



The Connection Code™

5 Foundations of Enduring Relationship

Janna Findley Harris, M.S., Ed.S., LMFT

TheConnectionCode.co

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5 Critical Dimensions of Enduring Relationship

Personal Reflection to Action Workbook

by

Janna Findley Harris, M.S., Ed.S., L.M.F.T.

Welcome to Your Workbook!

This workbook is your personal companion to **The Connection Code™ Relationship Assessment** and its accompanying book. It is designed to help you move beyond reflection and into deeper self-understanding — and ultimately, into meaningful, intentional action.

If you have already completed **The Connection Code™ Relationship Assessment**, you now have a picture of where your relationship currently stands across five foundational dimensions. Perhaps some results surprised you. Perhaps others confirmed what you already sensed. This workbook gives you the space to sit with those results, understand them more fully, and begin the quiet, courageous work of deciding what to do with what you have learned.

If you have not yet completed the assessment, that is a natural starting point. The workbook will offer tremendous value on its own — but the three tools together form a complete experience that is more powerful than any of them alone.

What This Workbook Contains

There are five sections, one for each dimension explored in The Connection Code™:

1. Positive Regard and Mutual Respect
2. Empathy
3. Authenticity / Genuineness
4. Alignment/ Congruence
5. Emotional Intimacy

Each section includes three parts: reflection and journaling prompts to deepen your self-awareness, questions to better define and explore your feelings, and an awareness tracking log to help you notice patterns in real time followed by practical exercises to actively strengthen that dimension.

How to Use This Workbook

This workbook is designed for solo use — meaning it is a private, personal experience intended for you alone. There is no right or wrong way to engage with it, and no timeline you are expected to follow. What matters is honesty — with yourself, about your experience, in this moment.

A few suggestions as you work through it:

- Work through one dimension at a time. Give yourself at least a day or two between sections to allow the reflections to settle.
- Write without editing yourself. These pages are for you alone. The most useful insights often come when you stop curating your thoughts and simply let them land on the page.
- Use the Awareness Tracking Log over time, not just in one sitting. Keep this workbook accessible and return to whenever something in your relationship surfaces a strong feeling.
- Approach the exercises with curiosity rather than pressure. These are not tests. They are invitations.

A Note on Self-Compassion

What you are doing in these pages takes courage. You are looking honestly at your relationship — not the one you hope it is, or fear it might be, but the one you actually live in. That kind of clear-eyed honesty requires a foundation of self-compassion.

You are not here to blame yourself or your partner. You are here to understand. Understanding is the first step toward anything better.

If certain sections surface painful or difficult emotions, please honor that. You do not need to rush through them. And if at any point you find that what you are uncovering feels beyond what this workbook is designed to hold, please consider reaching out to a licensed professional. That is not a failure — it is wisdom.

"Being fully known and loved by a partner for whom one has the ultimate respect is one of the greatest achievements and pinnacles of success life has to offer." — Janna Findley Harris

For additional tools, resources, and support, visit TheConnectionCode.co

Dimension One

Positive Regard and Mutual Respect

Mutual respect is the steady, daily honoring of your partner’s inherent worth, autonomy, and vulnerability. It is not grand gestures — it is the quiet refusal to diminish, dismiss, or control another human being who has chosen to build a life with you. When positive regard is genuinely present, both partners feel safe to be fully themselves. Disagreements can occur without the fear that one’s dignity is at stake.

John Gottman’s research identified contempt — eye-rolling, sarcasm, belittling — as the single highest predictor of relationship breakdown. Its opposite is not simply politeness, but a deep and consistent honoring of your partner as worthy of your best, even when you are at your most frustrated.

Reflection and Journaling

When do you feel most respected and valued by your partner? What does that look and feel like?

When do you feel least respected? Are there particular situations, topics, or times of day when this tends to arise?

Think of a recent moment when you felt your dignity was at stake in an interaction with your partner. What happened? What did you need in that moment that you did not receive?

In what ways do you demonstrate respect toward your partner? Are there ways you could be more consistent?

Awareness Tracking Log

Use this log over time to track moments when respect felt absent or threatened. Noticing patterns is the first step toward changing them.

Situation	How I felt	My response	What I needed

Practical Exercises

Exercise 1: The Pause Practice

Before responding in a moment of tension or frustration, practice a deliberate three-second pause. In that pause, ask yourself silently: “Am I about to say something that honors my partner’s dignity — even if I strongly disagree?” You do not need to change what you say. Simply notice, over time, how the pause shifts your choices.

Exercise 2: The Appreciation Record

Each day for one week, write down one specific thing your partner did or said that you genuinely appreciated. It does not need to be large. The practice of noticing builds the habit of positive regard. At the end of the week, read back through the list. What do you observe?

After completing the exercises, what did you notice about yourself? What shifted, even slightly?

Other Notes

For additional tools, resources, and support, visit TheConnectionCode.co

Dimension Two

Empathy

Empathy is authentically sensing and caring about your partner’s inner experience — not just the words they speak, but the emotions, history, and meaning behind them. It is the difference between living beside someone and truly living with them. Unlike sympathy, which feels sorry for another, true empathy communicates: “I am genuinely with you in this.”

Carl Rogers described empathy as entering the private perceptual world of another and becoming thoroughly at home in it. In the daily life of a long-term relationship, this translates into the willingness to receive your partner’s experience before rushing to resolve, reframe, or redirect it.

Reflection and Journaling

Describe a time when you felt truly understood by your partner — not just heard, but genuinely met. What made that moment different?

Is there something you have been carrying lately that your partner may not fully understand? What would it mean to you if they did?

When your partner is struggling or distressed, what is your instinctive first response? Do you tend toward solutions, reassurance, silence, or something else? Is that response what they typically need?

Think of a time when you felt your partner's response to your distress missed the mark. What were you actually needing in that moment?

Awareness Tracking Log

Use this log to track moments when you felt unheard, dismissed, or met with solutions instead of understanding.

Situation	How I felt	My response	What I needed

Practical Exercises

Exercise 1: The Mirror Practice

The next time your partner shares something difficult, resist the impulse to respond immediately. Instead, reflect a portion of what they said back to them: “What I’m hearing is that you felt...” Then stop. Allow the silence. Notice what they add when given more space. Practice this three times over the next two weeks and record what you observe below.

Exercise 2: The Curiosity Question

Once per day for one week, ask your partner one genuine question about their inner experience — not about tasks or logistics, but about how they are actually feeling. Examples: “What was the hardest part of your day?” or “Is there something on your mind lately that you haven’t had space to share?” The question itself is the practice.

*After completing the exercises, what did you discover about your own capacity for empathy?
What felt natural, and what felt challenging?*

Other Notes

For additional tools, resources, and support, visit TheConnectionCode.co

Dimension Three

Authenticity and Genuineness

Authenticity is the alignment between who you are on the inside and who you show up as in your relationship. It is the willingness to be self-disclosing about your strengths and your failures, to speak honestly about how you truly feel, and to allow your partner to know your actual self — not a carefully polished version of it.

Pretense, even well-intentioned pretense, eventually erodes trust. To be loved in spite of our imperfections by our partner is one of the greatest gifts we can receive. But that gift is only possible when we allow ourselves to be genuinely known.

Reflection and Journaling

In what areas of yourself do you feel most free to be genuine with your partner? Where do you hold back, and why?

Is there something true about you — a fear, a struggle, a part of yourself you haven't fully shared — that your partner does not know? What has kept you from sharing it?

When you are not being fully authentic with your partner, what does that feel like from the inside? What does it cost you?

Do you believe your partner is being fully genuine with you? What makes you feel that — or what makes you uncertain?

Awareness Tracking Log

Use this log to notice moments when you felt the need to present a false version of yourself, or when you sensed inauthenticity from your partner.

Situation	How I felt	My response	What I needed

Practical Exercises

Exercise 1: The Honest Moment

Choose one small truth you have been holding back — something minor enough to feel safe, but real enough to matter. Share it with your partner this week, without elaboration or apology. Notice their response. Notice how you feel afterward. Write about it below.

Exercise 2: The ‘I Was Wrong’ Practice

Identify one situation from the past month where you were wrong, overreacted, or handled something poorly. Acknowledge it to your partner without explanation or justification — simply: “I was wrong about that, and I’m sorry.” Notice what this practice costs you, and what it gives back.

What did these exercises reveal about your relationship’s capacity for authenticity? What would it take to deepen that?

Other Notes:

Dimension Four

Alignment / Congruence

Congruence in a relationship is the ongoing alignment between what we say we value and how we actually live. It is the slow accumulation of small, reliable choices that tell our partner: “You can trust that my words and my actions will match.” Over time, this integrity becomes the invisible foundation of the relationship.

One of the fastest ways to erode trust is when a partner’s words and deeds are not aligned — when values are stated but not lived. Congruence is not about being flawless. It is about being honest when gaps appear, and working together to close them.

Reflection and Journaling

Where do you see strong alignment between what your partner says and what they do? What examples come to mind most readily?

Where do you notice gaps — areas where your partner’s stated values or commitments are not consistently reflected in their behavior? How do those gaps affect you?

Now turn the mirror: where might your own words and actions be misaligned? What values do you espouse that you do not always live out?

When promises are broken — even small ones — how do you typically respond? How does your partner respond when you break one?

Awareness Tracking Log

Use this log to notice moments when you felt the gap between stated values and actual behavior acutely.

Situation	How I felt	My response	What I needed

Practical Exercises

Exercise 1: The One Promise

Identify one promise you have been meaning to keep but have not — something your partner has heard you say but has not yet seen you do. Make it this week. Do not announce it in advance. Simply do it, and notice what changes.

Exercise 2: The Values Inventory

Write down five values you believe are central to your relationship (e.g., honesty, presence, humor, adventure, security). Then, for each one, rate on a scale of 1–10 how consistently your behavior reflects that value right now. What do you notice? Which gaps feel most important to close?

What did working through these exercises reveal about the alignment — or misalignment — in your relationship? What is one specific change you want to make?

Other Notes:

For additional tools, resources, and support, visit TheConnectionCode.co

Dimension Five

Emotional Intimacy

Emotional intimacy is the willingness to be genuinely seen — and to extend that same seeing to your partner. It expands beyond individual vulnerability into the tender territory of shared hopes, fears, longings, and mutual dreams. It is the late-night conversation that reminds you why you chose each other. The quiet admission of insecurity that invites comfort rather than judgment.

When emotional intimacy is strong, both partners feel they have a safe harbor in one another. When it fades, a relationship can begin to feel more like a business partnership than a love story. Deepening it begins with small, regular invitations to go beneath the surface of the daily routine.

Reflection and Journaling

When was the last time you felt truly emotionally close to your partner? What were the conditions that made that possible?

Is there a fear, longing, or dream you carry that your partner does not fully know about? What has made it difficult to share?

What does emotional safety feel like to you? Do you experience that with your partner? In what circumstances does it feel most present – and least?

If emotional intimacy in your relationship could be described as a season, what season would it be right now, and why?

Awareness Tracking Log

Use this log to track moments when you felt the distance between you and your partner most acutely, or when a bid for emotional closeness was missed.

Situation	How I felt	My response	What I needed

Practical Exercises

Exercise 1: The Invitation

Once this week, initiate a conversation with your partner that begins with one of the following: “I’ve been thinking about something I’d like to share with you...” or “Can I tell you something I haven’t said out loud yet?” It does not need to be monumental. The act of opening the door is the practice. Write about what happened below.

Exercise 2: The Question That Goes Deeper

For one week, end each day by asking your partner one question that invites more than a factual answer. Examples: “What’s something you’re quietly hoping for right now?” or “Is there anything you wish I understood better about how you’re feeling lately?” Listen without offering solutions. Simply receive.

After completing this dimension's work, what feels most alive for you? What feels most tender or difficult?

Other Notes:

For additional tools, resources, and support, visit TheConnectionCode.co

Bringing It All Together

You have now moved through all five dimensions of The Connection Code™. That is not a small thing. What you have done in these pages — the honest reflection, the noticing, the willingness to look clearly at something as tender as your most important relationship — takes genuine courage.

Take a moment before moving on to look back across all five sections. Not to judge, not to score, but to notice: where does energy feel alive and hopeful? Where does something feel stuck, or quietly aching for attention?

Looking across all five dimensions, which one feels most in need of your attention right now? What is one specific, concrete step you are willing to take in the next thirty days?

Which dimension feels most like a genuine strength in your relationship — something worth acknowledging and building from?

If you could say one honest thing to your partner that you have not yet said — something grounded in what you've uncovered in these pages — what would it be?

A Note on Next Steps

This workbook is a beginning, not an ending. The insights you have gathered here are most powerful when they are acted upon — gently, honestly, and with your partner’s dignity always in view.

If working through these pages has surfaced something that feels larger than what reflection alone can address, please consider utilizing other resources at www.ConnectionCode.co or even seeking other professional assistance. Seeking support is not a sign that your relationship has failed. It is a sign that you take it seriously enough to invest in it.

The relationships worth having are not the ones without difficulty. They are the ones where both people keep choosing each other — with growing skill, growing honesty, and growing grace.

"May these reflections serve as a steady companion on your journey — reminding you of the quiet miracle it is to have found someone with whom you can build a life, grow older, and continue becoming more fully yourselves — together."

— Janna Findley Harris, M.S., Ed.S., L.M.F.T.

DISCLAIMER: This workbook is an educational tool intended for personal reflection and self-directed growth. It does not constitute therapy, counseling, or medical advice. If you are experiencing significant emotional distress, depression, anxiety, or any mental health crisis, please seek support from a qualified provider. If you are in immediate danger, call 988 or 911.

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