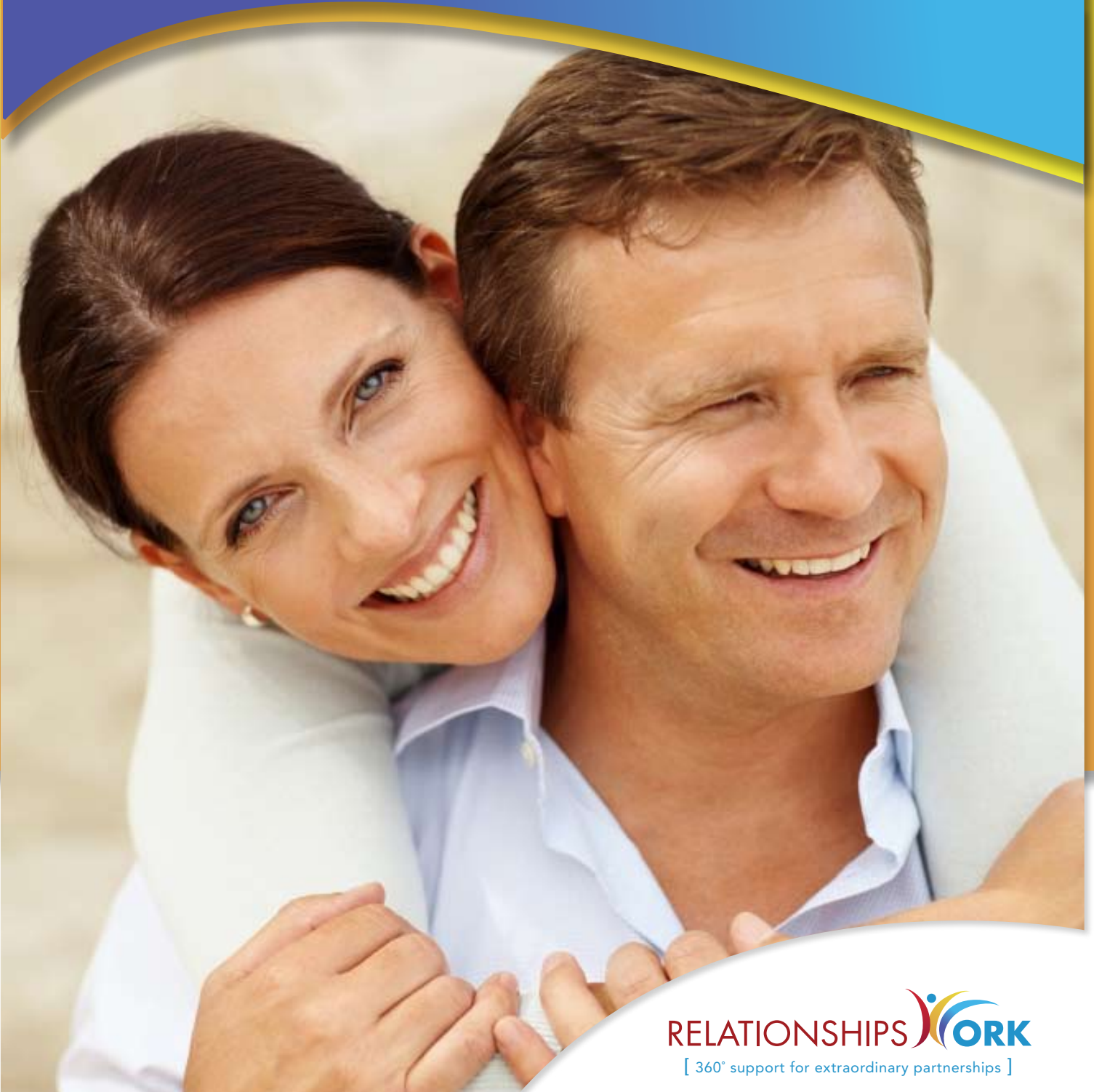


# HEAD, HEART & HORMONES

WHAT EVERY COUPLE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT  
**CREATING LASTING LOVE**



RELATIONSHIPS  **ORK**  
[ 360° support for extraordinary partnerships ]

## Head, Heart & Hormones

### *What every couple should know about creating lasting love*

*"All at once, you looked across a crowded room for no one in particular, just looking. Suddenly, you see him, but, oh, how many times you've seen him before. So, why did your heart just skip a beat? Your eyes meet by mere coincidence, or is it? At that moment, you both instantly know that the relationship between the two of you will never be the same again."*

*–Anonymous*

The desire and intent of every person who makes a lifetime commitment to a partner is to choose the partner we have been "dreaming of," a.k.a the "right" person. Yet 50% of these choices prove to be "wrong" and end up in divorce.

So, why is it that we end up choosing the "wrong" person 50% of the time?

**Is there something we can do differently to increase our chances of being one of the 50% of committed relationships that lasts?**

We strongly believe the answer is yes. There is a way to increase the odds that you and your partner will be together for a lifetime.

To have the best chance of making a healthy, lasting partner choice, you must navigate the relationship with:

- An intentional and conscious awareness of the relationship.
- Deep knowledge about who you are and who your partner is.
- A working understanding of the balance between **Head, Heart & Hormones**. What we call the **Relationship Trilogy**.

The primary reason many of us don't navigate our committed relationships this way is that we have a romanticized view of love and marriage. When we are dating we make one of the most important decisions we will ever make in our lives – whether or not a person will be a suitable lifetime partner for us and good parent for our children or step-children – based on our emotional feelings of love and attraction. We focus on Heart and Hormones, much more than on our rational thinking – our Head.

Often we even deny the flashing warning signs, “Stop, this is not a good match,” because we have “fallen” in love. And clearly have fallen hard enough to damage our heads.

Have you ever stopped to think that fallen means dropped, descended, plummeted, plunged, tumbled, tripped over?

*“Forget love, I’d rather fall in chocolate.”*

*– Sandra J. Dykes*

Marriages based primarily upon emotional attachments have a high failure rate, whereas arranged marriages in countries such as India, have only a one percent divorce rate. Parents, knowing their children, search for a match they think will be suitable for their child, based upon compatibility. Couples marry and grow into a loving relationship by building a life and a family together. Head first. Heart and hormones come later. Couples expect to have to “work” on their relationships and know that love is a process they “grow” into, not “fall” into.

Of course, we are not suggesting that you should have asked your parents to select your mate (although that might not have been such a bad idea!). We are raising your awareness that one of your most important life choices is made with your Heart and Hormones, with Head following behind. After you get married, and the excitement of the honeymoon is over, typically the Hormones slow down and the Head starts leading as you live your life together.

**Our belief is that if you consciously and intentionally work toward a balance of Head, Heart and Hormones – you will have the best chance of creating a marriage of two “right” partners.**

*“The more connections you and your lover make, not just between your bodies, but between your minds, your hearts, and your souls, the more you will strengthen the fabric of your relationship, and the more real moments you will experience together.”*

*– Barbara De Angelis*

## The Head, Heart & Hormones Worksheet

The three worksheets that follow will start you thinking about your relationship in a different way – a way that may produce a more harmonious result.

The worksheets are designed to help you assess yourself, what you are looking for from your relationship and partner, and help you understand how to use the **Relationship Trilogy – Head, Heart & Hormones** – in a conscious way to create the best balance for you.

But first, a little more about what **Head, Heart & Hormones** really mean:

### Head Leads the Way

“**HEAD**” refers to that part of us that reasons and evaluates; the cognitive, logical and analytical part that collects facts, observes, stores and analyzes them, ultimately interpreting their meaning and making conclusions. Using our objective thinking, our past experiences, and bringing our intuition and feelings into full view, it is vital to observe and analyze the factual and practical experiences you have with your partner.

When you were dating and those hormones were a-rushing you were “living in the now.” Your attention was captured by the powerful feelings and just plain fun of being in such a romantic place. The “Head” was present, but in the background. How much did it serve as an anchor to reality in the midst of all the overwhelming bliss?

### Heart Comes Next

When we speak of “**HEART**” we are referring to our feelings, the emotions that allow us to connect up with others through listening, sharing, understanding, empathizing and being vulnerable with each other. Sharing the feelings most important to us and sensing those emotions in others is a tremendously important aspect of connecting in a loving relationship. Our treatment of our partner’s emotions and our treatment of our own feelings are critical facets that will either draw us close to or push us away from our partner. Caring for each other’s feelings allows partners to feel safe, become vulnerable and share the deepest connection.

## Hormones Bring Up the Rear

Finally, we have **"HORMONES"** or sexual attraction. Ah yes, the magic of it all. That neuro-chemical response, that "itchin' down south" that we just can't quite scratch, that cascade of biological and chemical responses and exchanges that can mesmerize the most grounded and reasoned of us all. What would life be without such joy? It probably is the shortest and most dramatic route to a sense of instantaneous love and "forever" devotion. Clearly, when Hormones lead we have "fallen" in love.

This magnetic attraction begins with our adventures in dating and can be even more powerful as the relationship matures. There is no analysis or list necessary to review whether or not we feel attraction. If it is there, our body will clearly tell us, and our desire, like a compass pointing North, will show us the clear way.

## How to Use The Head, Heart & Hormones Worksheet

### Part I: Observe, observe, observe; Explore and gather information

The purpose of these worksheets is to help you become more conscious and aware of your partner, yourself and your relationship. Your job is to observe your partner and your relationship and collect information, but NOT to draw conclusions until you have gathered enough data.

### **Exercise #1: What Do I Think?**

Carve out some quiet time for you to think and reflect. Using this worksheet, answer these questions in a genuine and authentic way.

Think about your partner and answer these questions:

**1** What are the strengths of my partner and our relationship?

**2** What challenges do my partner and I face individually and in our relationship?

**3** What does my partner do to show he/she truly loves me?

**4** How well do we use our cognitive connection to communicate?

**5 What do I know about my partner in these areas (and what might I want to know more about)?**

- Family History – Parents, Siblings, Grandparents .....
- .....
- Dating History .....
- .....
- Marital History .....
- .....
- Work History .....
- .....
- Friends .....
- .....
- Character – Honesty, Kindness, Generosity .....
- .....
- Self-Esteem .....
- .....
- Life Goals/Ambition .....
- .....
- Use of Alcohol/Drugs .....
- .....
- Health/Fitness .....
- .....
- Spending/Saving Money .....
- .....

- Sex .....
- .....
- Religious Views/Spirituality .....
- .....
- Attitudes/Perceptions/Beliefs .....
- .....
- Ability to be Intimate – Emotionally, Sexually .....
- .....
- Ability to Commit .....
- .....
- Relationships with Others .....
- .....
- Handling of Conflict/Anger .....
- .....
- Ability to Forgive/Apologize .....
- .....
- Perseverance .....
- .....
- Devotion to Loved Ones .....

*Sometimes you have to get to know someone really well to realize you're really strangers.  
–Mary Tyler Moore*



## Exercise #2: How Do I Feel?

Answer the questions below. Use examples of behaviors/actions that created the feeling.

### 1 Do I feel cared about being with this person?

Does he/she attend to my needs and desires, and at times put me before himself/herself?

Do I feel connected or close emotionally?

*Examples: He supported me when I was anxious about my promotion at work by letting me talk about it and listening.*

*She took time off of work when my mother visited, since I had a major project that came up.*

### 2 Do I feel heard – in thought and feeling?

Does he/she truly listen with deep empathy and make an effort to comprehend what I say and feel?

*Examples: She listened attentively when I talked about football.*

*He had good eye contact when I was talking and responded in a way that made me feel validated.*

### 3 Do I feel respected?

Does he/she respect me, including respecting our differences?

*Examples: He took me to the "chick flick" I wanted to see even though it wasn't his first choice.*

*She apologized for being late.*

**4 Do I feel supported?**

Does he/she help me when I need assistance?

Do I feel he/she is interested in my world and would walk a mile in my moccasins or high heels?

*Examples: He helped me cook and clean up when I made dinner for us.*

*She was flexible with the date since I wasn't sure what my work schedule would be.*

**5 Do I feel appreciated?**

Does he/she thank me genuinely when I do something for him/her?

*Examples: She thanked me for taking her to dinner.*

*He appreciated that I went to the basketball game.*

**6 Do I feel accepted?**

Does he/she acknowledge, understand and make room for my idiosyncrasies?

Do I feel safe enough to be vulnerable with him/her?

*Examples: He made sure he was on time to the party because he knew I hate being late.*

*She didn't complain when we got lost.*

**7 Do I feel important?**

Does he/she put me and our relationship above work or other important obligations?

*Examples: He left work early to go to the show.*

*She changed her plans so we could spend time together tonight.*

*"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched – they must be felt with the heart."*

*– Helen Keller*

**Exercise #3: How Connected Are We Erotically?**

Answer these questions thoughtfully. Explore and ponder before you answer.

**1 What was our erotic connection like in the beginning of our relationship?**

How much of our initial attraction was based on hormones?

**2 How has that changed over the timeline of our relationship?** (honeymoon, the first year, after children were born, etc.) How difficult has it been for us to adjust to these changes? Do we acknowledge changes and communicate about them?

**3 How would I describe our sexual life and connection presently?**

Are we conscious and aware of our sexual connection? Are we a team in this area?

**4 How satisfied am I and my partner with this part of our relationship?**

**5 When we have had sexual challenges (i.e. difficult times) how have we handled them?**

**6 What would I like to change about our erotic connection?**

What do I think my partner wants to change?

**7 How well do we communicate about sexuality?**

What are the roadblocks?

**8 How do I see the connection between sex and love?**

*Lust is easy. Love is hard. Like is most important.*

*– Carl Reiner*

## Part II: Assess and Take Action

Now that you have explored your head, heart and hormone connection it is time to pull it all together and take action.

### Exercise #4: Putting It All Together

Review your journal from the beginning forward and answer these questions:

- 1 **Head Question:** Based upon all that I have thought about my partner, what have I learned about him/her? How can I use this information to improve our relationship?

- 2 **Heart Question:** Based upon how I feel about this person and how he/she makes me feel, what would I like to feel more of? How can I communicate this to my partner?

- 3 **Hormones Question:** Based on my assessment of our “making love life,” what are the things we need to talk about and work on changing?

- 4 **How is the balance of Head, Heart and Hormones in our relationship? In which area(s) do we need to work to create a better balance?**

- 5 **Carve out time with your partner to compare notes about the three areas of vital connection. Then write down what are the all the things you would like to improve. Take one at a time to start working on and remain conscious and aware of consciously creating new habits with a balance of Head, Heart and Hormones.**

*“Passion without reason is blind. Reason without passion is dead.”*

*– Baruch Spinoza*

## A Final Note About Creating Lasting Love

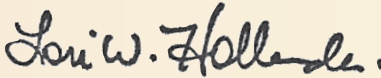
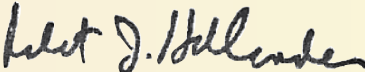
Having a balance of Head, Heart and Hormones in relationships does not have to rely upon chance. With a lifetime of accumulated wisdom and learning every day about each other, you have the ability to use this information to create a deeper bond than you've ever had before. You can keep your Head, Heart & Hormones in a dynamic and moving balance so that there is a natural flow and harmony between the three realms of the Relationship Trilogy and an active and exciting interweaving of them.

It is then that we may experience the full and complete love that we are searching for in the extraordinary relationship we have been pursuing for so long.

*"Love deeply and passionately.  
You might get hurt but it's the only way to live life completely."  
– Unknown*

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Thank you for making the commitment to work toward creating an extraordinary relationship. It is our honor and mission to support you 360° in accomplishing that.

Lori and Bob Hollander of Relationships Work