
International Psychology Centre

PsychologyHealth[®]

Issue No. EN022026



The Relationship Blueprint: From First Attraction to Forever Love

Healthy, fulfilling relationships rarely happen by accident. While chemistry can spark a connection, lasting love is built through conscious choices, emotional understanding, and consistent effort over time. This relationship blueprint explores the journey from choosing the right partner to sustaining love long-term, offering practical insights grounded in psychology and real-life relationship dynamics



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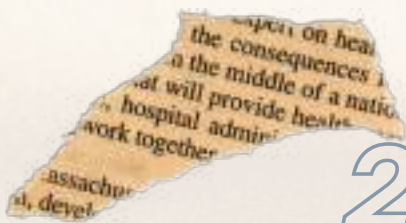
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Editor's Message

Dear readers,

Valentine's Day magnifies a timeless truth: love matters for our health — emotional, mental and physical. Yet the romantic ideal we celebrate this month often obscures the practical work of finding a good match and keeping intimacy alive over years and decades. This issue explores both sides of that work: how to attract and choose a partner who fits you — and how to sustain passionate, secure connection through life's changes.

This Valentine's Day not only celebrate romance, but commit to the quieter, braver work that sustains it. Love that endures is less about fate than about mutual respect, intentional effort, and emotional responsiveness. May this issue give you evidence-based tools to choose well and love wisely — today and for the years ahead.



*Dr. Edward Chan
Editor-In-Chief
PsychologyHealth*

Article of The Month

I. Selection: How to Choose the Right Partner

One of the most overlooked aspects of relationships is selection. Many people focus on how to make a relationship work, without first asking whether the relationship is right for them. Choosing a suitable partner lays the foundation for emotional safety, compatibility, and long-term satisfaction.

A healthy selection process begins with self-awareness. Understanding your own values, boundaries, emotional needs, and life goals helps you identify what truly matters in a partner. Ask yourself: What kind of relationship do I want? What qualities are non-negotiable for me? What patterns from past relationships do I want to avoid repeating?

Compatibility goes beyond shared interests. While common hobbies can bring people together, deeper compatibility lies in aligned values, communication styles, conflict resolution approaches, and expectations about commitment, family, finances, and growth. Differences are inevitable, but core values should complement rather than constantly clash.

It is also important to distinguish between potential and reality. Many people stay in unhealthy relationships hoping their partner will change. Choosing a partner means accepting who they are now, not who you wish they would become. Pay attention to consistency between words and actions, especially in moments of stress or disagreement.

Lastly, emotional availability matters. A partner who is respectful, accountable, and capable of emotional intimacy creates a secure base for the relationship. Attraction may draw you in, but emotional safety and mutual respect are what allow love to grow.



Article of The Month

2. Attraction: The Science of Capturing Interest

Attraction is often described as mysterious or uncontrollable, yet psychology tells us there is a science behind it. Attraction is influenced by a mix of biological responses, emotional cues, and social factors.

Physical attraction plays a role, particularly in the early stages. However, attraction is not only about appearance. Confidence, body language, eye contact, tone of voice, and presence significantly influence how attractive someone appears. People are often drawn to those who are comfortable in their own skin and emotionally grounded.



Emotional attraction develops through positive interactions. Feeling seen, heard, and valued activates emotional bonding. Active listening, genuine curiosity, and validation make others feel important, which naturally increases attraction. Small behaviours such as remembering details, showing appreciation, and being attentive can leave a lasting impression.

Psychologically, attraction is strengthened by novelty and emotional arousal. Shared new experiences, humour, and meaningful conversations stimulate the brain and create positive associations with the person. This explains why early dating often feels exciting and intense.

However, healthy attraction should feel engaging, not anxiety-inducing. When attraction is driven by inconsistency, emotional unavailability, or the fear of losing someone, it can create unhealthy attachment patterns. Sustainable attraction balances excitement with emotional security.

Article of The Month

3. Connection: Mastering Your Partner's Love Language

While attraction may start a relationship, connection is what deepens it. One of the most effective ways to build connection is by understanding and responding to your partner's love language.

Love languages refer to the ways individuals give and receive love most naturally. Common love languages include words of affirmation, quality time, acts of service, gifts, and physical touch. Conflict often arises not from a lack of love, but from loving each other in different languages.

For example, one partner may feel deeply loved through verbal appreciation, while the other expresses love through actions. Without awareness, both may feel unappreciated despite genuine effort. Learning your partner's love language allows love to be communicated in ways that are emotionally meaningful to them.

Connection also grows through emotional attunement. This involves empathy, validation, and being emotionally present during both positive and difficult moments. Feeling emotionally understood strengthens trust and intimacy.

Open communication is key. Discuss needs, boundaries, and expectations openly rather than assuming your partner "should know." Healthy connection is built when both partners feel safe to express themselves without fear of judgment or rejection.



Article of The Month

4. Sustainability: Keeping the Spark Alive Long-Term



Long-term relationships require intentional care. Over time, routines, responsibilities, and stress can dull emotional closeness if left unattended. Sustainability is about nurturing the relationship through different life stages.

Maintaining the spark does not mean constant excitement; it means consistent emotional investment. Regular check-ins, shared activities, and prioritizing quality time help partners stay connected. Small gestures of affection and appreciation often matter more than grand gestures.

Conflict management plays a major role in relationship longevity. Disagreements are normal, but how couples handle them determines relationship health. Respectful communication, accountability, and repair after conflict strengthen emotional bonds rather than erode them.

Growth is another essential component. Individuals evolve, and healthy relationships allow space for personal development while growing together. Supporting each other's goals and adapting to change fosters resilience.

Ultimately, lasting love is not about perfection, but commitment. Choosing each other repeatedly, even during difficult seasons, transforms attraction into enduring partnership.

Film of The Month

La La Land (2016), by Damien Chazelle

At first glance, La La Land appears to be a vibrant musical celebrating love, passion, and artistic dreams. Yet beneath its colorful visuals and memorable melodies lies a deeply human story about relationships, timing, and the choices that shape our lives. The film follows two ambitious individuals whose connection is genuine, meaningful, and emotionally transformative yet tested as personal aspirations and life demands begin to pull them in different directions.

Rather than a fairy tale, La La Land presents a nuanced view of romance—where attraction is real, connection is meaningful, and endings are not necessarily failures. It invites reflection on how relationships evolve and what it takes for love to last.

Let's explore La La Land through a psychological lens, unpacking the deeper dynamics behind attraction, connection, and the delicate balance between love and personal growth.



Film of The Month

La La Land (2016), by Damien Chazelle

Chemistry and Idealization

The early stages of Sebastian and Mia's relationship are marked by strong chemistry, novelty, and emotional excitement. Their attraction is fueled by shared passion, creativity, and the feeling of being truly seen and supported. From a psychological perspective, this stage is driven by emotional arousal and idealization, where differences and potential challenges are easily overlooked. This mirrors many real-life relationships, where intense attraction creates a powerful bond but may mask deeper questions about long-term compatibility.

Emotional Support and Emerging Strain

As their relationship develops, Sebastian and Mia form a genuine emotional connection. They encourage each other's dreams and provide a sense of belonging and validation. This emotional attunement creates closeness and trust. However, as career pressures increase, emotional availability begins to decline. Communication becomes strained, and unspoken expectations emerge. While love remains, their ability to stay emotionally connected weakens. The film illustrates how stress and unmet emotional needs can slowly erode connection, even in relationships built on care and respect.

When Love Is Not Enough

The heart of La La Land lies in its portrayal of relationship sustainability. The film challenges the belief that love alone guarantees longevity. As both characters grow, their priorities and life paths diverge. Neither partner is wrong; they are simply evolving in different directions. Sustainable relationships require shared direction, emotional repair, and the ability to grow together. In this case, maintaining the relationship would require sacrifices neither is prepared to make. Their separation reflects not failure, but an honest recognition of misalignment.

Key Psychological Takeaways

- Strong attraction does not always equal long-term compatibility
- Emotional connection must be supported by communication and alignment
- Relationships can be meaningful even if they do not last
- Letting go can be an act of emotional maturity, not defeat

Learning & Engagement



Previous Webinar

You can still watch the full webinar recordings on our official YouTube channel. These sessions feature expert insights and meaningful discussions that continue to support learning, reflection, and mental health awareness—available anytime at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@internationalpsychologycentre/videos>

Upcoming Webinar

These sessions are open to the public and free of charge, and will be led by experienced mental health professionals. Designed to promote awareness, reflection, and learning, each webinar offers practical insights into emotional well-being and mental health support. All participants will receive an e-certificate upon completion.



Social Media



Have a story you want to share but prefer to stay anonymous? Now's your chance! We're inviting you to send us relevant personal experiences, thoughts, or moments that have shaped you. Whether it's funny, heartfelt, inspiring, or thought-provoking, we want to hear it. All submissions are completely anonymous, so you can share freely without worry.

You may watch some of the stories at: <https://www.instagram.com/ipcmalaysia/>

Voice of Graduate

Name: Jonathan Chan Yih Tyng
Occupation: Health and Wellness Wholesale



Graduate from Accredited Professional Certification Course in Adult Psychological Assessment, Adult Psychotherapy, and Depression Therapy

What Did Your Learnt?

Throughout my studies at the International Psychology Centre (IPC), I gained valuable knowledge and practical skills that strengthened my professional development in psychotherapy. The course provided a strong foundation in adult psychotherapy and depression therapy, helping me better understand clients' psychological needs. Through continuous practice and case-based learning, I improved my clinical skills and confidence in understanding clients' emotional states, thought patterns, and behavioural concerns.

How Have You Applied Knowledge at Work?

I have been able to apply the knowledge gained from this course directly to my work and career. The skills I developed are especially useful when supporting individuals and families who are struggling with anxiety and depression. The therapeutic techniques I learned have helped me provide emotional relief, reduce suicidal ideation, and support clients in managing their psychological distress more effectively. This has been deeply meaningful and rewarding in my professional practice.

How Did The Faculty Helped You Along Your Courses?

They played a crucial role in supporting me throughout the course. The guidance I received, especially from my supervisor who was extremely helpful, particularly through detailed feedback on my case studies and SOAP reports. Dr. Edward's thorough case reviews and insightful reflections helped me develop stronger clinical reasoning and a deeper understanding of my clients.

Would you recommend the course to others?

I would highly recommend this course to others who are interested in psychotherapy.

Voice of Graduate

Name: Wong Pu Nie

Occupation: (on career break)



Graduate from Accredited Professional Certification Course in Adult Psychological Assessment

What Did You Learnt?

This was my first academic foray into the broad field of psychology and counselling, so everything I learned was new and fascinating. I discovered that human psychology is multi-dimensional and complex; while I was better able to name certain disorders, I had to look beyond labels and see them as human beings with a past and a story which defined them. I learned to be a more compassionate listener, understanding that this quality was an important component in helping clients redefine themselves in a more positive and balanced way.

How Did The Faculty Helped You Along Your Courses?

As someone completely new to this field, my supervisor Uma helped me understand the course and what it entails, and advised me on what courses to take based on my interests and level of competency. Her feedback on my SOAP report was invaluable and encouraging, helping me review my work more thoroughly while staying motivated to do good work.

How Have You Applied Knowledge at Work?

The experience of this coursework has taught me to be more conscientious of my own personal judgments when dealing with different personalities, particularly challenging ones throughout my day. It has also taught me to take a step back and consider the bigger picture, because oftentimes what you see on the surface is not a true representation of the whole situation.

Would you recommend the course to others?

Yes, highly recommend to those interested, as it helps build compassion and understanding of mental health disorders. The Group Clinical Supervision classes were especially helpful, exposing me to different therapy modalities and approaches.

Stay Connected

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