

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO RELATIONSHIPS

DOES HE ACTUALLY LIKE YOU?

How to tell real interest apart from attraction, mixed signals, and the little things that feel way more important than they actually are.

Less guessing. More watching what he does.

BEFORE YOU START

Stop guessing. Start watching

This book won't teach you to read anyone's mind. It'll teach you to read behavior, which tells you a whole lot more.

When we like someone, we spend hours decoding a text, a slow reply, a single emoji. But real interest doesn't hide in tiny details. You see it in what a person does, consistently, over time.

The question "does he like me?" keeps you anxious and never really gets answered. In these pages we swap it for better questions, ones you can actually answer by looking at the facts.

IMPORTANT NOTE

This is a general-interest guide, not a substitute for therapy or professional support. If a situation is causing you serious anxiety, or if you feel pressure, control, or fear, please reach out to a professional or the support services in your area.

THE METHOD

Less interpreting, more watching behavior

A single signal is noise: one intense night, a compliment, a perfect weekend. On their own, they don't tell you much.

What matters is the pattern: what repeats over time, in the everyday routine, in the small hard moments. Real interest tends to produce behavior, not just words.

Three words to keep in your pocket as you read:

Clarity

What you actually want, and which behaviors are compatible with that.

Consistency

Look at what he does over time, not the high of one night.

Reciprocity

Don't just count how much you feel. Count how much is being built by both of you.

EXERCISE

Write down what "real interest" means to you using only observable behaviors, not feelings.

PART ONE

The right question

Before the signals, let's change the question you start from. That's what decides whether you end up in anxiety or in clarity.

The wrong question: "does he like me?"

It sounds simple, but it's asking for a certainty you can't have. Attraction is internal, it shifts over time, and it doesn't always line up with wanting to build a relationship.

A person can be attracted to you and still be unavailable, incompatible, or unwilling to invest. That's why "does he like me?" always leaves you in doubt.

THE SKILL: CHANGE THE QUESTION

Swap "does he like me?" for: "Do his behaviors show enough interest, and interest that fits what I'm looking for?" That one you can answer by looking at the facts.

EXERCISE

For one week, every time you catch yourself asking "does he like me?", reframe it as "what has he actually done?"

CHAPTER 2

Interest, intention, availability

These are three different things, and they often don't go together. "I like you" isn't automatically "I want a relationship with you." And "I'd like to" isn't "I'm able to build it right now."

Interest

Curiosity, attraction, enjoying the connection.

Intention

A stated willingness to explore a certain direction.

Availability

The real capacity to give time, consistency, and emotional space.

EXERCISE

Rate the person you're thinking about from 0 to 10 on interest, intention, and availability. Often the first is high and the other two are low.

The signal that matters most: consistency

Isolated signals are noisy. Consistency cuts through the noise, because it shows you whether the behavior holds up over time, in the routine, and in the small hard moments.

Consistency doesn't mean perfection. It means the slip-ups get explained and repaired, not that every day looks identical.

EXERCISE

Take three signals that convinced you he likes you. Are they one-off moments, or patterns that keep repeating?

Who moves the relationship forward

Initiative is a useful signal because it costs something: time, the risk of rejection, actually planning. It doesn't have to be 50/50 every single day, but a relationship that only stays alive because you keep it alive is telling you something important.

Watch for:

- Who starts the conversations?
- Who suggests an actual, specific plan?
- Who picks the thread back up after a busy day?
- Who brings up the next step?

EXERCISE

Look back over the last two weeks without counting likes or emojis: count the actions.

Feeling seen, not just entertained

A strong sign of real interest is how understood you feel when you tell him something that matters. It's not just that he texts you. It's whether he actually catches what you share.

Three lenses instead of one vague feeling: when you open up, do you feel understood? validated? taken seriously? If one of the three is always missing, that's data.

- He remembers the things you tell him.
- He asks follow-up questions, not just cracks jokes.
- He responds to the emotion, not just the facts.
- He adjusts his behavior when a need is reasonable.

EXERCISE

Think about the last time you shared something important. Did you feel understood, or just entertained?

PART TWO

Reading the digital signals

Texts, response times, compliments. Here you learn not to give an emoji more weight than it deserves.

Texting a lot doesn't equal interest

Some people text constantly, others barely. The sheer volume of texts is a weak indicator on its own. It's more useful to see whether the contact creates continuity and actually moves things into real life.

More telling than the number of texts:

- He circles back to things that matter.
- He follows through on what he says over text.
- He turns "we should hang out" into a day and a place.
- He doesn't use texting as a permanent stand-in for seeing you.

EXERCISE

For one week, track how many conversations lead to something concrete, not how many notifications you get.

Response time: stop watching the clock

There's no universal window after which a reply means he's not interested. Work, habits, and texting style all matter. What's useful is the pattern, combined with his other behavior.

More important

Whether, after going quiet, he comes back with substance, explains, suggests a plan, keeps it going.

Less important

Whether he replied in 23 minutes instead of 3.

EXERCISE

For seven days, drop every rule like "if he replies after X, it means Y." Replace it with watching the patterns.

Compliments and flirting: attraction isn't commitment

Flirting and compliments can point to attraction, but they're low-cost signals. They can be totally genuine and still not predict any future investment.

A little hierarchy of signals, from the lightest to the heaviest:

Words, then initiative, then reliability, then investment over time. The further down you go, the more trustworthy the signal.

EXERCISE

Sort the signals you're getting by how much they "cost" him: low, medium, high.

Future talk or future planning?

The future can also be used as a fantasy. So learn to tell the difference between talking about the future and actually planning for it.

Future talk

"One day we'll go to Tokyo."

Future planning

"I'm free the weekend of the 12th, should we book it?"

EXERCISE

In the last 30 days, how many future sentences turned into actions with an actual date?

Does he only reach out when it's convenient?

A pattern clustered around convenient or late-night hours can mean the relationship takes up a limited slice of his life. That's not automatically bad if you both want something casual. It becomes a problem when you want more and the pattern doesn't change.

EXERCISE

Compare what you want with the actual place this relationship holds in your week.

PART THREE

The signals that fool you

Some things look like love and aren't. Others look like nothing and mean a lot. Let's learn to tell them apart.

Jealousy is not proof of love

Jealousy can come from all kinds of places: attachment, insecurity, fear of loss, cultural norms. It's not a reliable thermometer for how deep the feelings run.

Watch out for a common mistake: control, monitoring, isolating you, pressure, or punishment don't turn romantic just because jealousy is the motive.

THE SKILL: CHANGE WHAT YOU READ INTO IT

Swap "he's jealous, so he cares" for "how does he handle jealousy when he feels it?" The answer to that question is worth a whole lot more.

Sex and interest: two different conversations

Sexual desire can coexist with real emotional interest, but it's not enough on its own to prove it. Even amazing physical chemistry doesn't, by itself, answer the questions about reliability, intention, and compatibility.

Protect your clarity: don't use sex to get a definition of what you are, and don't use the definition to negotiate sex. They're related conversations, but separate ones.

EXERCISE

Write down what conditions make you feel free and safe when it comes to intimacy. They're yours, not a tactic to get something.

Easy is a good sign

"Easy" doesn't mean free of feelings or problems. It means you don't have to constantly decode whether the relationship even exists. A little predictability can feel less exciting if you're used to uncertainty, but it's often more telling than hot-and-cold chemistry.

If the only person who gets you fired up is the unpredictable one, you might not be reading interest. You might be reading anxiety.

EXERCISE

How much mental energy do you spend interpreting this person? Rate it from 0 to 10. A high score is not proof of great love.

High interest, low compatibility

One of the biggest risks is using his interest as proof that you should want him. Being wanted doesn't automatically make a person right for you.

Interest is only half the information. The other half is: is this person compatible with the life I want?

EXERCISE

List three things you'd still weigh even if you were 100% sure he's in love with you.

Believe the words, verify with the actions

Being cynical isn't smarter than being naive. Words matter. The problem is using them as a substitute for what he actually does.

"I want a serious relationship" is a piece of information. If it's followed by weeks of evasive behavior, that piece of information needs updating.

- Promise plus action = growing trust.
- Promise with no action = hold off on the verdict.
- Promise broken more than once = look at the pattern.

The most common false positives

Here are the signals that win us over most easily, and what they're really worth:

"He always watches my stories"

A rock-bottom-cost signal.

"He's jealous"

Can point to insecurity, not to the quality of the relationship.

"He tells me I'm different"

A compliment, not a plan.

"He always comes back"

Coming back matters less than what changes after he comes back.

"The chemistry is insane"

Important, but separate from intention and availability.

EXERCISE

Which false positive wins you over the fastest?

PART FOUR

The behaviors that count

The reliable signals: how he handles a no, how he repairs after a fight, and a test to pull it all together.

The high-value signals

If compliments cost little, these cost a lot. They're the signals that carry the most weight:

- He makes plans and keeps them.
- He gradually brings you into decisions.
- He tells you when something changes.
- He respects your no.
- He repairs after a fight.
- He makes real room for the relationship.

EXERCISE

Circle the three signals that matter most to you. Are they there?

How he handles your no

The way a person reacts to a small boundary is often more telling than how charming he is when everything's going his way.

A healthy response

He might be disappointed, but he respects the limit without punishing you, mocking you, or pulling affection as leverage.

A concerning response

He pushes, guilt-trips you, makes you feel "difficult," or turns your no into a test of your love.

EXERCISE

Think about the last no you said out loud. What happened afterward?

How he repairs after a fight

Compatibility isn't measured by the absence of fights, but also by the ability to repair. One well-handled conflict tells you more than a thousand compliments.

Four ways of fighting to keep an eye on, in him and in you:

- **Criticism:** attacking the person instead of the behavior.
- **Contempt:** sarcasm and mockery. The most dangerous signal.
- **Defensiveness:** "yeah, but you..." without owning your own piece.
- **Stonewalling:** silence used as punishment.

Repair is the opposite: owning your own piece, not using silence to punish, looking for a concrete solution, and the behavior actually changing, at least in part.

EXERCISE

Think about your last fight: was there a real repair, or just a return to normal without dealing with anything?

The 5 A's test

A simple way to pull it all together. It's not a scientific test: it's a grid for observing.

Attention

He listens and remembers.

Action

He turns intentions into behavior.

Accountability

He keeps his commitments and repairs when things go sideways.

Authenticity

He gradually shares real parts of himself.

Advancement

The relationship moves forward instead of staying in limbo.

EXERCISE

Give each A a 0, 1, or 2: 0 absent, 1 on and off, 2 consistent. Look at where you score lowest.

PART FIVE

Asking and deciding

When the signals aren't enough, you ask. And you learn to read the typical answers without telling yourself stories.

How to ask without "ruining everything"

If a reasonable question about where the relationship is going "ruins everything," it probably just revealed something that was already fragile.

THE SCRIPT

"I'm really enjoying this, and I want to understand how you're feeling about where we're at. I'm looking for something serious, no rush but with intention. You?"

EXERCISE

Adapt the script to your own voice. Cut every line that's there to apologize for having a need.

If he says "I'm not ready"

Take the sentence seriously. It can be true even if he's attracted to you. Your job isn't to figure out whether "he's actually just scared." It's to decide whether what he can offer today is compatible with what you're looking for.

EXERCISE

Finish this: "When a person tells me they're not ready, I stop translating and start ____."

If he says "let's see how it goes"

"Let's see how it goes" can be a legitimate stance in the early days. It becomes a problem when there's no progression at all, or when it's used to dodge every conversation forever.

EXERCISE

Set your own reasonable window for when you want to see more clarity. Not as a secret ultimatum, but as a personal limit.

If he's really into you but you're not sure

You don't have to reciprocate just because someone's "perfect on paper." Reciprocity includes your desire too. Being selective means not using someone else's availability to feel safe when there's no real interest on your side.

EXERCISE

If you took away the fear of ending up alone, would you still choose this person?

Interest can grow slowly

Not everyone develops feelings at the same speed. Slow isn't automatically disinterest. The difference is between slow-with-progression and stagnation dressed up as "I need time."

- Contact gradually increases.
- Conversations get more personal.
- He's more woven into your real life.
- Shared decisions start to show up.

EXERCISE

Is the relationship further along than it was a month ago?
In what concrete way?

PART SIX

Workbook

Now you put it all on paper. This is where you stop guessing and start seeing.

The 14-day protocol: observe, don't interpret

Two weeks to train your eye on behavior instead of feelings.

- **Days 1-3:** note initiative, plans, follow-up.
- **Days 4-6:** notice whether you feel understood, validated, taken seriously.
- **Day 7:** run the 5 A's.
- **Days 8-10:** express a small need or boundary and watch the response.
- **Days 11-12:** compare words and actions.
- **Day 13:** ask for clarity if the relationship is far enough along.
- **Day 14:** decide whether to increase, hold, or pull back your investment.

The final decision rests on at least three patterns, not on a single moment.

The words-and-actions table

Fill in at least five rows. Look for the trend, not perfection.

- **Column 1:** what he said.
- **Column 2:** what he did.
- **Column 3:** how much time passed.
- **Column 4:** does it match up? Yes / partly / no.

EXERCISE

When words and actions don't line up for row after row, you have your answer, no interpreting required.

Your own standard for interest

You can't dictate how much someone has to text or call. But you can define what makes you feel like you're in something that's mutual enough.

EXERCISE

Finish this: "For me, enough interest means that, over time, we both _____, _____, and _____."

Red flag or just a difference?

Not everything you don't like is a red flag. But not everything that is a red flag should be shrugged off as "just a difference."

A negotiable difference

Texting styles, hobbies, how social he is.

A possible incompatibility

Exclusivity, wanting kids, where to live, the kind of relationship you each want.

A red flag

Control, coercion, boundary violations, humiliation, fear.

EXERCISE

Sort three things that confuse you right now. Don't call everything you dislike a red flag, and don't call something that scares you "just a difference."

Checklist: does he actually like you?

Check off what's true. Don't use the total as a verdict: look at which items are missing and how much they matter to you.

- He reaches out on his own.
- He suggests real plans.
- He keeps plans or repairs them.
- He's curious about your world.
- He respects your boundaries and your no.
- His words and actions line up.
- The relationship is moving forward.
- You can ask questions without fearing punishment or him disappearing.
- You feel understood, not just entertained.
- You don't have to carry the whole connection yourself.

You don't need to read his mind

"You don't have to know what he feels. You have to know whether what he does is enough for the relationship you want."

No ebook can read another person's mind. But it can help you stop building certainties on fragile signals, and start giving more weight to repeated behavior, listening, reliability, and progression.

IMPORTANT NOTE

No behavior can guarantee another person's interest. This guide is here to help you observe more clearly and protect your well-being. If there's coercion, control, violence, or fear, please reach out to qualified services and professionals.

GO DEEPER

Essential reading

This is a general-interest guide and not a substitute for therapy or professional support. The sources are here to give the concepts a serious foundation.

Reis, H. T., & Shaver, P. (1988). Intimacy as an interpersonal process. In *Handbook of Personal Relationships*.

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Le, B., & Agnew, C. R. (2003). Commitment and its theorized determinants: a meta-analysis of the Investment Model. *Personal Relationships*, 10(1).

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