say: "I can't listen to this right now, I'm tired. Let's talk tomorrow."

You have the right to end a conversation if it's going in circles and you're being used as a "dumping ground for negativity."

You have the right not to enter into someone else's state if it drags you down.

Remember: you approach the person, but you don't live in their pain. You stay on your own territory.

When you truly listen, you give a person the most valuable thing—your attention. You say: "You are not alone, I see you." This is more than words. It heals loneliness, calms anxiety, and gives hope. Learn to listen—and people will be drawn to you. Not because you are smart or beautiful, but because it's easier to breathe when they are with you.

Your Assignment:

1. Recall the last time you felt understood. What did the other person say? What words supported you?

2. Recall a time when you felt unheard. What did the other person do? Write it down so you don't repeat it yourself.

3. This week, consciously apply the active listening algorithm in at least one conversation. Write down what changed.

Chapter 4. Time to Know More About Men: A Complete Classification. Who to Befriend, Who to Date, and Who to Run From

Men are different from women. And if you understand this science, relationships will stop being a guessing game.

You are smart. You read books, build a career, moved out of your parents' house, sorted out your finances. But in relationships with men, you sometimes feel like a schoolgirl who forgot to study for a test. You wait, guess, worry, analyze his every message, and he... just lives his life. And you don't understand: does he love you? Is he busy? What is he even thinking about?

I've been there. Honestly, sometimes I still fall into that game. But over years of mistakes, observations, and conversations—with men and with myself—I've identified several clear patterns. How to understand, how to choose, how to build, and how not to destroy yourself in the process?

Let's start with the most important thing: illusions. As long as you believe in them, they will hinder your life.

Illusion 1. He should guess what I want.

No. The male brain is not wired for mind-reading. If you want him to do something—say it directly. Without hints or resentment. "I want you to get me a little gift" works much better than "I'm sad, and you're always disappearing."

Illusion 2. I can change him.

No. People only change when they want to. And most often—not under pressure, but because their time has come. If a man doesn't respect you now, he won't start respecting you after marriage. If he's lazy—he won't become a hard worker. If he's rude—he won't become gentle. Accept him as he is or leave.

Illusion 3. If he's silent, he doesn't care about me.

Men think in terms of tasks. If they are at work—they are at work. If with friends—they are with friends. They don't sit around replaying in their heads what you're feeling right now. This isn't because they don't care about you. It's just that they are single-minded. For them, silence is normal. Don't confuse a lack of messages with a lack of feelings.

Illusion 4. Men don't feel.

They feel. Strongly. They just don't know how to show it because they weren't taught to. From childhood, they are told: "don't whine," "be a man," "tough it out." As a result, they either suppress emotions or express them as aggression. This is their trauma. If you want true intimacy, you'll have to learn to talk about feelings together.

Illusion 5. If I'm perfect, he won't leave.

You can be perfect in everything. And he can still leave. Because his decisions don't always depend on you. He might meet someone else, he might fall out of love, he might not be ready for a serious relationship. Perfection guarantees nothing but burnout.

How Do We Choose the Wrong Ones?

We choose not men, but projections and images. I wrote in one of my books how I fell in love with the image of a man—and that relationship didn't work out in my favor. We fall in love not with the person, but with their status, appearance, manner of speaking, with their "potential." And this is our main enemy.

Trap 1. He's "not like everyone else."

If he's "not like everyone else"—most often he just doesn't fit into normal social norms. This can be charisma, but it can also be immaturity, an inability to commit. Brightness and reliability are different things.

Trap 2. You see a "wounded boy" in him.

If you see a "wounded boy" in him who needs to be healed with love—that's a signal to stop. You are not a doctor. Relationships should be equal, not therapy.

Trap 3. You believe words, not actions.

Promises are just words. Never believe words. Look at actions. Behavior that repeats more than twice is a pattern. If he's late, lies, doesn't keep his word—that won't change. Verify with reality, not hope.

Trap 4. Fear of loneliness.

Fear of loneliness is a bad advisor. You'd rather marry the wrong person than be alone until forty. But getting divorced or suffering in a marriage is much more painful than being alone. Don't let age pressure you.

How to Recognize a Man Capable of a Healthy Relationship

I call this the "Maturity Formula." It's useful to check along three axes. And again, this is a framework for observation.

Axis 1. Emotional Maturity

Does he know how to admit his mistakes—not make excuses, not blame others? Can he talk about his feelings—not "everything's fine," but "I'm sad" or "I'm anxious"? Is he capable of compromise? Is he not afraid to ask for help?

Axis 2. Social Maturity

Does he have friends, hobbies, a life of his own outside of you? Does he respect women in general, not only you—how does he talk about his ex, about colleagues? Does he have goals and plans? Does he stand by his word: said it—did it?

Axis 3. His Attitude Towards You

Does he consider your needs, not just his own? Does he rejoice in your successes—not envy, not devalue? Does he talk about a shared future without an eternal "we'll see"? Is he willing to invest—time, attention, effort?

Red Flags—Stop Signals:

- devalues your feelings ("you're too emotional");
- controls you—who you are, where, with whom;
- doesn't take responsibility for his actions;
- constantly criticizes, compares you to others;
- is jealous without reason, threatens;

his words don't match his actions.

How to Talk to a Man to Be Heard

If you need support—say it directly: "I don't need advice right now, I need you to hug me and tell me everything will be okay," "Darling, please help me with the rent for my apartment. I really need your help," "For my birthday, I want you to give me money, and I'll pay three mortgage payments."

Use "I-messages": instead of "You don't listen to me"—"I feel lonely when we don't talk."

Avoid generalizations: "You're always late" is better replaced with "Today you were twenty minutes late, and I was upset."

Don't lecture. Men tune out during long monologues. Speak briefly, clearly, to the point. If you need to discuss something important, you can give a heads-up: "I have a topic, is it convenient to talk in ten minutes?"

Ask for his opinion—men love to feel like experts. But don't overdo it: he's not your psychotherapist.

Respect his silence. If he's quiet, it doesn't mean he's angry. He might just be processing information. Give him time.

How to Preserve Yourself in a Relationship

This is, perhaps, the most important part of the chapter. Because even with a good man, you can lose yourself.

Don't abandon friends, hobbies, or work for him. If you build your whole life around him—when you break up, you'll have nothing left. You must be whole even without him.

Financial independence is the foundation of healthy respect. Don't go into debt for his gifts, don't pay his bills if you're not married. And even in marriage, it's useful to have a personal account.

If you swallow an offensive word once, the second time you'll swallow an even more offensive one. Boundaries mean, "I'm showing that you can't treat me this way." Leave when there are serious violations.

You have the right to an evening without him. To your opinion. To your career. To your time. If he doesn't understand this, he's not yours.

Forget the phrase "I'm like a mother to him." This is a script for the death of a relationship. Don't chase after his socks, don't remind him about tasks, don't control his daily life. He's an adult—he'll answer for himself. And if he doesn't, it means you didn't choose an adult.

Filter Theory

We'll return to the filter theory later in the book. But for now, I want to give you a checklist of filters through which you can screen any man, even at the dating stage.

Filter 0. Availability

Can he see you regularly? If meeting requires "feats," he's out.

Filter 1. Appearance and Lifestyle

Do you like his appearance, how he's dressed, what he does, how he smells, what his home is like? If something irritates you, don't tolerate it.

Filter 2. Values and Habits

Does he like to plan or is he spontaneous? A spendthrift or a saver? Active or a homebody? Is family a priority or career? If they don't match, it's a future conflict.

Filter 3. His Attitude Towards You and Women in General

How does he talk about his ex-girlfriend or wife? Does he respect your boundaries? How does he react to your "no"? Does he hear your desires?

****Filter 4. His Attitude Towards Marriage and Family****

What does he think about children, the distribution of roles, money in marriage? Does he avoid these topics?

Filter 5. Willingness to Invest

Is he willing to spend time, effort, money with you—commensurate with his abilities, to listen to your problems? Or are you the only one investing?

Filter 6. Reliability

Does he keep his word? Does he arrive on time? Does he answer calls? Can you rely on him in a difficult situation?

Filter 7. Acceptance of You as a Person

Does he accept you with your quirks, emotions, character—or does he try to "mold" you?

If even one filter isn't passed, it's worth thinking about. Skipping the fourth, sixth, and seventh and hoping for a miracle won't work.

What "Love" Truly Is

Infatuation is passion, idealization, dependence, need, a desire to dissolve into another.

Love is a choice, respect, patience, partnership, the ability to see flaws and remain. It's "we fill our lives together."

Check yourself: are you ready to go through a difficult stage with this person without running away? To accept him without trying to change him? To tell him the truth, even when it's sharp? To support him when he's weak, and at the same time not lose yourself?

If "yes" to everything, you're on the right track.

Assignment:

1. Create your own checklist "What's important to me in a man"—about values, respect, reliability.
2. Think about your past relationships. What filters did you miss? Write down your mistakes so you don't repeat them.
3. If you're currently in a relationship, evaluate your partner using the filters. Honestly. Where are the shortcomings? Discuss it with him.
4. Write a portrait of the man you'd like to be with in three years. Not his appearance, but his actions, his attitude towards you, his life priorities.

It's important to understand: men are not divided into "good" and "bad." They are divided into mature and immature, into yours and not yours, into compatible and incompatible with you. Your task is not to judge, but to understand and choose.

Have you ever caught yourself thinking, "He seems good, but something's off"? Or vice versa: "Everyone says he's a jerk, but I'm drawn to him"? This is because we don't have a system. We choose by smell, by a picture from childhood. We don't know who we're looking for, so we take the first one who smiles.

Below, I provide a typical classification of men—by their inner makeup, by their maturity, by their attitude towards women, and by their potential in relationships. This is another working map; it helps not to wander in the dark, while understanding that every person is more complex than any scheme.

Classification of Men by Personality Type and Attitude Towards Life

1. **Man-Child.** He's charming, cheerful, spontaneous. You're never bored with him. He knows how to surprise, give emotions, make unexpected gifts. But he doesn't know how to plan, doesn't keep his word, doesn't take responsibility for consequences. He lives for today, and if a problem arises, he disappears.

How to recognize him:

His promises break against reality ("I'll stop by"—didn't stop by, "I'll do it tomorrow"—didn't do it).

He doesn't remember important dates, doesn't plan a shared future.

His life is parties, friends, games, hobbies, work "until the first difficulty."

When you try to talk seriously, he changes the subject or gets offended.

He always "doesn't have enough time" or "circumstances."

He often borrows money and doesn't return it.

What to do with him:

Friendship? Yes, if he doesn't drag you down. He's an excellent conversationalist, fun to be with, he can be a sincere friend—but not in a crisis.

Relationship? Only if you're ready to be his "mom" and carry everything yourself. And if you're twenty years old and still in "party mode" yourself. With age, this stops working.

Build a family? No. He's still a child himself—in the sense that's important for a family.

Important: He's not evil. He just hasn't grown up. And he might never grow up. Don't try to change him—it will drain all your energy and yield no results.

2. **Abusive Man.** He's a walking red flag. Charming at the start, quickly gains trust, creates the feeling of "he's my hero." But behind this facade are control, humiliation, devaluation, manipulation, and the gradual destruction of your self-confidence. He's often very successful, charismatic, and even caring—at least, in his own version of events.

How to recognize him in the early stages:

He too quickly says "you're my destiny," "I've never met anyone like you." This has a name—"love bombing." It's not love. It's bait.

He criticizes you: "you're too emotional," "your friends are strange," "you look good when you're silent."

He controls: where you are, with whom, when you'll be back.

He's jealous without reason, accuses you of infidelity.

He devalues your achievements: "so what, a bonus," "that was just luck."

He uses "cold silence" as punishment.

Everyone is always to blame except him: his ex is stupid, his boss is a jerk, his friends betrayed him.

You feel like you're walking on eggshells, afraid of his reaction.

Friendship? No. He doesn't know how to be a friend—he knows how to use people.

Relationship? No. This is a trap that's very difficult to escape.

If you're already in a relationship: The first step is to admit that it's abuse. Next—a psychologist, close friends, any therapy. Plan your exit in advance: money, documents, housing. Promises to change sound convincing, but people only change after long therapy, and not all of them.

Important: You are not obligated to save him. You are not obligated to tolerate it. Your safety is more important than his "emotional traumas."

3. **Man-Wall.** He's reliable as a rock. He earns money, solves problems, does his job. But about feelings—almost nothing. To the question "what do you feel?" he answers "everything's fine" or simply stays silent. He can be a wonderful husband and father, but next to him, you risk feeling lonely.

He rarely initiates heart-to-heart conversations.

He answers emotional topics monosyllabically.

In conflicts, he closes off, withdraws into himself.

He expresses love through actions—bringing money, fixing things, buying groceries—not words.

He doesn't pick up on hints because he's not very good at reading emotions.

Friendship? Excellent, if you need a reliable person who won't pry into your soul.

Relationship? Only if you're ready to accept his "love language"—actions instead of words. If conversations and emotional intimacy are important to you, he will likely not satisfy you. But if you are self-sufficient and don't need constant "venting," he can be a wonderful partner.

Build a family? Yes, if you accept his emotional restraint and are willing to learn to decipher his silent signals. Children will feel his support, even if he doesn't tell them he loves them every five minutes.

Important: Don't try to "make him talk" by force—this only causes rejection. Accept him as he is, or leave.

4. **Man-Potential.** He's smart, talented, but... lazy, indecisive, afraid to take a step. "Golden hands" and a "bright mind"—but he works as a taxi driver or lives off his mother. He talks about great projects but does nothing. He promises that "everything will change this Monday"—but Monday never comes. You fall in love with his potential, not his reality. And this is the main trap.

He talks a lot about plans but does little.

He makes excuses: no money, no time, the market isn't right.

He often changes projects without finishing any.

He lives off others—parents, girlfriends, women.

He gets offended when you remind him of his promises.

Friendship? Yes, but cautiously. He can be an interesting conversationalist—just don't take on his responsibilities.

Relationship? No. Until he realizes himself, you will carry him. This is called emotional dependency. You will become his mother, motivator, and financial sponsor all at once. And he will devalue you—because your success will highlight his failures.

Build a family? Only if he has already started moving and shown real results. Otherwise, you'll have children, and he'll remain an "eternal boy"—and all the burdens will fall on you.

Important: Don't fall in love with potential. Fall in love with reality. If he does nothing today, don't believe he will do it tomorrow.

5. **Narcissistic Man.** He is confident in his exceptionalism. He demands admiration, attention, constant confirmation of his own genius. He can be handsome, successful, intelligent. But he is incapable of empathy. Your feelings for him are an annoying hindrance. He can be generous with gifts, but this is not love—it's a way to buy your admiration.

He talks only about himself, interrupts, doesn't listen.

He expects constant admiration.

He doesn't remember details about your life—what you like, what's important to you.

He reacts to criticism with rage or cold contempt.

He believes rules are for others, not for him.

He loves being the center of attention and is jealous of your successes.

What to do about him:

Friendship? No. He doesn't know how to be a friend—he collects admirers.

Relationship? No. You will feel insignificant, and all your resources will go to supporting his ego.

Build a family? No. Children are a threat to his exceptionalism. He will not be a good father.

Important: You are not the "special one" who will change him. A narcissist doesn't change because he doesn't see a problem with himself. Leave.

6. **Partner Man.** This is what to aim for. He is not perfect—but he is an adult. He knows how to take responsibility, keep his word, resolve conflicts, feel and talk about feelings—even if not perfectly. He respects your freedom and isn't afraid of his own. You can build with him.

He is stable—in both actions and mood.

He keeps his word: if he promised, he will do it.

He isn't afraid to talk about the future, about marriage, about children.

He respects your boundaries and doesn't violate them.

He accepts criticism and knows how to apologize—without "buts."

He rejoices in your successes, he isn't jealous.

He is self-sufficient: he has his own life, work, friends—and he doesn't "cling" to you.

He doesn't play guessing games—he speaks directly.

Friendship? Yes. Real, deep, reliable.

Relationship? Yes. This is the best foundation. With him, you can resolve conflicts, make plans, and trust.

Build a family? Yes. He will be a father who participates in his children's lives and doesn't shift everything onto you.

Important: He is not perfect. He might not be ideal in appearance, not a millionaire, not a "macho." But he is an adult. And that is the most important thing.

7. **Intellectual Man**. He lives in a world of ideas and theories. He can be a brilliant scientist, programmer, philosopher. But he is detached from everyday life, from emotions. He might forget to buy bread because he was thinking about quantum physics. He might not notice that you're upset—because his brain is occupied with a completely different task.

He loves to talk about complex things, not about feelings.

He often "gets lost" in his thoughts.

He isn't very good at handling daily chores.

He can be absent-minded and forgetful.

In conflicts, he resorts to rational arguments, not feelings.

Friendship? Excellent, if you enjoy intellectual exchange.

Relationship? If you are ready to take on household duties and not expect emotional outbursts—you can try. If words of love, attention, and care are important to you—he will most likely disappoint you.

Build a family? Yes, if you accept his peculiarities and are ready to be his "bridge" to reality. He can be a wonderful father who will teach children to think—but he won't always remember to change diapers.

Important: Don't try to transform him into a "sensitive romantic." Either accept him, or look for someone else.

8. **Chameleon Man**. He wants to please you—and so he adapts. He says what you want to hear, does what you want to see. But he has no convictions, values, or core of his own. He can be pleasant, but you will never understand who he really is. Over time, he might "disappear"—or turn into someone you don't recognize.

He has no strong opinions—he agrees with you on everything.

He changes his behavior depending on his surroundings.

He often says, "whatever is convenient for you."

He has no hobbies of his own that he had before you.

He doesn't argue, doesn't object, doesn't show initiative.

Friendship? Superficial. You won't truly get to know him.

Relationship? Be careful. You might think you have ideal mutual understanding—but in reality, he is just reflecting you. Over time, this becomes tiring. You start to feel empty.

Build a family? No. He won't be a pillar of support because he has no core. In a crisis, he will either break down or show himself in a completely unexpected light.

Important: Look for a man who has his own hobbies, his own opinions, his own friends. A person who dissolves into you has no self—and won't hold onto you.

9. **Hero Man**. He is used to saving everyone. He chooses women with problems and "solves" them. He needs drama and difficulties to feel needed. He can be wonderful—but next to him, you will always be in the position of a victim. You simply won't be able to be happy and calm: he gets bored.

He often talks about how he "saved" his exes.

He is attracted to women with problems.

He ignores your successes when things are going well for you.

He can create problems just to solve them later.

Strong and self-sufficient women don't interest him—he simply doesn't need them.

Friendship? Yes, but don't fall into the role of "the one being saved."

Relationship? Only if you are ready to be a "distressed princess" forever. But this is tiring and hinders your growth.

Build a family? Risky. He might find a new "victim" as soon as you become strong.

Important: You are whole. You can be happy without drama. Don't let him make you "convenient."

10. **Your Man.** This is about your man. The one with whom it's easy, even when it's hard. The one with whom you don't have to play roles, don't have to explain the obvious, don't have to ask for basic respect. You might have different habits, different paces, different pasts—but you agree on the main things: values, attitude towards people, sense of humor, respect.

You feel calm next to him. Not "butterflies," but a calm warmth.

You can be silent together—and it's wonderful.

You discuss conflicts, you don't avoid them.

You rejoice in each other's successes without envy.

You have similar life plans—an apartment, moving, children, freedom, it doesn't matter what exactly, the main thing is that they match.

He supports you in your decisions, even if he doesn't agree.

He accepts you with your flaws.

Friendship ? The best friendship.

Relationship? Build, develop, invest.

Build a family? Yes. With him, you will create a partnership, not "patience and suffering."

Important: Don't expect him to be perfect. But if the basic things align—that's already a great success.

What to do with whom?

|*Type of Man* | *Friendship?* | *Build a Relationship?* | *Build a Family?* | *Risk for You*

|Man-Child| Yes (if fun, but not in a crisis) | No (only if you're ready to carry him) | No | You'll become his mother, lose yourself

|Abusive Man | No | No | Absolutely not| Trauma, loss of self-esteem, danger

|Man-Wall | Yes (if you don't need deep emotional connection) | Yes (if you don't need heart-to-heart conversations) | Yes (if you accept his guardedness) | Emotional loneliness

|Man-Potential | Yes (cautiously) | No (until he realizes himself) | No (until he takes steps) | You will carry him your whole life

|Narcissistic Man | No| No | Absolutely not| Loss of self-esteem, resources, nerves

|Partner Man| Yes| Yes| Yes| Minimal (if you are both mature)

|Intellectual Man | Yes | Yes (if you accept his detachment) | Yes (if you're ready to take on household duties) | You will "translate" him from the language of ideas to reality

|Chameleon Man | Superficial | Cautiously | No | You won't know who he really is

|Hero Man| Yes (but without the victim role)| Only if not in the role of "the one being saved" | Dangerous| He might look for a new "victim"

|Your Man | Yes | Yes| Yes | Only natural growth difficulties

How to distinguish

There's one confusion that many people fall into. You're friends with a man—and suddenly you realize you've fallen in love. Or, conversely, you're dating, and then you realize: it's just friendship, and nothing more. This is normal and simply what happens. But it's useful to understand the difference before you get completely confused.

Here's a simple way to look at the situation a little more clearly:

Friend vs. Partner: What's the Difference

Criterion | *Friend* | *Partner*

Feelings | Warmth, trust, but no passion | Passion, desire, romance

Support | Present, but without obligations | Present, with future obligations

Plans | Separate, sometimes coincide | Joint, built together

Boundaries | Clear (I - you)| Integrated (we)

Time | Meetings by desire | Regularity and priority

Jealousy| Absent or mild | Present, but controlled

Physical Intimacy | Absent | Present and important

If you realize you've fallen in love with a friend—Tell him honestly, but without demands. Something like: "I feel more than friendship for you. How do you feel about that?" This is a frank conversation.

If he doesn't reciprocate—respect his answer. Don't wait for him to "come to his senses." This leads to long and completely unnecessary suffering. You can try to maintain the friendship—if both sides are ready for it. But only if you can truly do it, and not suffer by his side.

If you realize that a partner has become just a friend, that also happens. Feelings change—and that's life. Talk to him. Sometimes it's just a phase that you can get through together. And sometimes—it's the end, and it's better to admit it honestly than to drag it out. Don't lead him on. If there's no love—say so. It hurts, but it's respect.

What if there's no ideal man?

There isn't one. There never was and never will be. There will be the one you choose. And the task here is not to find an ideal, but to choose from real people the one who is most compatible with you. And then—to build. But you don't have to endure.

To build is to:

respect differences,

negotiate,

forgive (but not everything),

grow together.

Checklist: "Should I start a relationship?"

I feel safe with him.

We can talk about difficult topics.

He keeps his word—in small things and big.

He respects my time and my boundaries.

We have matching basic values: children, money, freedom, honesty.

He accepts me, doesn't try to "mold" me.

I can be myself, not play a role.

He rejoices in my successes, he isn't jealous.

He has his own life, he doesn't "cling" to me.

I can laugh and be silent with him—equally comfortably.

If most of the points are "yes"—try it. If not—don't waste your time.

You have the right to choose! You are not obligated to be with the first person who pays attention to you. You are not obligated to tolerate disrespect. You are not obligated to give a chance to everyone you like. You have the right to choose—consciously and without rushing.

You have the right to choose! You are not obligated to be with the first person who pays attention to you. You are not obligated to tolerate disrespect. You are not obligated to give a chance to everyone you find attractive. You have the right to choose—consciously and without rushing.

And one more important thing: a man is also a person. With his own history, pain, and weaknesses. You can be there for him, but you cannot "fix" him. The only thing in your hands is to choose with whom to move forward, and from whom to step away.

There is too little time in this life to spend it on those who are not ready to go in the same direction as you.

Assignment:

1. Make a list of the men who are—or have been—in your life. Assign each one a type from the chart above. Be honest. What insights did you gain?
2. Create your own portrait of "your man." Not his appearance—his values and actions. What is most important to you?
3. If you are currently in a relationship—evaluate your partner. Are there any red flags? If so—talk to him.
4. If you are currently single—re-read the chart before your next date. Check the filters. Don't rush.

Remember, the ideal man does not exist. There is a person who suits you. He won't guess your desires. He will make mistakes. He will sometimes annoy you. But he will be there when things are tough. He will keep his word. He will respect you.

Don't fall in love with potential, with a project, with the "what will happen in five years" scenario, as I once did. Study the person and look at what is present now. Believe only in actions.

It's better to be alone and not deceive yourself than to be in a relationship and feel lonely. Your time alone is a time for growth until you meet someone who is worth your time.

Chapter 5. Before Marriage: The Time That Decides Everything

There is a dangerous myth instilled in us girls from childhood: "You'll meet a prince on a white horse—and everything will work out." As if marriage will solve all problems and give meaning to life. But reality is different.

Marriage doesn't solve problems—it highlights them. And if a girl enters married life with a bunch of unresolved issues, she doesn't become happier. She simply transfers her chaos into a shared space, where now two people suffer.

Therefore, there is a critical period—the time before marriage. This is your personal startup that will determine whether you will be an equal partner in marriage or an eternal girl looking for salvation. What do I recommend?

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