



A VELA WORKBOOK

The Clarity *Workbook*

Get clear on who you are, the life you're building, and who actually belongs in it - before you give another year to the wrong person.

15 PAGES · 8 EXERCISES · 24 QUESTIONS · 9 SCRIPTS

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You don't have a dating problem. You have a *clarity* problem.

Most people can describe their ideal partner in about four seconds. Tall. Funny. Ambitious. Good with kids.

Ask those same people what they actually **need** in a partner to build the life they want, and the answer gets a lot quieter.

That gap is where the years go.

Attraction is fast. It runs on familiarity, chemistry, and pattern recognition - and pattern recognition is exactly the problem. If your nervous system learned that love feels like uncertainty, then certainty will feel like boredom, and chaos will feel like home. You will call it chemistry. It is not chemistry. It is recognition.

You cannot choose well for a life you haven't defined, with a self you haven't examined.

This workbook does three things:

- 1 Gets you clear on who you are**
Your patterns, your defaults, and the places you're running on autopilot without noticing.
- 2 Gets you clear on the life you're building**
Because the right partner for a life you don't want is still the wrong partner.
- 3 Shows you where your boundaries are missing**
The quiet reason good people end up in draining relationships - and how to build the lines that protect the life you want.
- 4 Gives you the questions to ask**
Twenty-four conversational questions that reveal who someone actually is - without ever feeling like an interview.
- 5 Gives you the words to end it**
Nine copy-and-paste scripts for closing things cleanly, so you never ghost someone for lack of language.

Take your time with it. The exercises only work if you're honest, and honesty here costs nothing but a little discomfort.

Three things clarity *protects* you from.

REPEATING THE PATTERN

Different face, same relationship. If you've had the same argument with three different people, the common denominator isn't them. Clarity about your own patterns is what breaks the loop - you can't interrupt something you can't see.

MISTAKING POTENTIAL FOR REALITY

The most expensive mistake in dating is falling for who someone could be. Potential is a story you write and then pay for. Clarity about what you actually need turns "he could be" into "he isn't" - a much cheaper sentence.

LOSING YOURSELF IN THE PROCESS

When you don't know what you want, you become whatever the relationship requires. Three years in, you don't recognize your own life. Clarity is the anchor that keeps you recognizable to yourself.

EXERCISE 01

What keeps happening that you don't want to repeat?

Be specific. "Drama" isn't specific. "I ignore it when someone shuts down instead of naming it" is specific.

EXERCISE 02

What do you bring that actually works? Something worth keeping.

Most people can list their flaws instantly and go blank here. That's worth noticing.

Define the life. Then find who *fits* it.

Almost everyone does this backwards. They find someone, fall for them, and then try to build a life around whoever they landed on.

The order matters. A partner isn't the destination - they're the person walking beside you toward one. If you haven't picked a direction, you'll end up going wherever they're already headed.

The right person for a life you don't want is still the wrong person.

EXERCISE 03

Three years from now - what does an ordinary Tuesday look like?

Not the highlight reel. A regular weekday. Where do you wake up, what do you do, who's there.

EXERCISE 04

What are you unwilling to compromise on? Name three.

These are the things that, if you gave them up, you'd resent the person who asked.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."

PROVERBS 29:18

What you *want* vs. what you *need*.

These are two different lists, and most people have only ever written the first one.

Want is built from attraction, past experience, and what you've been taught to find impressive. It's fast, emotional, and often points backward toward what's familiar.

Need is built from your actual life, your actual patterns, and what it would genuinely take for you to be well with someone over years. It's slower and less exciting to write down. It's also the list that predicts whether you'll still be happy in year five.

They're not opposites. The goal isn't to abandon what you want - it's to notice where the two lists disagree, and to stop letting the want list overrule the need list without a hearing.

EXERCISE 05

Write both lists. Don't edit yourself.

Want: what you're drawn to. Need: what your life actually requires from a partner.

WHAT I WANT

WHAT I NEED

Look at the gaps. Where your want list and need list disagree is exactly where you've historically gotten into trouble.

Qualified is not the same as *prepared*.

Qualified means you meet the criteria. Prepared means you've built the capacity to carry it.

Plenty of people are qualified for a good relationship - decent, kind, employed, interested. Far fewer are prepared for one. Prepared means you can hold your own during conflict. Prepared means you can receive love without sabotaging it. Prepared means the life you're offering someone is one you'd actually want to join.

The uncomfortable question isn't whether they're worthy of you. It's whether you're currently the person your ideal partner would choose.

You will not attract what you want. You will attract what you're ready for.

EXERCISE 06

Honest readiness check. Mark what's true right now.

No one's watching. The only wrong answer is a flattering one.

- ☐ I can name what I need without apologizing for it
- ☐ I can say no and tolerate someone being disappointed in me
- ☐ I can stay in a hard conversation without shutting down or blowing up
- ☐ I've processed my last relationship - I'm not still carrying it
- ☐ My finances wouldn't be a burden on someone else
- ☐ I have people in my life besides a partner
- ☐ I can be alone without it feeling like an emergency
- ☐ I take care of my body and my health
- ☐ I know what I'm working on, and I'm actually working on it

Every unchecked box is not a failure. It's a direction. Pick the one that would change the most if you fixed it, and start there.

The thing quietly costing you *everything*.

In their book *Boundaries*, Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend describe boundaries as personal property lines. They define what you are responsible for and what you are not.

Think of it the way you'd think about a fence around a yard. The fence isn't hostile. It isn't a wall. It simply marks where your property ends and someone else's begins - so both of you know what you're each responsible for maintaining.

Cloud and Townsend point out that boundaries operate across every part of a person: **physical** boundaries govern who can touch you and when. **Mental** boundaries give you the freedom to hold your own thoughts and opinions. **Emotional** boundaries let you own your feelings and disengage from someone else's manipulation. **Spiritual** boundaries keep your convictions your own.

Boundaries define who you are and who you are not. Without them, other people decide.

WHAT HAPPENS WITHOUT THEM

A person without boundaries doesn't experience it as a boundary problem. They experience it as exhaustion. As resentment they can't explain. As saying yes and feeling angry about it afterward. As losing themselves eleven months into every relationship and not being able to point to when it started.

Here's the pattern that shows up over and over: someone with weak boundaries attracts people who benefit from weak boundaries. Not always intentionally. But the person who needs everything and gives little will find the person who gives everything and asks for little. And that arrangement is stable for years - until the giver has nothing left.

Cloud and Townsend name one law that explains most of this: the **Law of Reaping and Sowing**. People reap the consequences of what they sow. When you step in and absorb someone else's consequences, you interrupt the process that would have taught them something. You don't rescue them. You just move their problem onto your side of the fence.

EXERCISE 07

Where are you carrying something that isn't yours?

A consequence, a mood, a responsibility, a problem. Something that belongs on the other side of the fence.

How to know one's needed - and how to *set it*.

THE SIGNALS

Boundaries rarely announce themselves. They show up as feelings you've learned to talk yourself out of. Watch for these:

- ☐ **Resentment.** The clearest signal there is. Resentment is what a violated boundary feels like from the inside.
- ☐ **Dread before contact.** If your stomach drops when their name appears on your phone, something needs a line.
- ☐ **Explaining yourself constantly.** Over-justifying a normal decision means you don't believe you're allowed to make it.
- ☐ **Saying yes, then being angry.** The anger isn't at them. It's at yourself for not saying the true thing.
- ☐ **Managing their emotions.** If you're responsible for how they feel about your choices, you've taken on their side of the fence.

HOW TO SET ONE

- 1 Name it to yourself first**
You cannot communicate a limit you haven't defined. Get specific: what exactly is the behavior, and what exactly do you need instead?
- 2 State it about you, not about them**
"I'm not available for calls after 9pm" holds. "You call too late" invites a debate about whether you're right.
- 3 Say it once, plainly, without the case file**
A boundary doesn't need three paragraphs of justification. Over-explaining signals it's negotiable.
- 4 Expect discomfort and hold anyway**
People who benefited from your lack of boundaries will push back. Cloud and Townsend call this predictable. It is not evidence you were wrong.

A boundary you won't enforce is just a preference you announced.

EXERCISE 08

Write one boundary you need to set. Use the format below.

"I'm not available for _____. " or "I need _____ in order to _____."

Recommended reading: Boundaries: When to Say Yes, How to Say No - Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend.

HOW TO USE THESE

These work in real conversation - over dinner, on a call, in a text thread. They're not an interrogation. Ask two or three across an evening, not twelve. The answer matters less than *how* they answer: what they reach for first, what they avoid, whether they can hold complexity.

EMOTIONAL WORLD

Can they access and name feeling?

"What's something you're still working through from your past?"

Listen for: Can they name something without either shutting down or trauma-dumping. Both extremes are information.

"When you're overwhelmed, what do you actually do?"

Listen for: Self-awareness and whether they have real coping tools. "I don't get overwhelmed" is an answer.

"How do you show up for someone who's having a hard time?"

Listen for: Do they describe presence, or do they describe fixing? Fixers struggle when problems can't be solved.

"What's something about your emotional life you're proud of that took work?"

Listen for: People who've done work have an answer. People who haven't go blank or deflect to humor.

CONFLICT & REPAIR

The highest-predictive category

"Tell me about a time you really disagreed with someone you cared about."

Listen for: Do they need to win? Do they punish? Can they describe the other person's side fairly?

"After an argument, how long before you're actually okay again?"

Listen for: Recovery time. Days of lingering coldness is a pattern that will become your pattern.

"Who usually apologizes first in your relationships?"

Listen for: "Always me" and "always them" are both flags. Healthy is "depends who was wrong."

"What does someone do during conflict that shuts you down fastest?"

Listen for: Self-knowledge, plus a practical map of what they need from you.

AUTONOMY & CONTROL*Surface this early*

"How do you feel when someone close to you needs space?"

Listen for: Comfort vs. suspicion. "I'd wonder what they're hiding" is a serious flag.

"How do you feel when someone tells you no - even about something small?"

Listen for: One of the clearest windows into whether they respect autonomy or feel entitled to compliance.

"How do you feel about a partner having close friends of the gender they're attracted to?"

Listen for: Trust baseline. Watch for rules dressed up as preferences.

"What's off-limits for you in a relationship - things you need respected?"

Listen for: Whether their limits sound like boundaries (about themselves) or rules (about you).

VALUES & CHARACTER*Who they are when it costs them*

"Tell me about someone you really respect. What is it about them?"

Listen for: What they admire is what they value. Character traits or status markers?

"What's a decision you made that was right even though it cost you something?"

Listen for: Integrity is only proven under cost. No example means no evidence.

"How do you think about money in a relationship?"

Listen for: Avoidance of this topic is itself the answer. Financial mismatch ends relationships.

"How do you treat people who can't do anything for you?"

Listen for: Watch this in practice, not just in their answer. Servers, staff, strangers.

PATTERNS & HISTORY*The best predictor of the future*

"How do you usually describe your exes?"

Listen for: Nuance and shared responsibility. If every ex is crazy, you're meeting the next ex.

"What did you learn about yourself from your last relationship?"

Listen for: A blank answer means no reflection has happened. The pattern will repeat with you.

"What do you think you contribute to a relationship working?"

Listen for: Ownership vs. entitlement. Can they name a behavior, not just a trait?

"What does moving on look like for you after something difficult?"

Listen for: Their healing process and timeline. Fresh wounds are information you need early.

VISION & DIRECTION*Do your lives point the same way?*

"Where do you see yourself in five years - what does the life actually look like?"

Listen for: Vagueness isn't always bad. Misalignment is the quiet killer of long relationships.

"What does your ideal ordinary Sunday look like?"

Listen for: Lifestyle rhythm, social energy, and priorities - all in one easy question.

"What role does family play in your life right now?"

Listen for: Involvement level and boundaries. Major compatibility factor - surface it early.

"What does partnership mean to you? How's it different from dating?"

Listen for: Their actual readiness, and what level of relationship they're prepared for.

How to end it *cleanly*.

BEFORE YOU SEND ANYTHING

The goal of a closure message is not to be understood. It's to be clear. Most people write these hoping the other person will agree with them - which is exactly why they end up too long, too soft, and open to negotiation. Short is kind. Vague is not.

AFTER ONE OR TWO DATES

"I enjoyed meeting you. I don't think we're the right fit for what I'm looking for, but I appreciate the time. Wishing you well."

No reason given, and none is owed after two dates. Warm, complete, closed.

A FEW WEEKS IN, NOTHING WRONG, JUST NOT IT

"I've had a good time getting to know you. Being honest, I'm not feeling the connection I'd need to keep going, and I'd rather tell you that than let it drift. I'm sorry - I think you're genuinely a good person."

Names it directly and gives them something true to hold onto. "Let it drift" acknowledges the alternative you're refusing.

YOU WANT DIFFERENT THINGS LONG-TERM

"I've been thinking about this a lot. We want different things, and I don't think that's something either of us should try to talk the other out of. I'd rather step back now than ask you to want a life you don't."

Removes blame from both sides. Frames the ending as respect rather than rejection.

THEY CROSSED A LINE YOU'RE NOT NEGOTIATING

"I'm not comfortable with how that went, and it's not something I want to work through. I'm going to step away. I'd appreciate it if you didn't reach out."

No debate offered. Nothing to argue with. The request at the end is a boundary, not a suggestion.

SLOW FADE THAT NEEDS A REAL ENDING

"I think we've both let this go quiet, and that's probably its own answer. I don't want to leave it unsaid - I'm going to close this out. Take care of yourself."

Names the mutual drift instead of assigning fault. Ends it properly anyway.

THEY'RE A GOOD PERSON, YOU'RE NOT READY

"This is about me, and I know how that sounds, but it's true. I'm not in a place to give this what it deserves, and doing it halfway wouldn't be fair to you. I'm sorry."

Only use this if it's actually true. Using it as a softener when the real reason is them is a disservice to both of you.

THEY KEEP PUSHING AFTER YOU'VE ENDED IT

"I've said what I needed to say and my answer hasn't changed. I'm not going to keep discussing it. Please respect that."

Repetition without new information. Do not add a new reason - a new reason gives them something fresh to argue with.

YOU NEED TO SAY IT IN PERSON, AND YOU'RE PREPARING

"I want to be straight with you because I respect you. I've thought about this and I don't see us building something long-term. I'm not looking to debate it - I just didn't want you finding out by me disappearing."

"I'm not looking to debate it" set early prevents forty-five minutes of negotiation. Say it in the first thirty seconds.

CLOSING THE DOOR ON SOMEONE CIRCLING BACK

"It's good to hear from you. I'm in a different place now and I'm not looking to revisit this. I hope things are going well for you."

Kind without cracking the door. "Different place now" is complete and requires no elaboration.

FOUR THINGS THAT UNDO A GOOD MESSAGE

- ✗ **Over-explaining.** Every extra sentence is another thing to disagree with. Three sentences is usually the ceiling.
- ✗ **Leaving a door open you don't mean.** "Maybe down the road" is cruelty dressed as kindness if you don't mean it.
- ✗ **Listing their flaws.** Feedback they didn't ask for at the moment they can least receive it. Skip it.
- ✗ **Waiting for their permission.** You can end something without them agreeing that you should. Their response doesn't change the decision.

"Let your yes be yes, and your no be no."

MATTHEW 5:37

You've done the hard part.

Now *keep going*.

Clarity isn't a one-time event. It's a practice - and it gets sharper the longer you stay with it.

What you just did in ten pages, Vela does continuously. It builds your profile over time, notices the patterns you can't see from inside them, and adapts as you learn more about yourself.

1 **Keep the honest inventory going**

The self-knowledge you built here decays without maintenance. Revisit Exercise 01 every few months.

2 **Set the boundary you named**

Exercise 08 is only worth doing if you say it out loud. Pick your moment this week and hold the line once.

3 **Actually use the questions**

Two or three at a time. In real conversation. The deck only works if you take it out of the drawer.

The right person for the wrong version of you is still the wrong outcome. Become the person your life requires.

When you're ready for the tool that does this continuously, go find your vela.

"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

PROVERBS 4:23



Clarity first. *Connection follows.*

Vela builds on everything you just did. A living profile that sharpens over time, an honest read on anyone you're considering, and a map of where the right people actually are.

FIND YOUR VELA

Join the founding waitlist for early access, founding member pricing, and first look at both apps.

findyourvela.com