

COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR COUPLES

Part 2

Master Conflict Resolution, Enhance
Communication, Build Intimacy and Trust, and
Strengthen Lasting Love with a 365-Day
Relationship Guidance

Arthur Apison

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the journey that shaped me—to the lessons, the love, and the life-changing moments that continue to mold who I am.

To my parents, who gave me the gift of life and stood by me through every high and low. To my beloved mother, who passed away shortly after I published *Part 1* of this book. Although you are no longer here in body, your spirit lives on, and this book carries your light.

To the extraordinary woman by my side today: your love is my anchor, your presence my inspiration. You are my muse, my confidant, and the heartbeat behind every page.

To the beautiful land of Portugal and its warm-hearted people, thank you for embracing me with open arms. Your kindness, especially toward those seeking refuge, reflects the very best of humanity.

To everyone in all the nations that have opened their doors to refugees since the beginning of the war—your solidarity has brought hope to so many. May your compassion continue to ripple outward.

And to all conscious souls working to heal and awaken our Earth—your courage lights the path forward. Keep going. You are the change.

With deepest gratitude,
Arthur Apison

Contents

INTRODUCTION: WHEN PASSION FADES, LOVE BEGINS	6
CHAPTER 1: THE EARLY DAYS—BUILDING LOVE ON WEEKENDS.....	10
CHAPTER 2: JOURNEY INTO THE SACRED — WHAT UNITED US	15
CHAPTER 3: THE DOOR THAT FOUND US.....	20
CHAPTER 4: THE SPACE BETWEEN US	25
CHAPTER 5: BUILDING THE SPACE WE DREAMED OF	32
CHAPTER 6: OUR HONEYMOON BEFORE THE WEDDING	36
CHAPTER 7: THE HEART LEARNS IN SHADOW	40
CHAPTER 8: WHEN LOVE MEETS ROUTINE	45
CHAPTER 9: TWO HEMISPHERES, ONE HOME	50
CHAPTER 10: PROTECTING THE CIRCLE	54
CHAPTER 11: SMALL SOUL, BIG LESSONS.....	60

CHAPTER 12: DIVIDING RESPONSIBILITY 73

CHAPTER 13: FTP INSIGHTS.....80

**CHAPTER 14: EMOTIONS: HOW TO FEEL, EXPRESS, AND
TRANSFORM THEM.....97**

CHAPTER 15: NEW FAMILY RULES 116

**CHAPTER 16: THE ART OF COMMUNICATION — WHERE PLAY
MEETS LOVE.....135**

CHAPTER 17: CRISIS AS A GATEWAY TO GROWTH.....142

EPILOGUE 153

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 158

ABOUT THE AUTHOR 161

Introduction: When Passion Fades, Love Begins

This book is a continuation of the first part, but if you happen to start here before reading *Part 1*, that's absolutely fine—you can return to the first book later if you wish. Here's a short introduction to what you can expect in the pages ahead.

Unlike traditional relationship guides built mostly on theory, my books grow out of more than 20 years of lived experience—including periods of celibacy, conscious relationships, and solo spiritual practice. I've navigated relationships through every stage of my own evolution (which you can read about in *Part 1*), and each encounter has brought a deeper understanding of love, communication, and the emotional world we share. I do not pretend to be a PhD psychologist. My work is grounded in

lived experience: thousands of hours in deep conversations and countless shared moments of vulnerability, insight, and healing with my partners and clients. I write not from academic theory but from real human experience—and I believe that’s where some of the most transformative wisdom is found.

In *Part 1*, I shared tools that helped me—and many participants of my retreats—build stronger relationships: the **Fair Talk Practice** (FTP), the four levels of communication (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual), the cappuccino model, and the importance of shared mission and values. That book focused on structure—how to create a solid foundation that could hold the weight of real life. Once the foundation is secure, then we can co-create the structure. If *Part 1* was about laying a strong foundation, this one is about building your house and creating a home by understanding and accepting each other’s mental, emotional, and physical language. This second part is like developing the muscles that allow our relationship’s skeleton to move and come alive. The practices you’ll find here strengthen flexibility, connection, and emotional tone—so that love doesn’t just stand firm, but also flows, adapts, and grows.

As I wrote in the final pages of *Part 1*, I sensed that the next chapter of this journey would be about something deeper: the emotional dimension of love. Because once the foundation is set, the real test begins—learning how to navigate the waves of feeling: vulnerability, doubt, passion, and fear. And that’s what this book is about. This is where theory meets practice. What we discovered—and how we managed it—is what I’ll share with you in this book.

This *Part 2* is written for couples in the early stages of a relationship—the first year of a relationship that feels both magical and fragile. It’s a time when everything is new, but when deep patterns also start to surface. You begin to experience each other’s habits, emotional cycles, triggers, and unspoken fears. If you’re not aware, the very feelings that brought you together can begin to create distance.

One of the biggest traps couples fall into is **confusing passion with love**. Passion is exciting and intense—but it's temporary. When it fades, many assume the love is gone too. They walk away, thinking something is broken. But the truth is: **Passion fades. Love deepens.**

This book is for those who want to go beyond the fire of attraction and build something enduring: **emotional intimacy**. It's about understanding each other's fears and dreams, navigating moods and miscommunication, and making space for both closeness and individuality.

This book is not just theory. It's a continuation of my story with Analu—full of real moments: connection and misunderstanding, harmony and misalignment, growth and repair. I share my experiences, not as instructions but to invite you to reflect, feel, and share your reactions with your partner. By doing this, it will help you both to grow together more consciously.

When I finished writing *Part 1*, my relationship with Analu had only just begun. The book was complete—but our love story was still in its opening chapters. Though we met at a themed festival and connected on all four levels from the very beginning, our journey together has been far from an easy walk on the beach. It has been real, deep, and transformative. We've faced many challenges side by side, and that journey is still unfolding—much of which I share in this book.

At times, it feels as if we are plunging into a vortex where each challenge, when met consciously, brings us closer together. Sometimes you may feel that all lessons have already been learned and everything interesting has passed. But in reality, you are simply entering another turn of the spiral—facing new challenges that invite deeper growth. As you commit to the process, the energy accelerates and intensifies your individual and shared evolution.

If you feel that your relationship doesn't yet cover all levels, that's perfectly okay. Every relationship evolves at its own pace. Supported by the practices in my books, it's absolutely possible to deepen your connection at any stage. Walking this path with your partner is not only more powerful, but often easier than going it alone. In the end, the level of consciousness we bring shapes the quality of the relationship we create. I hope that through the experiences I share in this book, your own journey will become more conscious—and more loving.

Love doesn't just happen to us. It's something we co-create—through attention, presence, and the willingness to grow together.

Your behavior during the early months will set the tone for everything that follows. Let's make them count—not just by falling in love, but by learning how to stay in love, long after the butterflies are gone.

This book is not just about avoiding breakup during the first year—it's about transforming that vulnerable period into a foundation for deep, lasting connection. I hope it serves as a companion for all who are ready to work consciously, side by side, to strengthen their love.

Chapter 1: The Early Days— Building Love on Weekends

When Analu and I met at a festival, everything felt aligned from the very beginning. We connected instantly on all of the four levels I described in *Part 1*. But even with that rare alignment, we quickly discovered that love isn't just about connection. It's about what you do with that connection—how you hold it, nurture it, and let it grow through real-life challenges. And our first challenge was simple but real: we lived in different cities. Analu was based in Lisbon; I lived in Porto.

Every Friday afternoon, after work at the bank, Analu would take the long-distance bus north. I would wait for her at the station, grateful and excited. The moment she stepped off, our little weekend world began. Those short days became our personal retreats—long walks, shared meals,

music, laughter, and quiet presence. Then, before sunrise on Monday, I would take her back to the bus station. She returned to Lisbon and went straight to work—often without enough sleep, but always with love in her heart.

Sometimes, I traveled to Lisbon myself. But the city's energy didn't resonate with me. The traffic, noise, and constant stress of finding parking quickly drained me. I always felt the urge to escape—to breathe more freely. The atmosphere in Porto, by contrast, is completely different. It feels less like a bustling city and more like a large village. Life flows slower here and is more relaxed. People still take time to greet each other, to share stories in cafés, to sit by the river without rushing. The air carries the smell of the ocean, and the narrow streets hold a warmth that makes you feel at home. For me, Porto was not just a place to live—it was a place where my soul could breathe.

Early in our relationship, there was hope that Analu might be transferred to Porto through her company. That hope sparked our first search for a home together. We sat down and made a list of everything we wanted in our future apartment: plenty of natural light, quiet surroundings, space for our morning practices, and a small garden for her cat. The vision felt so alive between us that even visiting apartments felt like we were already building our life together.

But life had other plans. Her transfer didn't get approved.

For a moment, we flipped the idea—maybe I could move closer to Lisbon. I wasn't bound to any specific workplace, and I was open to adapting. So, we began exploring towns around the Lisbon area. Still, something inside me hesitated. The city didn't feel right.

One weekend, while I was visiting Lisbon, we decided to sleep under the stars by the ocean. I brought my tent, and we drove out to the coast. It was stormy and raining when we left, but by the time we reached the ocean in Sintra, the sky had cleared. That kind of sudden change is typical on the

Portuguese coast—unpredictable and magical. Though the sea remained wild, the air was fresh and calm.

We found a quiet spot near the rocks and pitched the tent at the farthest safe distance from the sea. The sky was full of stars. The ocean roared, and the rhythm of the waves lulled us to sleep.

Because the tent was pitched on sand, I couldn't anchor it well. When heavy rain returned in the middle of the night, I felt a sudden splash of a large amount of water against the tent wall. Still half-asleep, I assumed a puddle had formed on top, and the accumulated water fell down, since the tent hadn't been stretched properly. But when I opened the flap and looked out, I realized the ocean had crept much closer. The next wave was stronger. Water rushed in, soaking our things.

We jumped up, dragging the tent to higher ground just as waves began crashing against the rocks where we had been sleeping minutes before. It was chaos—but also something sacred.

At the new place, Analu fell back asleep, even with rain falling and everything around us soaked in salty water. I lay beside her, awake, and listening to the storm, watching and protecting the tent, thinking. When the rain finally stopped, I stepped outside. The clouds had parted, and I knew it was time to move. I gently woke Analu. We packed up and carried our drenched belongings to the car. At a nearby beach café, we spread everything out to dry, then flattened the back seats, wrapped ourselves in damp sleeping bags, and fell asleep in each other's arms.

We woke with the sun already high and the coast coming back to life. It was a partnership that dealt with a stressful situation calmly and with care. We walked along the beach and took photos near the crashing waves. Then we returned to Lisbon, having been soaked, feeling tired, and yet incredibly happy.

That night wasn't just an adventure. It was a mirror. In emergency situations, we reveal who we really are. There's no time for performance—just instinct and truth. What I saw in Analu, and what she saw in me, was not panic or blame. It was a partnership that dealt with a stressful situation calmly and with care. That experience deepened our connection more than any perfect weekend ever could.

Another moment that tested us happened weeks later, when a fire broke out in the apartment I had rented in Porto. Once again, we faced the unexpected together—responding not in theory, but through action. Working as a team, we put the fire out.

Looking back, I understand these weren't the moments we would ever wish for. But they revealed who we were as a couple. They gave us something precious—proof, quiet and unshakable, that we could count on each other when it mattered most.

Later, I had to repaint the entire room, but that was already another story. But at that moment, Analu didn't just stand by—she rolled up her sleeves and helped me clean everything. Together we scrubbed the walls, cleared the smoke-stained furniture, and brought order back to the space. She even helped me choose and adjust new curtains to replace the ones that had burned. It wasn't glamorous work, but it was a powerful reminder: love isn't only about romance—it's also about rebuilding together when life leaves its marks.

During the week, when we were apart, we stayed connected through our daily morning practices. For me, waking at 5 a.m. was already a habit. For Analu, it was a brand-new discipline—and a serious challenge. But she committed. Every morning, we met online and practiced Tibetan hormonal gymnastics together—the same routine I guide during my fasting retreats. It awakens the body, recharges energy, and brings emotional balance.

Waking up at 5 a.m. became our second big challenge—and our first daily victory. Because love doesn't only grow in comfort. It grows when two people stretch their limits, meet in the unknown, and choose to rise together.

Over time, it became clear that Lisbon wasn't right for Analu either. Her job at the bank was stable, but uninspiring. It didn't reflect her deeper values or her spirit. And once we were honest about that, the idea of building a life near Lisbon quietly faded. We paused our apartment search—but one day, something unexpected happened. And I'll tell you about that... soon.

Chapter 2: Journey into the Sacred — What United Us

After navigating the rhythms of distance, early mornings, and weekend reunions, something inside us shifted. We had moved through logistical challenges, emotional tests, a midnight storm by the ocean—and even a fire. Then, the next step appeared—not just for us as a couple, but for Analu individually. She joined several of my fasting retreats, participating for the first time in her life in extended fasting.

Although I had guided many people through the process before, there was something especially meaningful about sharing it with her. She wasn't just participating. She was entering sacred territory—**my world, my work, my path**—and bringing her own spirit into it.

From the very beginning, I saw something powerful awakening in her. The physical benefits were noticeable—greater lightness, clarity, and energy—but it was on the **spiritual level** that her transformation unfolded most vividly.

Analú was born in Brazil and carries a deep indigenous lineage through her father's side. That ancestral connection lives in her bones. She grew up surrounded by the echoes of Amazonian wisdom—rituals, plants, prayers, and a deep understanding that true healing happens in the body and beyond it. So when she stepped into the fasting space, it wasn't foreign to her. It was familiar, ancient, and deeply alive. Though she had never fasted before, she entered the experience with reverence—and it responded to her.

By the second day, her energy shifted. Her face softened. Her voice grew quieter. And by the third day, she told me she was going through a process very similar to Ayahuasca, a plant medicine she had encountered in the past—but this time, it was coming from within. There were no external substances, no ceremonies led by others—just stillness, breath, emptiness, and the body's own sacred intelligence.

“It's like after drinking Ayahuasca,” she said softly one night, “but the process lasts much longer.”

The journey was deeper and slower than a ceremony. It unfolded over days, not hours. But the visions, clarity, emotional releases, and spiritual insights she experienced were unmistakable.

Fasting can do that. When the body is light and the mind is quiet, the spirit speaks more clearly. Emotions surface. Memories return. The body begins to reset, and the soul finally has space to be heard. But witnessing someone you love go through that transformation—to see her open, soften, remember, and rise—is a different kind of miracle. She began to understand my work not just with her mind, but with her body. And I

began to understand her roots not just through her stories, but through her energy.

In those days of fasting, we didn't just detox the body—we entered a **shared sacred space**, where healing was not taught or explained, but lived. Each day of the fast revealed a new dimension of Analu. I watched her energy shift—not in dramatic bursts, but gradually, like the tide drawing out from shore, quiet and intentional. Her presence deepened. She moved more slowly, listened more attentively, and smiled with the kind of softness that comes only from within.

When the fasting week ended, it was clear: she had undergone more than a physical reset. It was a profound spiritual awakening. Though it was her first fasting experience, it felt as if her soul had known this path all along. Her connection to the wisdom of the body had always been present, rooted in her Brazilian heritage and indigenous ancestry. But fasting gave her a new kind of clarity—one that didn't come through inherited rituals, but through a direct, personal encounter with herself.

One of her first insights was the sacredness of the body—not as a concept, but as a lived truth. By giving her digestive system and cellular structure a break, she experienced a vitality that didn't come from stimulation or food, but from deep rest and inner alignment.

She also observed a powerful shift in her emotional state. Her self-control and focus grew significantly. Her nervous system felt more regulated. The emotional waves she once rode so easily became gentler. Her inner world had quieted—and in that stillness, she found strength.

As the days passed, another realization began to take root: **she was her own greatest commitment**. Not in a self-centered way, but in a deeply responsible one. She saw how essential it was to live in harmony—to bring thoughts, words, and actions into alignment. Fasting revealed that suffering often comes from internal misalignment. When we correct that, life begins to flow again.

One of the most transformative shifts came in her relationship with the mind. She saw more clearly how often we are led by unconscious thoughts, old stories, and mental noise. Fasting slowed all of that down. It gave her distance. It gave her a choice. She reclaimed the power to respond rather than react—and understood that mental discipline is not confinement but liberation.

But what touched me most was her recognition that true healing does not come from the outside—it comes from within. Through fasting, silence, and self-observation, she discovered that everything she needed already existed inside her. Pain surfaced. Memories resurfaced. Fear emerged. But she didn't run. She stayed with them. Breathed with them. Held space for them. And in doing so, something inside her shifted permanently.

Perhaps the most sacred part of her journey was her reconnection to God. In the absence of food and distraction, she felt held by something greater—not through dogma or doctrine, but through direct experience. She felt loved. Guided. Protected. She remembered dreams she had once buried and began to believe in them again—not as fantasies, but as callings.

Finally, she came to the truth that changed both of us: the importance of being surrounded by people who bring out the best in us. People who reflect our growth, challenge us with love, and help us rise. She saw how the company we keep shapes who we become. And she recognized that when two people walk the path consciously together, everything becomes possible.

These insights became her compass. And for me, witnessing her transformation wasn't just inspiring—it was humbling. We entered the fast as partners. We emerged as something more. Two souls, walking a shared sacred path, with a deeper trust and reverence for each other.

That fasting experience wasn't just a moment in time. It became a **marker** in our journey—proof that when love meets inner work, something extraordinary is born. The shared fasting experience became a powerful anchor in our relationship. It revealed what was possible when we aligned not just in love, but in spirit. We felt more connected than ever, rooted in something timeless, sacred, and deeply personal.

But life, as it often does, shifted the rhythm.

Several weeks later, I had to travel to the Azores to guide one of my fasting retreats with a new group. But just before I left, something unexpected happened.

I found an apartment.

And not just any apartment.

How it appeared—and what it represented for both of us—was something I'll share in the next chapter.

Sometimes, just as one path begins, another quietly unfolds.

Chapter 3: The Door That Found Us

Here's how it happened. How something we had once dreamed of—then quietly released—suddenly arrived. Not through effort, not through searching. But through something softer, something that felt like grace.

What unfolded next felt less like finding an apartment and more like being found by one.

We had stopped searching long ago. Analu's transfer to Porto hadn't been approved, and Lisbon never felt like home. After a few fruitless visits and unanswered hopes, we let the dream of finding a shared home go quiet. It hadn't disappeared—it had simply faded into the background. Something to be released rather than chased.

And then, without effort or expectation, it found us.

One quiet afternoon, for no particular reason, I opened Facebook and began scrolling through the Porto Expats group—a page I hadn't checked in ages. I wasn't thinking about apartments. I wasn't looking for anything at all. Yet there it was: a freshly posted listing for a house for rent.

The photos caught me off guard. There was a stillness in the images, a gentle kind of invitation. The rooms were bright and open, with sunlight pouring through large windows. The lines of the architecture held both simplicity and warmth. And as I read the description, my pulse changed rhythm. It matched our list.

Analú and I had once written it together, carefully and intentionally. A place that would support our lifestyle, our practices, and our sense of peace:

- A T2 house or apartment
- Located in Porto or no more than 20 km away
- If outside Porto, easy access by public transportation
- Slightly inland from the sea, not on the front line
- A clear view of the sunrise, ideally facing east
- Large windows for light and openness
- Parking space for our plug-in hybrid car
- A spacious living room for morning rituals and movement
- Two bathrooms
- A kitchen with generous counter space for meal prep and quiet moments
- Bedrooms filled with daylight
- Cats allowed
- A pantry for dry food and retreat supplies
- A backyard—for her cat, for plants, for life

Every single point.

And the most remarkable part? **I wasn't looking for it.**

I had completely let go of the idea.

It felt like a whisper from the Universe. A gentle nudge saying, *“Now that you’ve stopped chasing... you’re ready to receive.”*

With curiosity more than expectation, I contacted the person who had posted the ad. We arranged a visit.

The man who had been living there for the past three years welcomed me with warmth and ease. He owned his own business and had a calm, grounded presence. As it turned out, he was also a yacht captain—a skipper who had spent years sailing across the world. We connected immediately, exchanging stories about the rhythm of the sea, the silence of travel, and the strange peace that comes from letting go of land and control.

He spoke with genuine affection for the apartment. Of all the places he had rented across countries, this one had been a true sanctuary. But now, with a growing family, they had just bought a house near Porto and moved out. The apartment stood empty, except for the colorful drawings his children had left on the walls—a final signature of joy and transition. He was planning to repaint before handing over the keys.

When I stepped inside, I knew. This wasn’t just a good fit.

It was our place.

I stood in the space and felt a deep, grounding calm. As though some part of me had already been there. There was no flash, no show—nothing artificial. But everything aligned: the energy, the layout, the light.

It reminded me of something I’ve experienced again and again:

When we stop forcing life to bend to our plans, it often shows us a better one.

This home didn’t arrive through effort. It came through alignment. It came not when we were striving, but when we had grown enough to truly welcome it. But only when the wanting becomes still. Only when you’re truly ready to receive.

Soon after, I met the owner, a painter who had already been living several years abroad. We communicated online at first, and even then, I could feel the ease of mutual understanding. A shared pace. A calm respect. No pressure, no rush—just clarity.

Eventually, the three of us—captain, painter, and me—met in person. We shook hands. We smiled, and I signed the contract.

There was one more detail about the apartment—subtle, but deeply meaningful to me. Years earlier, during one of my voyages, I had a connecting flight that required an overnight stay in London. The company booked me into a small, cozy hotel near Heathrow. The room was simple, but unforgettable for one reason: it had dormer windows. That night, lying in bed and looking up at the stars, I had a quiet thought—*"One day, I'd love to have bedroom windows like this. To fall asleep beneath the moon and wake up with the sky."*

Fifteen years later, that quiet wish came true. On the second floor of the apartment, both bedrooms had dormer windows—perfectly placed to observe the moon, the stars, and the drifting clouds. A detail forgotten by the mind but remembered by the soul.

I couldn't wait to tell Analu. The moment felt surreal. This was no longer something we hoped for. It was real. Physical. Ours.

This wasn't just a place to live. It was a confirmation. A symbol. A message that the roots we had planted together were beginning to take hold. And although we couldn't yet know the full meaning, the *timing* of this gift—just days before I would leave for the Azores—would come to shape the next part of our journey.

Because at the time, I thought the apartment was the gift. But the true lesson—one I could never have predicted—was waiting for me on the island.

And just as I stepped into a new space physically, the space between us—Analu and me—began to stretch in ways we hadn't yet experienced. What unfolded during my retreat in the Azores would test that space, challenge our connection, and bring to the surface what distance really means. And that separation—though brief—became a valuable lesson in our relationship. It revealed dynamics we hadn't seen before and ultimately brought us to a new level of understanding.

Chapter 4: The Space Between Us

After the intimacy and alignment we found through fasting together, the next step in our journey brought an unexpected challenge. A few weeks later, I traveled to the Azores to lead one of my fasting retreats—an experience I had been preparing for with great care and focus. Analu couldn't join me. Her job at the bank kept her in Lisbon, and for the first time in months, we found ourselves apart—not just geographically, but energetically. Our shared rhythm was disrupted.

The shift was subtle at first, but meaningful. Without our morning rituals, without the shared energy, and with me fully immersed in the retreat and the natural beauty of the island, something began to change between us. While I was focused on holding space for the group, Analu was left

navigating the stillness alone—and in that silence, quiet but powerful emotions began to surface: **longing, uncertainty, and even jealousy.**

The stillness we had once built together now felt uneven. While I was surrounded by awe and purpose, she was surrounded by absence. And that imbalance began to stretch the space between us. Because sometimes, when one partner moves forward into a new experience that the other cannot yet join, **the distance begins to grow**—not only geographically, but in feeling. What once felt like closeness can slowly start to feel like being left behind. And in that space, something began to stir.

What came next challenged us in ways we had not yet faced—and marked one of the most pivotal moments in our relationship. Leading my fasting retreat on São Miguel Island required all my focus and energy. It was my first major group since Analu and I had reached a new depth together, and the retreat became not only a test of my work but also of how our relationship would hold under new pressures.

As she couldn't join me because of her work, our familiar flow was suddenly interrupted. The one-hour time difference may have been small on the clock, but it was enough to disrupt our morning rhythm. Our 5 a.m. practices—once the sacred thread of our daily connection—became irregular. And when they did happen, something felt distant. Our closeness had stretched—not broken, but thinned.

When I'm in retreat mode, I give everything. My attention, energy, and presence go fully to the participants. Fasting is not just a physical detox—it's a deeply emotional and spiritual process that can shake people to their core. My role is to guide them through it while holding a safe, grounded space for real healing to unfold.

This retreat was especially meaningful. I wanted to show the group not only the power of fasting, but also the beauty of São Miguel—the hot springs, waterfalls, lush parks, wild beaches, and cliffs dropping into turquoise water. Every place was part of the medicine. Each day was a

dance between silence and awe. But while I was immersed in the group's journey, something quiet began to unravel between Analu and me. She started to feel left behind.

The absence of our shared routines, my limited availability, and the fact that I was surrounded by so much beauty—both in nature and in the people I was guiding—triggered old emotions in her. There were beautiful women in the group, and the knowledge that we had been bathing at wild beaches, sometimes nude, stirred deep pain. Past betrayals echoed in her body. Feelings she thought were long gone came rushing back.

Later, when I returned, she told me there were nights she couldn't sleep. She had written to me but received no reply. Her heart filled in the silence with fear, pain, and jealousy.

And here I want to remind: **where does jealousy come from, and what can we do with it?**

It often disguises itself as fear of loss or comparison. But at its core, jealousy is a signal—a flare from within—revealing the places where we have not yet fully accepted ourselves. It shows up when we forget our own value. When we believe that love can be taken from us, or that someone else's beauty, attention, or freedom somehow threatens our worth.

Until we do the inner work of facing our insecurities, healing our wounds, and learning to stand in our own light, jealousy will continue to visit. Sometimes quietly. Sometimes fiercely. But always with the same message:

“There is a part of you still waiting to be loved—by you.”

Once we begin to accept ourselves—truly and fully—we stop trying to control or limit our partner. We allow them to be who they are. Not because we are indifferent, but because we trust ourselves enough not to grasp. We love without fear. And we let go of the illusion that pain can be prevented by holding on more tightly.

As I wrote in *Part 1*, even if a partner chooses to betray us, it is not our fault. It is not our responsibility. The one who betrays is revealing something unresolved in their own relationship with themselves and with intimacy. Jealousy cannot prevent betrayal. In fact, it often creates the very conditions in which trust begins to erode.

When a partner is constantly met with suspicion—especially when they’ve done nothing wrong—it plants seeds of doubt. Repeated often enough, that doubt begins to shape identity. If you tell someone a thousand times that they are unfaithful, even if it isn’t true, they may begin to question themselves. They may eventually start to embody the very projection they’ve been accused of—just to fulfill the role they’ve been cast in.

Some believe jealousy protects love.

But the truth is: **jealousy poisons it**. It doesn’t prevent betrayal—it makes the connection more fragile.

Only through self-acceptance can we love freely.

Only through inner peace can we give our partner the space to love us back—not from fear, but from choice.

And slowly, Analu stepped onto that slippery path.

What she didn’t know was that I, too, had been navigating a storm.

One of the participants was a man from Ukraine. He had volunteered for the army as soon as the war began. This was his first time away from combat in nearly three years. Before the war, he had lived a grounded, conscious life—baking eco-bread, avoiding alcohol, staying close to nature. But war had transformed him. He told me that many soldiers rely on alcohol to survive emotionally. “Without alcohol,” he said quietly, “the war couldn’t go on.”

As his body entered the fasting process, all the pain he had buried began to surface—not gradually, but explosively. His trauma didn’t knock—it broke through the door. He withdrew from the group, avoided practices, and at one point, even tried to find alcohol on the island to cope with what

was rising inside him. Which was definitely not acceptable from any point of view during fasting.

Supporting him—while also holding the retreat space, managing logistics, and keeping the group grounded—was one of the most emotionally demanding experiences of my life. It asked everything of me: patience, compassion, humility, strength. There were moments I doubted whether I could carry it all. And in the middle of that intensity, my phone was filled with unread messages from Analu—messages I simply didn't have the energy to respond to.

I wasn't ignoring her. I was overwhelmed. I was in the fire of my own process—supporting a man haunted by war, who was now breaking open in the most sacred and vulnerable ways. What made it even more heartbreaking was his awareness that after this brief touch of peace in the Azores, he would return to the battlefield. He told me this might be the last time he would ever see beauty like this again.

I gave him everything I could—my presence, my care, my heart.

When I finally returned to Porto, I was emotionally exhausted. But I was also carrying stories and pain I hadn't yet processed. Analu—tired from silently holding her own fears—welcomed me with love, but also with sadness. My absence had left a mark. This became a turning point in our relationship.

Distance, unspoken emotions, and quiet expectations had created a new space between us—a space where misunderstanding can grow. A space where love isn't lost, but isn't heard. A space where silence becomes heavy. And in that silence, we had to learn to listen more deeply than ever before.

The next day, we sat down for a long Fair Talk Practice (FTP)—much longer than usual. It was time to clear the space between us. To speak honestly, to listen gently, and to remember the love that still lived beneath the noise.

Once again, we came to the same conclusion: **FTP had helped us through**, just as it had before—but this time, more profoundly than ever. It didn't just repair the connection. It opened a deeper one.

Over time, our FTP sessions evolved. They revealed new layers—unexpected emotions, hidden dynamics, and even new guidelines for how to use the practice in more conscious and effective ways as a couple. These discoveries didn't come from books. They came from living. And later in this book, I'll share these updated insights, because they changed how we communicated—and how we grew together.

As before, FTP allowed us to see the situation not only from our own point of view, but through the eyes of each other. When we sat in FTP, we weren't trying to win an argument—we were trying to understand. That shift alone softened our hearts. We began to listen not to defend, but to feel. And in that space of mutual witnessing, we found the power to accept, to forgive, and to grow together.

On that day, one truth stood out above the rest:

I wanted to make my beloved happy. Truly happy.

In real love, the most sacred questions are the simplest:

“How can I improve my partner's life?”

“What does she—or he—truly long for?”

“What more can I give—not out of obligation, but from the joy of love itself?”

When I saw how vividly the Azores still lived in Analu's imagination, I realized something beautiful: **I could bring her dream to life.** And nothing brought me more joy than knowing I could give her that.

So, I made a decision: to offer her this gift—a journey to the Azores together. Because true love, I've come to believe, isn't about holding on. **It's about giving.**

And in giving, **we don't lose love—we multiply it.**

In that moment, I remembered something my mother used to tell me when I was a child—words that echoed in my heart more clearly than ever before:

“What you give away, you gain.
What you keep, you lose.”

Chapter 5: Building the Space We Dreamed Of

When I returned from the Azores, everything felt different.

The apartment was waiting. Not as an idea or a plan, but as reality—a quiet, sunlit space with keys in my pocket and new beginnings tucked into every corner. It had come to us in perfect timing, yet what made it most beautiful was not that it appeared, but that we were finally ready to step into it.

Analu helped me move in. She supported me in making the space functional and beautiful—her touch in the kitchen, her eye for comfort, her care in every corner. But because of her work, she continued living in Lisbon, coming only on weekends.

Once I made the decision to stay in Porto, I felt a surge of energy. It was clear. Clean. Empowering.

First of all, because we both liked Porto more than Lisbon. The city resonated with our energy. And second—more importantly—because I could feel how much Analu didn't enjoy her work. Watching her go to a job she didn't like, seeing her give her life force to something that didn't feed her soul—it didn't inspire me to build more. Her job drained her. I could see it. Hear it. Feel it. And I didn't want to be connected to that frequency any longer. That “egregor,” that energy field, wasn't one I wished to align with. And that's exactly what would have happened if I had moved to the Lisbon area.

I realized that if we couldn't live together yet, it might actually be better to meet on the weekends and give 100% of our attention to each other—rather than fall into the dull routine of sharing space during a week filled with tiredness, frustration, and depletion. I saw clearly: there was no energy for me in that direction.

And yet, I felt responsibility too. After all, I was living in the house that met our shared vision. I had chosen this place not just for me, but for us. And in my heart, it wasn't a question of *if* Analu would move in—it was only a matter of *when*.

Days turned into weeks, and life unfolded quietly between work, conversations, and our growing plans. The idea of traveling together began to hover in the background like a gentle promise—something not yet decided, but already alive in our thoughts. The time was approaching for the journey we had once only mentioned, the one that seemed to call us both: the Azores.

When Analu later asked if I would take her to the Azores—something we had briefly spoken about—I began thinking about how to organize it in the best way. I wanted it to feel right, both energetically and logistically. I

was working on it. But when she asked again, “Are we going to the Azores?”—and then repeated the question—I felt something inside me shift. I sensed a lack of belief in my words. I didn’t feel inspired. I felt pressured.

And this moment, while small on the surface, revealed something much deeper: the **difference in how men and women often communicate love and commitment.**

When a man says something, in his world, it stands. Unless he says otherwise, he holds that promise. No need to repeat it. It lives in him. But for a woman—whose energy is cyclical, emotional, and ever-changing—words need renewal. Reassurance. A promise made yesterday may need to be heard again today—especially words like:

I love you.

You’re beautiful.

You’re safe.

You matter.

And that’s not a weakness. That’s feminine wisdom. A woman needs to feel love *in the moment*, not just as a memory. And often, men forget this.

When, shortly after I moved, Analu asked me if I really wanted to live together, I felt a wave of anger rise again inside me.

What did she mean?

Why had I done all of this?

What kind of proof did she need?

I didn’t need much for myself. The house was far more than I needed on my own. I had moved because I believed in us. I had chosen this place for our future. Hearing her question, my intention hurt—not because I doubted it, but because I felt like my commitment wasn’t being seen.

It was one of those moments when two hearts stand face to face but see slightly different realities.

And yet, these are the moments relationships are made of—not just the beauty, but the misunderstandings. Not just the joy, but the learning. It's here, in these gaps, that something deeper can grow—**if we choose to stay present, and not carry misunderstanding into the future.**

In that moment, I realized something important: love is not only built on actions, but also on the language of reassurance. A man may think that his actions speak forever, that once a promise is made, it doesn't need repeating. But a woman's heart often needs to hear it again—to feel it alive in the present moment.

I began to see these differences not as contradictions, but as complementary truths. My way of loving through action and vision, and Analu's way of needing presence and reaffirmation, could meet—if we both stayed open. These were the lessons life was giving us, preparing us not just to share a house, but to share a life.

The idea of traveling to the Azores was already present between us. But this realization gave it new energy—it was no longer just a plan we had spoken about, it became something alive that we were ready to fulfill together. And so, the Azores once again called us—this time not for work, but for love.

Chapter 6: Our Honeymoon Before the Wedding

As December arrived and the winter sun dipped lower each day, everything began to feel quieter and slower. The days shortened, the air turned crisp, and it seemed the world around us was gently inviting a pause. It was during this time that Analu received unexpected news: her workplace had granted her a full week off during the Christmas holidays. It felt like a gift from the universe—sudden, unplanned, and perfectly timed.

We had talked many times about wanting to travel together, to take a break just for us, but the idea had always hovered in the air without ever taking form. Now, in a matter of moments, that vision became a doorway we

were being invited to walk through. Both of us felt it instantly: this was the time to go to the Azores.

There was no hesitation. I booked our plane tickets that same day, rented a car, and secured a reservation at a retreat center in Furnas—a peaceful haven nestled in the heart of São Miguel, where I had hosted others through my Week of Health fasting program. But this time, we weren't going to lead. We were going to be held by the island, by the silence, by each other. We didn't create a packed itinerary. We were going to slow down, step away from routines, immerse ourselves in nature, and see what would unfold when we simply gave ourselves time. We were seeking connection, simplicity, and space.

The island welcomed us with its gentle beauty. Every hill, every waterfall, every lake, every hot spring, every winding road seemed to whisper:

“You’re exactly where you need to be.”

Each day had a rhythm, but never a rush. On Christmas Eve, we sat together in front of the fireplace, chanting mantras as the flames flickered and warmed the room. We were alone in the large guest room, fasting at the time—no food for days—yet we felt deeply nourished. Our connection fed us more than any meal could. The quiet, the breath, the sound of our voices in harmony—it filled us.

There were no material gifts exchanged that night.

Instead, we gave each other presence.

And that became our gift again and again throughout the trip.

Our mornings began slowly but always with practice. We did yoga, Tibetan gymnastics, breathing techniques, and shared long stretches of silence and meditation. There was no need to speak constantly. The silence between us spoke volumes. Then we'd head out for the day, driving across the island's green hills, stopping by beloved spots and discovering new ones that instantly felt like home.

We stood under waterfalls, wandered through quiet valleys, and sat by the sea with nothing but the sound of the waves. There were no schedules, no obligations—just the two of us, fully present.

Evenings brought softness. We melted into the sauna's warmth or soaked in the steaming hot springs of Furnas, sometimes in silence, sometimes with gentle music playing in the background. The stars above seemed to twinkle just for us, reminding us that we were part of something much greater. There was no need to strive, no need to impress. We allowed ourselves to fully rest.

Everything about the trip felt like a honeymoon, even though we weren't officially married. There was something sacred in how we explored—not just the island, but each other. We learned each other's rhythms more deeply. We laughed more easily. We rested more fully. It wasn't a celebration of something past—it was a beginning, a deepening, a sacred pause before stepping forward.

And then something magical happened.

We found a place—a hill overlooking the ocean, wild and beautiful—that called to us in a way we couldn't explain. We stood there together and just knew: **This is where we'll get married.**

That moment marked a shift for Analu, too. Something inside her settled—like a puzzle piece falling into place. After we returned to our everyday life, she told me, without hesitation:

"I'm moving to Porto."

It wasn't a suggestion or a maybe. It was a declaration. Not born from urgency, but from clarity. Not rushed. Just ready.

But the most surprising part came next.

She shared her decision calmly and confidently with her boss—without overexplaining or seeking permission. And the response? Support. Her

employer offered her the option to work remotely from Porto. What once felt like a logistical roadblock now became completely possible. It was as if the world around her rearranged itself to support the choice she had already made inside.

It reminded both of us of a line we loved from Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist*:

“When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.”

We had spoken those words before. But now, we weren't just speaking them—we were living them.

What started as a spontaneous holiday became something unforgettable. It wasn't just a break from routine. It was a bridge. A reset. A blessing.

The Azores weren't just a backdrop to our love story—they became a symbol of it. That week reminded us that when you trust the timing of life, when you let go of control, and when you give your full presence to each other, something sacred opens.

From that moment on, everything between us felt lighter, deeper, and more real. It was the kind of experience that doesn't just live in memory—it becomes a living thread, one that continues to weave through everything that comes next.

That week in the Azores showed us what's possible—not just in relationships, but in life.

When love leads, everything else begins to align.

Chapter 7: The Heart Learns in Shadow

But life, in its mysterious and often humbling ways, soon reminded me of its depth and contrast—of its ability to weave joy and sorrow into a single thread of experience.

Just days after returning from our magical trip—still glowing with warmth, still walking softly in the afterglow of everything we had seen, felt, and shared—I received a phone call that instantly changed the atmosphere of my entire inner world.

My mother had passed away.

The news arrived like a sharp crack in still air. One moment, everything was peaceful. The next, it was as if the world shifted beneath my feet. She had just celebrated her 78th birthday. Three days later—on the birthday of my older brother, who had passed away two decades earlier—she suffered a heart attack. No warning. No slow decline. Just a quiet and swift departure.

The New Year was about to begin, but instead of celebration, it brought waves of grief—rolling in from a place deeper than words could reach. What made the loss even more painful was that I couldn't be there. Due to the war, the borders were closed. Travel home was impossible. I was thousands of kilometers away, and no matter how much I wished or prayed, I couldn't reach her. I couldn't hold her hand. I couldn't look into her eyes. I couldn't whisper my final words, nor thank her for everything she had given me. My goodbye remained silent, unspoken, carried only by thought and memory.

A friend of mine from Istanbul came for New Year's Eve. His trip had been planned long before I received the news about my mother. After the New Year celebration, he planned to visit the Azores for the first time in his life. On December 31st, the three of us—Analú, my friend, and I—went into nature. Into the forest, into the mountains, to the river. We made rituals. We played the shamanic drum, handpan, and other instruments.

And for me, that forest became sacred—

The place where I said my final goodbye to my mom.

We all carry invisible threads that connect us to our parents. And the bond with one's mother—whether soft or strained—is unlike any other. She is our first heartbeat. Our first comfort. The first face we learn to read. The first hands that hold us. The first voice that makes us feel safe. In so many ways, she is our beginning. To lose that source is to lose a part of yourself.

Even with all the inner work I've done, all the spiritual understanding I've cultivated—even with the belief that every soul is a temporary traveler in our life, as I wrote in my first book:

“Every person we meet is a temporary companion on our journey.”

—Saying goodbye to a parent is still a hard lesson.

And the pain was piercing. Real. Sharp.

It cut through every layer and reached a place I hadn't touched in years. Grief doesn't ask for permission. It arrives in its own time and moves at its own pace. It has a rhythm all its own—like a tide that pulls you under and brings you back to shore, only to pull again. And the only way to honor it is to let yourself feel it—without resistance.

In those quiet, aching days, memories began to rise like old photographs developing in water.

I remembered being four years old, standing beside my mom in the kitchen. She would divide the space into small areas and let me clean each one. When I finished, she would cheer me on and assign the next. We made games out of tasks. She made cleaning fun. She gave me my first experience of responsibility—but not as a burden. It was joyful. Almost sacred. That's where I learned to love small steps. To appreciate care. To take pride in doing things well, even when no one was watching.

I remembered how she encouraged me to apply to the Maritime Academy. How she came with me to another city and stayed through every step of that difficult process.

I remembered how patiently she taught me my first English words, and how proud she was of every small success. She supported my dreams—even when she didn't fully understand them—because she believed in me.

I remembered the countless small things: her laughter, her quiet strength, the meals she made with love, the way she made our home feel safe during

storms. Her care is woven into my being in ways I can never fully name—but always feel.

And in the face of all this, the only thing that softened the weight of the loss was one powerful truth: **I wasn't alone.**

Analú was there. Fully present. She didn't rush me out of pain. She didn't offer solutions or soothing words. She didn't need to. Her presence was the medicine. She sat beside me in silence. She held my hand. She made tea. She gave me space to move through the grief without judgment or interruption. She didn't try to distract me from it—she made room for it.

That, to me, is one of the purest forms of love:

The willingness to witness someone else in pain—without turning away, without needing to fix it.

There is a love that dances with you when the sun is shining.
And there is a love that walks beside you through the rain. She did both.

For me, this is the true strength of Love. Not just how we shine in the bright moments, but how we stand together in the dark ones.

Not the perfection we display, but the presence we offer.

Not the words we speak, but the silent truths we embody when someone we love is breaking open.

I'll write more about this deeper kind of love in my next book—

A spiritual way of relationships.

The kind that isn't flashy or grand, but steady and real.

The kind that doesn't promise to fix everything but offers a hand.

And when you feel that kind of support from your partner, it gives you the strength to face even the hardest moments. It helps you rise, grow stronger, and reconnect with your soul. And this, I believe, is one of the deepest reasons we need a partner: To pass through life's lessons in a more effective, supported, and heart-connected way.

A breath.

A simple, steady heartbeat.

For now, I end this chapter in quiet reverence.

Those days held both the lightest joy and the deepest sorrow.

They were days of new beginnings—

And days of final goodbyes.

A sacred page in the book of my life.

Turned, but never forgotten.

Chapter 8: When Love Meets Routine

After Analu made her decision to move to Porto, I drove to Lisbon to help her pack. We gathered her things—clothes, books, notebooks, guitar, tiny treasures that made up the rhythm of her everyday life, and her cat—and loaded them into the car. It was a simple act, but one filled with meaning. We weren't just moving bags and suitcases. We were merging lives.

Four months after meeting, we were living under the same roof. It might sound fast to some, but for us, it felt natural. There was a quiet confidence beneath it all—a sense that life was guiding us into something important.

From the outside, it might have looked like the story had settled: two people in love, a cozy, sunlit apartment, a shared life, a vision of the future.

But the truth is, that was only the beginning.

As I wrote in *Part 1*, the real work begins in the lower chakras—especially the first and second. These energy centers govern the foundations of life: daily routine, survival, safety, habits, emotional grounding, and the ability to be vulnerable. And because they are so closely tied to the everyday, they're also the most challenging to navigate.

Working on these chakras has nothing to do with sparks of romance or the poetry of long walks and deep talks. It looks more like laundry, rent, groceries, dishwashing, sleep schedules, misunderstandings, moods, missed texts, and morning breath.

It's the daily stuff. The gritty stuff. The unfiltered reality.

Many spiritual seekers try to bypass these layers—reaching for transcendent states while avoiding the very earth meant to anchor them. But if you want a real connection—lasting, loving, resilient—you have to go through the base. Through what's raw, repetitive, and deeply human. And that's exactly where our journey took us next.

Because falling in love is one thing.

Living together is another.

When we began living together, the beauty of our connection was very real—but so were the shadows that began to appear. There were moments when Analu felt an overwhelming urge to leave. Not her soul, but her ego—uncomfortable, stretched, unsure of how to handle the friction that naturally arises when two people begin sharing not just a bed or a kitchen, but a life. She wasn't alone in this. I, too, had moments when I didn't understand why we were together.

I found myself asking (on my ego-mind level):

What am I gaining from this?

Why does it feel so hard?

Why is the very person I love most also the person who triggers my deepest patterns?

And in those moments, the most tempting solution was the simplest one: **to run.** To imagine how much easier things would be if I could just start over with someone new—someone who didn't push all my buttons, someone who wouldn't require this much inner work.

But running is never the answer.

We may think that by leaving the relationship, we are escaping the discomfort. But in truth, we are only postponing the lesson. The soul knows this.

At the deepest level, we understand:

If we don't face what this relationship is trying to teach us, the same lesson will appear in the next one. Just with a different name, a different face, a different story—but the same energy. The same mirror.

Because relationships are mirrors.

Because the partner we choose is never random.

Every choice we make in love is guided—sometimes by unconscious desires, sometimes by spiritual contracts—but always by something meaningful.

Our partners reflect our hidden wounds, our unresolved fears, and our untapped potential. It is through interacting with them—through their habits, emotions, wounds, needs, and love—that we begin to see our own unconscious patterns. It's in the daily exchanges, the tiny misunderstandings, the moments when one of us withdraws or becomes defensive, the tears, the laughter, the pauses between words—that we begin to remember who we really are beneath the stories we've built.

And this process isn't always comfortable. True growth isn't soft and poetic. It's often awkward, messy, and raw. It shows up in the form of confusion, resistance, and discomfort. It shakes our old beliefs. It asks us

to look at the parts of ourselves we've long ignored—the parts we've kept hidden even from our own awareness.

And unless we are deeply committed—to our own healing and to each other—it's easy to mistake the discomfort for a sign that we're with the wrong person. But most of the time, that's not the case. Most of the time, it's not the wrong person.

It's the right lesson.

And those lessons don't arrive all at once. They unfold over time. One layer after another.

This book is about navigating those lessons on the practical level—the part of love that doesn't get talked about enough:

Daily adaptation.

Emotional negotiation.

Grounded patience.

And the mundane beauty of partnership.

It's about doing the actual work of learning how to live together as two separate beings choosing, every day, to walk side by side.

It's about learning to listen more deeply.

To pause before reacting.

To ask instead of assume.

To hold space for two truths to exist at once.

As I said earlier, most probably, my next book will explore the spiritual aspects of relationships—how our souls guide us through love as a path of awakening. But this book is about how we survive the storm without jumping ship.

How we hold the wheel steady even when the waters rise.

How we honor the love, even when the ego wants to run.

How we stay—not to suffer, but to grow.

Because if we stay, and stay with presence—if we stay with open eyes and open hearts, even when it's hard—we begin to see that the friction isn't breaking us.

It's shaping us.

It's smoothing our rough edges.

It's showing us what love really is—not just a feeling, but a practice.

And when we show up for that practice, day after day—

We grow not just as partners, but as people.

Together.

Chapter 9: Two Hemispheres, One Home

Every person is a universe. And when two universes come together, they must learn how to orbit without crashing. They must figure out how to coexist—how to share space, time, routines, moods, silence, decisions, and all the little preferences we rarely notice until they clash with someone else's.

It's easier when both people come from the same galaxy—same language, culture, values, customs. But we weren't from the same galaxy. We were from different hemispheres. Different mother languages. Different childhoods. Different assumptions. Different emotional expressions. What seemed completely normal to her sometimes left me feeling

unmoored. And things that felt second nature to me were, for her, strange or uncomfortable.

I first fell in love with Brazil during my years working aboard bulk carriers—first as a cadet, then as third and second mate. I sailed along the Brazilian coast, visited its ports, and met its people. The country left an impression: colorful, lively, passionate. But later, when I settled in Portugal and began interacting more closely with some Brazilians in daily life, I noticed something else—another side of the coin. Alongside the joy and warmth was a tendency toward chaos, a lack of self-discipline, a kind of unstructured spontaneity that clashed with my nature.

And I... I had the personality of a captain.

I needed clarity. I valued structure. I liked plans, precision, and discipline. I was used to systems that worked and rules that made sense. My nervous system was calibrated for order.

So what happens when structure meets spontaneity?

When impulse meets planning?

When one person wants a schedule and the other flows with the wind?

These are two polarities—two sides of the same coin. And to reach the deeper levels of love, we had to find our balance.

And that was not an easy journey.

There was friction. Misunderstandings.

Tensions that didn't arise from a lack of love, but from our differences. Because we were still new to each other in this particular way.

The only thing that saved us—again and again—was one simple tool I had shared in *Part 1: Fair Talk Practice (FTP)*.

Sometimes, we practiced FTP multiple times a week. Our personal record was **four sessions** in a single week. Not because we were falling apart, but because we were committed to staying connected.

Everything can happen. We might not like something. We might feel reactive. But what truly matters is that both partners are ready to work for the relationship. To invest time, energy, and attention. That's what builds trust. That's what creates safety.

Each time we sat down, we brought ourselves honestly. We spoke. We listened. We softened. We stretched. Each session gave us a bit more understanding. Each one became a bridge.

One evening, after a particularly revealing conversation, Analu looked at me with gentle intensity and said:

“I don’t understand how couples survive without FTP. Without this practice, we wouldn’t manage our relationship.”

And she was right.

Without it, we would have wandered into assumptions, projections, and silent resentments. But with it, we kept returning—to presence, to truth, to care, to repair. We rewrote the script of conflict not by avoiding it—but by meeting it with heart, and by learning to see the situation through our partner’s eyes.

We had to work for this.

And we kept updating our practice as we evolved—adjusting the structure, refining the agreements, adding new rules. I’ll share more details about those changes later in this book.

Living together didn’t make our relationship easier.

It made it more real. More human. More profound.

Because the real test of love isn’t whether things feel magical when life is light—

It’s whether you’re both willing to keep showing up when life is heavy.

And we kept showing up.

Two universes.

Learning to orbit.

Slowly.

Patiently.

Tenderly.

Learning to speak one language—not just of words, but of understanding.

Chapter 10: Protecting the Circle

There is a trap that many couples fall into—quietly, gradually—without even realizing it’s happening. It can appear at any time, but becomes especially common after the birth of a child. Sometimes it’s present from the very beginning, when one or both partners enter the relationship with children from previous relationships.

Other times, it begins the moment a child is born. The shift is subtle but real. Attention moves. Priorities rearrange. Emotional focus shifts. And before the parents even realize it, the center of the relationship quietly changes.

The partner with the child—whether mother or father—starts giving more attention to the child than to their partner. And while the instinct behind that shift is natural, even loving, over time it begins to pull the couple apart.

After birth, many mothers—guided by biology and emotion—pour all their energy into the newborn. The partner becomes an afterthought. They may start to feel invisible, unneeded, or even pushed aside—not out of neglect, but because they’ve been unintentionally excluded from the mother-child bubble.

This isn’t about blame. It’s about awareness.

Because when this imbalance continues, it leads to frustration, silence, and misunderstanding. The relationship begins to quietly unravel. What was once a partnership turns into parallel parenting.

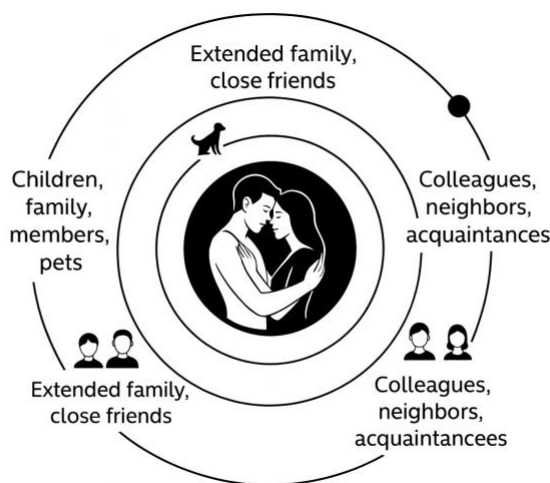
As the child grows, the dynamic can become even more complex—and sometimes evolve into subtle emotional manipulation. Little boys may pull their mothers away from their husbands, even insisting they sleep beside them, while resisting the father’s presence. Little girls may become the “princesses” of their fathers—receiving affection, attention, and closeness that, though innocent at first, can blur emotional boundaries if not guided with clarity and firmness.

Sometimes, children greet their parents first—with hugs and kisses—while the parents forget to greet one another. If that happens, the children begin to expect to always be the center of attention and affection. Over time, the partner receives less warmth, less acknowledgment, less emotional space—until they begin to withdraw.

None of this happens with bad intentions. But when left unspoken, it creates cracks in the foundation of the relationship. Cracks that become distances. And over time, distances become walls.

In *Part 1*, I wrote about family rules and the importance of shared mission. Now, I want to go deeper—into something even more fundamental: **family hierarchy**. Because without a clear structure of unity, love loses its direction—and the family system becomes vulnerable to emotional confusion.

When a man and a woman come together, they form a **complete circle**. Two energies—Yin and Yang—fused into one. That circle becomes a **new universe**. It is whole. It is not missing anything. It is not waiting to be completed. And because it is whole, no one else should enter it—not children, not relatives, not friends, not pets.



Everything else orbits around that circle—but never inside it.

Imagine the structure like this:

- The **central circle** is the couple—man and woman, united as one complete energetic system.
- The **first orbit** includes their children and any family members or pets who live in the home.
- The **second orbit** includes extended family and close friends.
- The **third orbit** includes colleagues, neighbors, and acquaintances.
- And so on.

The couple decides who belongs in which orbit. But if someone from an outer orbit tries to enter the core—and the couple is unaware or unclear—their unity begins to dissolve. The circle cracks. Eventually, it splits.

That's why, even with our children—especially with our children—we need clarity.

It's best to establish these boundaries early. Children should sleep in their own beds. The earlier this happens, the easier it is in the long run. But if this separation doesn't happen at first, it's still okay. Until the age of three, we can let them sleep beside us (not between us). At this age, let them be little kings and queens. Let them feel the warmth of unbroken closeness.

But after the age of three, it's time to begin a gentle, loving process of helping them understand how love flows in a healthy family system.

Children thrive with boundaries.

When they see their parents united, when they feel the clarity of structure, they feel safer—not less loved, but more secure. They may not be able to explain it, but their nervous systems respond with more calm, more trust, and more confidence.

Of course, some children will resist. They'll cry. They'll test. They may throw tantrums and tug at guilt. Their ego wants attention. Their instinct says: *"Bring the energy to me. I want to be at the center."*

And society often reinforces this, telling parents to place children above all. But the truth is—

The greatest gift we can give our children is not to give them everything they want.

It is to show them a love that lasts. And that love begins with the couple. Partners must trust each other more than anyone else, even more than their children. Because when a parent starts siding with the child instead

of the partner, a new triangle is formed.

And triangles in relationships lead to conflict, manipulation, and emotional distance.

When one partner begins to trust the child's opinions more than their spouse—when they say, *“Yes, but our daughter thinks...”* or *“Our son needs...”*

instead of listening to their partner's heart—

trust dissolves. Unity dissolves.

The couple begins to fade—one subtle compromise at a time.

This doesn't mean ignoring our children. It means protecting the root of the family.

In truth, our children need only two things:

a feeling of **love**

a feeling of **safety**.

Safety means support and backup.

They need to feel the message from us: *“You are always in my heart—but after your mom or dad. Whatever happens, you can count on me.”*

With this mindset in the future, they will be willing to build the same healthy relationships.

If you're hugging your partner from the front, try hugging your child from behind. With this kind of hug, they receive warmth and structure. They are embraced—but they feel the strength of the couple holding them first. That subtle gesture sends a powerful energetic message:

Our couple is strong. And you are safe within it.

The more united the couple, the more love they generate. And children, immersed in this field, receive it automatically—like contactless chargers. They don't need to be the center of every conversation. They just need to

feel the connection that flows between their parents. And when children are raised in love—not spoiled, but truly held—they become more independent. They're better equipped to explore the world on their own.

They'll make mistakes. They'll stumble. They'll fall. That's okay. That's how we grow. Parents can not pass their children's lives for them.

But with a strong couple at the center, the family becomes a safe launchpad.

A home. A universe. A source of strength.

If the couple is united, the family is strong. If the couple is divided, everything else begins to wobble.

This isn't always an easy truth to accept—especially in a world that often places children above all else. But from a psychological perspective, the couple comes first. Because without a circle, there is no orbit. And without unity, there is no family.

Chapter 11: Small Soul, Big Lessons

We didn't have children—at least not yet—but we did have Nix. Analu's cat. And from the moment we started living together, we realized: this was not just “a cat.”

This was a presence. A personality. A small creature with strong opinions, habits, and a history that predated our relationship. He had his own rhythm, his own voice, and even, it seemed, his own subtle influence on our decisions. It was as if he were a small but powerful guardian of the household energy—attuned to moods, shifts, and even unspoken tensions between us. We could almost measure the harmony in the house by the way he behaved each day.

Before we met, Nix lived with Analu and had no limits. He did whatever he wanted—including sleeping in her bed, eating when he pleased, and walking across the desk as if it were his personal runway. He was used to being the king of the apartment. His preferences were never questioned.

So naturally, as we prepared for their move to Porto, the conversation arose:

Analú: “Will Nix be able to sleep with us in bed?”

Me: “No one in our bed.”

Analú: “But love... Nix likes to sleep with me. Why can’t he sleep with us?”

Me: “This is a new life. There will be changes—for all of us.”

To be honest, Nix is one of the cleverest cats I’ve ever met. Not just clever, but eerily intuitive. His eyes seemed to hold an ancient intelligence—one that didn’t just observe, but understood.

Even before I entered their lives, there were some strangely mystical things about him. Analú told me that about six months before we met, Nix had started waking her up every day at 5 a.m.—the same schedule I had been following for years. If she didn’t wake up, he would create chaos in the apartment—sometimes even breaking things, as if to say: *“Your new life begins before sunrise. Get used to it!”*

How could he have known that her future partner would be someone who woke up at dawn? It’s still an open question. But it’s also a reminder: sometimes animals sense things long before we do. They feel the undercurrents of change and respond in ways that defy logic. Nix, in that sense, was more than a cat—he was a quiet oracle of transition.

Before Analú and Nix moved in, there were already six cats living in our yard—adopted and cared for by kind neighbors. Each cat had their own small shelter and shared territory: garden beds, flower patches, and the

parking area. It was not just a yard—it was a miniature cat society, complete with power struggles, alliances, and rules.

Before moving, Analu was worried:

Analu: “Will Nix have to sleep outside? Will he be okay with the other cats?”

Me: “He’ll sleep in the dining room. He’ll have new friends, and he’ll be free to choose where he sleeps. Freedom!”

Before their arrival, I asked the owner of our house for permission to cut a hole in the front door and install a small cat flap—so Nix could come and go as he pleased. I wanted him to have the freedom he’d never known in apartment life. A chance to awaken his instincts, to step into the unknown, to explore.

Analu didn’t like the idea at first. She had genuine fears about letting Nix outside unsupervised. After all, this would be the first time in his life that he’d have unrestricted access to the outdoors. Most of his life had been spent in apartments, and the big wide world was unfamiliar. There were understandable concerns—traffic in the street that he might reach when the gate opened for cars, other animals, including seagulls, aggressive cats or dogs, illness, or even the risk of him getting lost.

But more than anything, I believe it was the emotional shift—the symbolic letting go—that was the hardest part.

In my next book, I’ll try to explore the philosophical and spiritual dimensions of relationships more deeply. But here, I want to touch on one essential idea: from a divine perspective, all our actions are rooted either in **love** or in **fear**. Often, our fear disguises itself as care—especially in women, for whom nurturing comes instinctively. Analu’s hesitation to let Nix outside clearly came from fear. And that fear had a story.

A few years earlier, Nix had fallen from the fifth floor of their apartment building and broken his leg. Thanks to the surgery Analu arranged, he recovered well. But the injury left its mark—and if you look closely, you can still see a slight limp in one of his hind legs, which had been broken in two places and repaired with metal plates. Since kittenhood, he had also suffered from asthma, having been rescued during the freezing winter in the Serra da Estrela mountains in central Portugal. His survival had always felt fragile. All of this weighed heavily on Analu's heart. And so, she had to face her fears—not to let them control her actions, but to grow through them.

There were also challenges for me and Nix.

At first, he had to learn how to use the new cat door that I made for him. But being Nix, he learned quickly, almost as if the instincts had been waiting just beneath the surface. His body remembered something his life had never taught him. I was deeply proud to see him succeed—it felt like what a parent might feel watching their child take their first steps.

The next challenge: the yard cats had their own social structure. And they were not thrilled about a newcomer. They fought with him. Chased him. Hissed.

At first, I tried to protect him. I wanted to defend him every time he stepped outside. But then I realized: this was his path to walk. His own journey. And just like children, sometimes pets need space to figure things out on their own. Physically, Nix was not weaker than the others. He needed to go through his own initiation. And once I stopped interfering, something shifted.

The cats accepted him. The standoffs became conversations. The chases turned into games. He made friends. Some even became his best playmates. He began to understand the rules of this new world. And in turn, the yard began to feel like his kingdom too.

Nix's life changed completely. He became partly wild. He hunted at night. Slept during the day. He became stronger, faster, freer. His muscles became more defined, and his movements more graceful. He began to embody what he had always been deep down: a feline with the heart of a panther. He climbed trees. He chased shadows. He rested in places we could barely reach.

One morning at 5 a.m.—while we were doing our morning practice—he brought in a live night butterfly. He played with it for a while... and then ate it. That happened even though his food bowl was full. There was something primal and wild in that moment. A reminder that beneath the soft fur was a hunter—an instinctual being reclaiming his nature. Analu was shocked. But she also understood: her domestic cat was no longer just domestic. He had become something more. Something whole.

It reminded me of parenting. At some point, we also have to let go of our children. We have to accept that our child is growing. That they're not here to stay protected forever. They're here to live. And sometimes that means letting go, even when our instinct is to hold on.

As we had our family rules, we needed to apply rules for successful co-living with Nix, too. Not to control him, but to give all three of us structure—a shared rhythm that honored everyone's needs. Living together isn't about limiting the other—it's about respecting each other's boundaries without crossing them.

Our First House Rules for Nix:

1. Treat Nix as a beloved family member—but not the head of the family.
2. We take care of ourselves—and each other—before we take care of Nix. Our relationship comes first.
3. Implement rules consistently, regardless of mood or situation.

4. Let Nix go outside during the day and night when we're home. When we're away, leave his door open and ask neighbors to feed him.
5. Don't allow Nix on tables.
6. No access to bedrooms on the second floor.
7. Once we have children, adjust our rules accordingly, so family rules remain consistent.

Some rules changed with time. For example, the original fourth rule was: "Let Nix go out during the day when we're home. Otherwise, keep the door closed." But once Analu's fears subsided, we started leaving the cat door open 24 hours a day.

The results:

- Nix became more confident.
- We no longer had to clean his litter box—he started doing all his business outside.
- He looked healthier, moved more, and lost the excess weight.

Definitely not everything happened in a moment, and the process took a while. Once, an interesting incident happened—one that showed the process of rules implementation and just how intelligent and perceptive Nix truly was.

By that point, he already understood our house rules, especially the one about not jumping on the table. But one day, as I was washing the dishes, I noticed him crouching in preparation to jump—an old habit resurfacing. He knew I had seen him. He paused and looked directly at me. Our eyes locked. He could sense from my expression that I wasn't going to allow it. And still, he lingered there, watching me, weighing his options. I gestured again with quiet firmness: no. He understood. I could see it in his eyes. But he chose to test my boundary anyway. He jumped.

I didn't scold him. I didn't yell. But I calmly opened the door and put him outside. At that time, he was still cautious about the other cats in the yard—still slightly afraid. So being sent out wasn't dramatic, but it was effective. It was a natural consequence. Not from anger or frustration, but from the simple truth that he had knowingly crossed a line. And importantly, he could come back in at any moment through his own door.

After that day, he didn't test that rule again—at least, not in my presence.

Children often do exactly the same. They constantly test adults, searching for clarity—for the edges of the container. And if they sense inconsistency, they push further. Not out of malice, but from a deep inner instinct to understand the world and their place within it. That's why they don't just need our love—they need structure.

Like Nix, children feel very comfortable around me. I've never had major issues with kids, because they quickly understand my boundaries. They know exactly what is allowed with me, and what is not—and those rules don't shift depending on my mood or external circumstances.

That's why Nix finds it easier to be with me than with anyone else. As Analu nowadays says: "You are best friends." And that is true. He knows I love him. And just as importantly, he knows where the lines are—and that those lines are drawn not to control him, but to honor my limits and preserve harmony.

There were, of course, moments of friction. Analu would sometimes want to let him into our bedroom or upstairs—especially when she was feeling emotional, and Nix was seeking affection. But we had set clear boundaries—and with communication, we returned to them.

We even built a handmade gate to keep him from entering restricted spaces.

But this process wasn't always smooth or without difficulty. Anyone who knows cats understands how hard it is to truly tame them—they have their own worldview, their own pace, their own logic. And only a clear, consistent, and united point of view from their humans can bring meaningful results.

From the very beginning, even though Analu and I had agreed on our house rules for Nix, there was a part of her—perhaps unconscious—that still wanted to protect him, to advocate for him. Her conscious mind said **yes** to the rules, but her subconscious sometimes hesitated. And Nix, being the clever creature he is, picked up on that crack in the system—and used it to his advantage.

Instead of simply saying, “We don’t go upstairs,” Analu would tell Nix, “Arthur doesn’t want you to go upstairs.” It might seem like a small thing, but energetically, it was everything. That phrasing removed her from the decision. It made me the sole “bad guy,” and it sent a confusing message—not just to Nix, but to the entire system of boundaries. A double standard like that can’t hold for long.

One evening, she didn’t close the door properly, and Nix slipped upstairs. I saw it as a violation of our shared boundary. Instead of acknowledging the situation and returning to our common ground, Analu instinctively defended him: “He was scared,” she said. “Maybe something frightened him in the yard. Maybe he just wanted to eat.” But the outcome was the same—Nix broke our rule and was met not with correction, but with comfort and even food.

And that moment created a neural pattern. In his feline mind, a new link was formed:

“Break a rule → get attention → receive food.”

Rewarded behavior repeats. It always does. And this wasn’t just a cat issue—it’s a human one, too. Many parents do the same thing,

unintentionally creating a system where children receive deep attention only when something goes wrong. So what do children do? Their subconscious begins to associate sickness or drama with love.

I once witnessed a striking example of this years ago at our retreat center near Odesa, before the war started. I was leading my fasting retreat, and at the same time, we were hosting a small group of children. The group was led by a woman who had brought her seven- or eight-year-old daughter.

One day, an accident happened: one of the children cut his leg badly on a loose board near the pool. The injury required a hospital visit and extra care. Naturally, the teacher—who was also a mother—spent much of the day with the injured child. Her own daughter watched quietly from a distance.

Later that day, as I stood near the pool, I noticed the little girl doing something strange: looking for sharp objects, testing the edges of things. I walked over and gently asked what she was doing. After some hesitation, she shared something both simple and heartbreaking: she wanted her mom to give her as much attention as she had given to the child who was hurt. And if it meant getting injured, she was willing to do that. Her honesty shook me. But it also made perfect sense. Children crave presence. If they learn that pain or illness is the fastest way to get it, they will—consciously or not—recreate that.

That's why structure and consistency matter. That's why love must show up not just when something is wrong—but every day. Not just in reaction to fear or injury, but in the mundane, the ordinary, the quiet.

When love is steady, the need for drama fades. When attention is predictable, the impulse for sabotage disappears.

Whether it's a child, a partner, or a pet, we all need attention. We all want to feel seen, safe, and valued. The difference lies in how we learn to ask for it—and how those around us learn to respond.

That day with Nix, like the story at the retreat, reminded me: healthy systems require clear signals. Boundaries must be respected—not enforced with anger, but held with love. Because that’s the true art of living together—not domination, not control, but mutual care through clarity. And whether it’s a cat or a child, we’re not just raising them—we’re shaping the emotional language they’ll carry through life.

And my concerns I had to explain to my partner, so she could truly understand my point of view. I brought them into our next Fair Talk Practice—calmly, without judgment—so we could explore not just the rule itself, but the feelings behind it. It wasn’t about control; it was about mutual respect, clarity, and making sure we were building a home on shared values, not silent acceptance.

Only after we had worked through and fully accepted the new rules—internally and together—and after Analu changed her language when speaking to Nix, saying, “we don’t go upstairs” instead of placing the responsibility on me, only then did he begin to truly understand our decision. And remarkably, even when the door was left open, he no longer crossed the boundary. Analu pointed this out to me several times, smiling.

All I could do was smile back and feel grateful. Grateful that our shared effort had borne fruit. And for that, I’m deeply thankful to my beloved.

The simple, handmade barrier became a physical reminder of our shared agreements. It wasn’t fancy, but it worked. A wooden symbol of mutual trust.

Over time, Analu accepted that I would take care of feeding Nix. I implemented a structured feeding schedule: three meals a day, only after he had finished the previous portion. No more full bowl 24/7. Physical activity plus meal control made a huge difference. In four to five months, Nix lost the extra weight he’d carried, became leaner, healthier, and more energetic.

There was still one issue: he scratched the furniture, especially the fabric on the sofa and armchairs. So one day, while walking in nature, I found a sturdy piece of wood. I wrapped it in rope, added a cushion on top, and created a scratch post and extra bed for him—which he now loves, especially when we watch movies on TV. That spot became his throne. His watchtower. With that, the furniture was saved. And Nix had a throne.



Eventually, Analu said something that filled my heart:

“I think Nix is the happiest cat in the world.”

And I agreed. He had the best of both worlds: a cozy home, our love and attention—things most street cats never experience—and, at the same time, the freedom to go outside whenever he wanted. Comfort and adventure. Safety and independence. For a cat, it doesn’t get better than that.

And not only for cats.

This is exactly what children need too: a warm, secure home where they feel loved and supported, along with the freedom to explore, grow, and make their own choices and mistakes. When both are present—structure

and space, in healthy balance, life becomes a playground, not a prison. That's when happiness takes root, and children can grow up feeling safe, confident, and ready to take responsibility for their own lives. We need to create safe places for their development, but we don't need to control every step. Otherwise, we risk stealing the joy and adventure from their lives. They too must grow into themselves—not into our expectations, but into the fullest versions of who they are meant to become.

And at the same time, we must always remember: **if we take something from them, we need to give something back.**

One day, long before I became responsible for feeding Nix, I noticed that Analu had changed his food routine. Instead of giving him wet food, she switched entirely to dry food due to some digestive issues. While the intention was good, the change happened too quickly. All changes we apply—especially to those we care for—should be gradual. If we take something away, we must offer something else in return.

The effect on Nix was immediate. His behavior shifted: he began eating indoor plants and doing little mischievous things—almost as if protesting or trying to compensate for the loss. Only through an open discussion during the next FTP sessions—and a gradual return to his normal feeding rhythm—did balance return. It was a reminder: sudden deprivation, without care or communication, always creates imbalance—whether in animals, children, or relationships.

Summing up our interactions with Nix, the following should be noted: Yes, it had taken time. Yes, there were boundaries. Yes, we said “no” to some of his habits. But what he gained in return was freedom. Space. Stimulation. And a fuller expression of his wild, wise little soul.

I'm deeply grateful to Analu for trusting me to lead in this area. It was a small thing—one cat—but it revealed something much larger: how we live, how we grow, how we build a home. It showed us that love is not just

words or moments—it's structure, respect, rhythm, and care. And I believe Nix is grateful too. His eyes say it every morning as he waits near the stairs, ready to greet us.

I'm also truly thankful for the lessons we were able to pass with Nix. They weren't just about a cat—they were preparation. A rehearsal for what it means to guide, protect, and set boundaries with love. These were parenting lessons before parenthood. And they gave us something essential: shared experience and deeper trust.

A small cat taught us so many things—and continues to do so. Nix helped my partner confront her fears and gave me even more confidence in her—not only as my beloved, but as the future mother of my children. This experience showed me that she wouldn't project her fears onto them or limit their freedom out of anxiety. The easiest path is to ban and restrict. It's much harder to look within, face our fears—even those shaped by painful experiences—and choose to act from love, not fear. And my partner showed me she is capable of doing exactly that.

As we divided responsibilities around Nix, we also began to divide our household tasks—another important step in building a balanced life together. That, too, came with lessons—and it's exactly what I'll speak about in the next chapter.

Chapter 12: Dividing Responsibility

In the early stages of a relationship, many couples want to do everything together. They want to spend as much time as possible in each other's presence—and there's nothing wrong with that. As I mentioned in *Part 1*, just a few days after we met, Analu and I found ourselves in my kitchen, making pancakes side by side. Those shared moments felt light and joyful, and they helped us build a sense of closeness and intimacy.

Joint activities can indeed deepen connection—especially in the early phase, when the energy of a new relationship is full of excitement and discovery. In those first months, I loved doing everything with Analu. From cooking to walking to folding laundry, every task became a kind of dance.

But when we started living together, that dynamic naturally began to shift. Real life, unlike romantic beginnings, brings with it routines, responsibilities, and the need for practicality. And my life experience has taught me something important: for a couple to function well in the long term—not just emotionally, but practically—responsibilities need to be clearly divided.

This isn't just about efficiency—it's about peace. Because when more than one person is responsible for the same thing, it often means that no one truly is. One partner assumes the other will handle it; the other thinks the same, and the task gets left behind. Eventually, someone feels let down. Disappointed. Unheard.

In moments of stress or time pressure, that lack of clarity can quickly turn into confusion... and then into conflict. And especially in a critical situation, when there's no clearly designated person responsible for a specific task, the chances of misunderstanding and tension increase significantly.

That's why, just as we had created clear boundaries with Nix and structured our co-living experience, we also began to define clear roles in our home. Not to become rigid or bureaucratic, but to be more effective—and to preserve more time and space for love, presence, and growth.

But Analu still wished to continue the beautiful practice of doing everything together. And in the beginning, I completely understood that desire—it came from a loving place. But as our life together evolved, I felt a growing need to shift toward a model that would be more effective in the long run. It took time and many calm, thoughtful conversations to explain to her that we could be much more effective as a couple if we divided our home responsibilities consciously and with intention. I'm deeply grateful that she was able to truly hear me. Not only did she understand my point of view, but she also took the initiative to create her own version of a proposed division of tasks—one that felt natural and

balanced. That moment of collaboration was another sign of our growing maturity as a couple.

When we divided our responsibilities, we tried to align them with the natural flow of energy through the chakras—a concept I explored in *Part 1*. This wasn't just symbolic; it helped us organize our lives in a way that respected both practical needs and deeper energetic harmony.

There's one crucial truth every couple needs to understand: **Responsibility only works when it comes with the power to make decisions.** Without that power, responsibility becomes hollow and ineffective. If you are held accountable for something but not trusted to act within your domain, the system breaks down.

This means that when we assign responsibilities, we must also grant autonomy. The other partner cannot simply override or intervene in that area without permission. Of course, that doesn't mean we can't help each other. For example, if Analu is responsible for preparing meals, it doesn't mean I can't cook. But before I step into the kitchen, I inform her—so I don't disrupt her plans or rhythm. Similarly, if I manage the bill payments, it doesn't mean she's unaware of how much we spend. It simply means she doesn't have to carry that task mentally. That frees her attention for the things she loves—like singing, writing, learning, or simply being more present.

Clear roles free up energy. They reduce friction. They bring focus.

While responsibility brings autonomy, it should never lead to complete dependency or ignorance in the other partner.

There must be balance and awareness in a healthy relationship.

Just because Analu is responsible for the laundry doesn't mean I don't know how to use the washing machine or where we keep the detergent. We don't divide tasks to create blind spots. We divide them to create flow. We must complement each other—not become helpless without one another. Because life is unpredictable. If something happens to one

partner, the other should be able to step in and manage the essentials without falling into chaos or dependency.

If a man takes on the responsibility of providing for his family—which aligns with the natural flow of energy I described in *Part 1*—that doesn't mean the woman shouldn't know how to earn money for her basic needs. When one partner becomes completely financially dependent on the other, without any personal capability or awareness, it creates an unhealthy form of vulnerability. If something happens to the provider, the dependent partner may be left unprepared and, often, deeply disoriented.

We've seen this happen in real life. Among our friends, there's a couple in which the woman has taken on the traditionally masculine role of managing most of the family's finances and making key decisions. She does it well. But I often wonder: what would happen if she weren't there one day? I'm fairly certain her partner would face a major adjustment—or have to embrace the kind of ascetic lifestyle, living with deep minimalism and reducing his needs to the bare essentials. And that's okay too. I lived my first two years alone in Portugal in a similar ascetic way. And I can honestly say they were among the best years of my life for my soul's experience. If needed, he too would make it through—and perhaps even grow from the experience.

The point is not to fear loss, but to prepare for life with wisdom. In a healthy relationship, each partner can lead in their area of strength, but both should maintain at least a basic understanding of the other's domain. That's how we build trust, balance, and resilience—not just in times of ease, but especially in times of challenge.

The division of responsibilities becomes especially vital in emergency situations. In moments of stress or danger, there's no time for back-and-forth discussions or second-guessing. The partner who holds the responsibility—and who has all the relevant information—must be empowered to act swiftly and decisively. They have the authority to make the final call in that area.

There's only one exception to this rule: if the responsible partner explicitly delegates their authority. In that case, the other partner takes over—not just the task, but the full responsibility for the outcome. Until such authority is consciously handed over, the default responsibility remains with the originally designated partner.

A simple but powerful real-life example of this dynamic is driving. If both partners can drive, the person behind the wheel is the one who makes the decisions—and bears the consequences. That's just how it works. It doesn't help if the passenger constantly comments, corrects, or panics. In fact, it usually makes things worse, distracting the driver and increasing the risk of a mistake, or even an accident.

The solution is simple: if you believe your partner isn't driving safely, take the wheel—but also take the responsibility. Otherwise, let them do their job. The car, at that moment, is their domain.

If we're entering a difficult section of the road—let's say, through a fire zone or any other danger—I naturally take the wheel. Why? Because when it comes to our car, I've assumed primary responsibility. I have more driving experience, and in such cases, it makes sense for me to lead.

In non-emergency situations as well, we divide our responsibilities based on experience. For instance, when we moved into a new home in Porto and needed to set up the internet connection, Analu took full responsibility for that task. As a native Portuguese speaker, she was better equipped to navigate conversations with the providers, schedule installations, and resolve technical issues, being IT engineer by her main education. Once she took the lead, I didn't interfere—I trusted her to make the best decisions in that space. And she did it perfectly. We've got the best fiber optic Internet available from a new company that was new on the market and had good conditions.

This is what it means to operate as a functional, harmonious team: each person leads where they are strongest, and the other supports—without undermining.

Clear roles. Clear responsibility. Clear trust.

This is not just more efficient—it's more peaceful. It allows us to channel our energy not into power struggles, but into the life we're building together.

But simply dividing responsibilities doesn't mean all your problems are solved. It also doesn't mean your partner will handle things exactly the way you would. Let's not forget—we are different. What one person considers “perfect” might not match the expectations of the other. Cleanliness, for example, is one of those areas where perceptions often vary greatly.

After Analu took on the responsibility of cleaning the house, I started noticing that certain things didn't align with my internal standards. Small details began showing up in my FTP list—minor complaints I shared during our weekly Fair Talk Practice. And rather than becoming a constant critic or acting like a supervisor in my own home—something I absolutely didn't want in our relationship—I proposed a new solution: we would take turns cleaning. One week I would clean, and the next week she would.

This shift brought unexpected benefits. First, it gave me the chance to lead by example—to show Analu what “clean” means to me, not through critique, but through action. Second, it gave both of us a broader perspective. Two people notice different things, and when we alternate, we cover more ground. Some areas I naturally focus on, Analu might not notice—and vice versa. There are also practical reasons: I'm taller and can easily reach the dormer windows, while other tasks are simply more intuitive for her.

That's what partnership means: complementing one another. Supporting each other not just to divide tasks, but to achieve better results—like a

calm, clean home that reflects both our efforts.

This new rhythm also created space for something else: a simple ritual of solitude. We agreed that when one partner is cleaning, the other goes for a walk for a few hours and returns only after receiving a message that everything is in order. This allows the person cleaning to work in peace, and the returning partner walks into a fresh, welcoming space. Space brings freshness. As I wrote in *Part 1*, spending time apart isn't just normal—it's essential. It allows room for appreciation. And this small adjustment offered us exactly that.

So if a particular division of responsibilities doesn't work as you expected, it doesn't mean the system is broken. Revisit it. Talk about it. Adjust it. Let your relationship breathe and evolve. A strong couple isn't rigid—they're adaptive. They co-create systems that serve both partners. And when those systems need to shift, they do so with care, communication, and mutual respect.

Chapter 13: FTP insights

As our relationship evolved, and we moved through the early stages of adaptation—constantly tuning and recalibrating between us—something shifted. Four months in, Analu suddenly looked at me and said with calm clarity: **“I finally understand how FTP really works.”**

It wasn’t just a statement. It was a moment of insight—one that opened a new layer of awareness in her. I saw it in her eyes: she had crossed a threshold. But like all true growth, it didn’t stop there.

FTP—Fair Talk Practice—is not a technique you master and then forget. It is a living process. And like all real communication, it keeps evolving. To this day, it continues to unfold—for both of us. With every session, new realizations emerge. What worked last week may feel different now. What used to trigger us might no longer hold power—until new layers appear. Through our conversations, listening, and observations, we keep

learning what works for us and what doesn't. Naturally, our rules adapt. Our structure grows with us.

As I emphasized in *Part 1*, every FTP must have a purpose:

To help your partner truly hear you—and maybe, just maybe, feel inspired to grow or make a change.

If your partner walks away from an FTP feeling defensive, shut down, or hardened, something went wrong. That wasn't FTP.

At its core, FTP is about creating connection without blame.

We don't point fingers—we speak about ourselves. We express our feelings, our needs, and our lived experiences. It's not about judgment. It's about honesty. And yes, that honesty can feel deeply vulnerable. But that very vulnerability is the foundation for true connection. And in that tender, open space—it's easy to hurt one another, even unintentionally.

There were moments when one of us used the feedback space not for reflection, but for subtle revenge. Times when feedback turned into a disguised form of attack. And when that happens, the other partner's easiest choice is to drop into ego mode—simply to defend themselves. Once both partners are operating from ego, the soul-level connection disappears. **At that point, FTP loses its meaning.**

That's why it's essential to give feedback using the structure outlined in *Part 1*. That framework prevents the ego from hijacking the process—especially when we didn't like something our partner said. It helps us stay focused on what can be improved, while still respecting our partner's perspective.

And yes, there were moments when our egos took over. We've been there.

When one partner opens up, sharing something raw and vulnerable, and the other minimizes, mocks, or dismisses it, the sacred space between them collapses.

No understanding.

No healing.

Just a wall—where there could have been a bridge.

And that wall can grow so high that our partner may not be willing to open their heart the next time—to share what's truly bothering them.

FTP is not about winning.

It's not about proving who's right or wrong.

It's about discovering the points of connection—those quiet overlaps where empathy lives.

It's about building a bridge.

Not in spite of your differences—but through them.

And the more bridges we build, the more understanding we cultivate.

Ego breaks those bridges.

But our souls need them to connect.

When FTP is practiced with presence, openness, and the shared intention to listen and be heard—something shifts.

There is lightness.

There is peace.

There is a renewed sense of intimacy and common ground.

And this requires time—time to begin understanding, and to truly see the situation through our partner's eyes. Whether we like it or not, every relationship demands adaptation. And those adaptations are far easier when we practice FTP regularly.

A few months later, after another successful session, Analu looked at me again and said:

“I don't understand how couples can live without FTP. That must be such a mess.”

And she was absolutely right.

From our many sessions and evolving practice, we've made the following key discoveries and new rules:

Rule 1: Don't Do FTP Until the Body and Emotions Have Fully Settled

There are moments in a relationship when life tests what you've built—not with tragedy or distance, but with something as deceptively small as a misunderstanding. And sometimes, these moments arrive on days when we expect the opposite: celebration, ease, connection. That was the case for us on February 14, Valentine's Day.

The day had begun with beauty. We exchanged kisses in the morning, shared coffee with warm smiles, and even spoke about what we wanted to have for dinner. It was our first Valentine's Day living under the same roof, and although neither of us cared much for commercial holidays, we both felt a quiet desire to make the evening meaningful.

But love, especially in its early stages, is never just a straight line. In the afternoon, a small tension arose—a misunderstanding that triggered deeper emotions for both of us. It wasn't about anything huge, but it struck a nerve. And instead of writing it down and saving it for our next scheduled Fair Talk Practice, as we had agreed to do with emotionally charged topics, Analu wanted to talk about it immediately.

"I don't want to cook in this mood," she said. Her logic made sense in the moment—she didn't want to carry emotional heaviness into the evening. And I agreed. I wanted peace too. So we tried an "emergency FTP."

But it wasn't really FTP. Not in its full, sacred form. It was an argument waiting to happen. Even though we had taken a little time to cool off, our nervous systems were still activated. Our bodies were in defense mode. And very quickly, our good intentions turned into a heated exchange. Voices rose. We tried to stay grounded, but the emotion overpowered the technique.

To me, it felt like a fire. You have a short window to contain it—miss it, and the flames spread. One minute, and you're already out of control.

In the end, we calmed down, but not in the way we hoped. Analu cooked dinner in an even worse mood than before. I sat quietly, filled with regret. We had wasted time, energy, and created more tension than clarity.

That day became a turning point for us. That's when we understood something vital: **FTP only works when both partners are calm.**

Not just when "some time has passed." The more time that passes, the better. Not just when you *think* you've cooled off, but when the emotional charge is truly gone. A good night's sleep or even a short nap can help. A walk. A shower. Meditation. A change of environment.

There's no fixed formula—what matters is whether your body and voice feel clear and grounded.

This wasn't the only time it happened, but it was probably the most memorable. From that day, we created our first non-negotiable rule:

FTP Rule #1: Never attempt FTP while emotionally activated—even if time has passed. Wait until you are both fully calm. Otherwise, it will turn into conflict, not connection.

But of course, a question arises:

What do we do with the emotion in the moment?

Suppressing emotions isn't the answer. So, we found a solution that works for both of us—a solution I'll describe in more detail in the upcoming chapter on Emotions.

In the end, FTP is about **safety, clarity, and connection**—not urgency. Let the emotion settle, like waves after a storm. Then build the bridge.

Rule 2: Remove the Cause of Irritation Before Starting FTP or Any Conversation With Your Partner

This rule is closely connected to the first—but with one key difference. The first refers to **internal conditions**: nervous system, body state, emotional presence. But this one addresses something **external**: the immediate cause of irritation that must be removed before any meaningful conversation can begin.

It sounds simple. And perhaps it is. But it took us time to fully recognize how crucial this step is. We learned that even with the best intentions, a conversation started at the wrong moment—when one of us was hungry, tired, or uncomfortable—could quickly derail into conflict.

If your partner is visibly irritated, even the most sacred of tools—like Fair Talk Practice—can fail. And not because the structure doesn't work, but because **the participants are not ready**.

Here's a simple example:

If your partner is hungry and annoyed, it's not the time to bring up finances or weekend plans. **First—feed them. Then talk.** It really is that basic sometimes.

When a child cries, most people instinctively respond with food, touch, or attention. But when our partner expresses discomfort, we often forget these simple responses. We expect them to self-regulate, to be composed, to “rise above it”—as if adulthood erases the nervous system.

Instead, we need to pause and ask:

- Are they tired?
- Hungry?
- Cold?
- Overwhelmed?

Check the physical and emotional basics first.

There's a reason old sayings stick around.

“The way to a man’s heart is through his stomach” is often said with a wink, but it carries real truth. And even for me—as someone who fasts and treats food as a conscious game—it holds deep meaning.

Because **food is not just about energy.**

When a woman (any partner) prepares food with love and intention, something powerful happens. It becomes a subtle but potent message:

“I see you. I care for you. I’m here for you.”

That’s why food made in a state of rush or irritation feels hollow to me. If it doesn’t carry love, I’d rather not eat at all. If I were a woman, I would treat this gift with reverence—not out of pressure or duty, but with the awareness that **nourishing someone is one of the most graceful expressions of feminine energy.** It speaks without words. It softens without effort.

So if you’re about to initiate a serious conversation—or an FTP session—**pause.** Look around. Feel the atmosphere.

Ask yourself: Is my partner ready to receive?

If the answer is no, step back.

Satisfy the basic need first.

Because the conversation doesn’t begin with words.

It begins the moment your partner feels safe to hear them.

Rule 3: Daily Check-In to Maintain Balance and Prevent Emotional Build-Up

While Fair Talk Practice is one of the most powerful tools in our relationship, it’s not always possible—or necessary—to do a full session every day. FTP is time-consuming and energy-intensive, and often, a simple check-in is enough to understand where your partner stands in the moment.

That’s why we introduced a new morning ritual: a quick 3–5 minute practice we do after breakfast. It’s simple—but surprisingly effective.

We ask each other three questions:

1. **How do you feel on a physical level?**
2. **How do you feel on an emotional level?**
3. **How would you rate our relationship today?**

Each of us gives each question a rating from **0 to 10**.

We can elaborate if we want to—or simply leave it at the number and say more during the next FTP. Either way, this tiny habit helps us tune into one another and adjust expectations for the day.

For example, if my partner says she's at a 3 physically, I know not to expect the same energy or enthusiasm I might on a day when she's feeling like a 10. Without this information, it's easy to fall into unconscious expectations and create tension without realizing it.

Sometimes, this check-in is all it takes to prevent a misunderstanding or emotional buildup before it even starts.

It also helps us reflect individually. If I rate our relationship a 10 and she rates it a 5, I can immediately recognize something is off and begin restoring the balance gently, before it escalates into conflict.

Balance Is the Foundation of Harmony

During one of our talks, Analu said: **“Giving and receiving are the same.”** This might be true from a **spiritual** or **absolute** perspective—but in our real, human world, they're not always experienced equally.

When one partner feels they're giving more than they're receiving, it creates a subtle imbalance. It may not be spoken aloud—but it leaks into tone, presence, and energy. And over time, it can lead to **resentment**, **burnout**, or **withdrawal**.

The key to a harmonious relationship is not to divide every gesture equally—but to ensure both people **feel** they are receiving as much as they are giving. That perception matters. It's what keeps love flowing.

When balance is lost, a sense of injustice is inevitable. And it often appears at the worst possible moment—unexpectedly, and explosively.

So how do we maintain that balance?

With **consistent awareness**. With regular **FTP sessions**. And with a **daily check-in**. But most importantly—with **honesty**.

An unprepared or emotionally avoidant partner might rate the relationship a “10”... and then have an emotional breakdown just a few hours later.

Why?

- They didn’t want to hurt their partner.
- They mirrored the other’s “10” out of guilt or politeness.
- They didn’t feel safe enough to express dissatisfaction.
- Or they were simply disconnected from themselves in that moment.

That’s why **being honest with yourself** is the first step to being honest with your partner.

This short morning practice keeps the emotional connection alive and helps both partners feel seen, understood, and supported.

From My Own FTP Notes:

“It can’t be that a person goes from total harmony to emotional breakdown in such a short time. I think that 10 wasn’t an accurate reflection of our relationship that morning.”

“If you need 20 hugs a day, count them. And if I didn’t give them to you, mark 2, or 1. But don’t say everything is okay and don’t rate our relationship a 10.”

“It’s not okay. I know it. I feel it. I might forget sometimes—but if you remind me, you help me build the right habit.”

“I’m not perfect. But I’m ready to grow with you.”

“And for that, we need to be honest.”

Rule 4: What's Been Resolved in FTP Stays Resolved

One of the golden principles of Fair Talk Practice is that it offers closure. And closure means a fresh start. A clean page. A true emotional reset. That's why we made this rule:

What has already been discussed and resolved during a previous FTP cannot be used in the future to boost your ego, win an argument, or gain the upper hand.

Once a partner has apologized, once forgiveness has been offered, once a matter has been closed within the sacred space of FTP—it must be left there.

We do not dig it up again.

We do not bring it back in a moment of frustration.

We do not weaponize our partner's past mistakes to gain power in the present.

Because if we do, we violate the very heart of the practice.

There were moments in our journey when one of us tried to reintroduce an old situation that had already been processed and closed during FTP. But each time, we could feel it immediately: the energy dropped. The connection weakened. It gave us no peace, no clarity, no resolution. That's how we knew this rule was essential to implement.

If something truly wasn't resolved during the original conversation—if there's still a question, an emotion, or a blind spot—**it can absolutely be brought back**. But only in the next FTP. Not in daily life. Not during conflict. Not during moments of ego or emotional intensity. Because daily life is not the place for unfinished emotional business. It needs structure. It needs consent. It needs the container of a dedicated practice.

A Personal Example

Since childhood, I've had a tendency to tease. In my early environment, mockery was often equated with strength. It was a form of survival—a way to feel in control. I know this pattern lives in me. And I work on it. I do my best not to use it consciously. But sometimes it slips through

unconsciously—less and less with time, but still present in moments when I'm not fully aware.

There was one instance where I fell into that old pattern. I teased Analu, not from malice, but from habit. She didn't pay attention and even bring it up in our next FTP. But I noticed. I felt it in my body afterwards—a sense of discomfort. So I wrote it down. When our next session came, I brought it up myself. I asked for her forgiveness. That's what FTP is for: awareness, accountability, and repair.

Not shame.

Not punishment.

And not recycling pain for later use.

When we know something has been fully heard, fully acknowledged, and fully processed, **we let it go.**

That's how trust grows.

That's how forgiveness becomes real.

That's how the past stops poisoning the present.

We are not perfect. We are human. But we grow through intention. And FTP only works when we use it to move forward—not to dig back.

Let the practice be a closing ceremony.

Let the page truly turn.

And if something still needs attention—return to it with presence and care. But not with ego. Not with blame. And never in a way that turns vulnerability into a weapon. Let what's healed remain healed. And keep the space clear for what's next.

Rule 5: Speak From One Level and Do Not Mistrust Your Partner's Words

When our partner speaks their truth, we receive it—without interrogation, without doubt, and without twisting it into something else. Just full acceptance and trust. As I shared in the previous rule, **honesty is**

essential.

When we have **100% trust** in our partner, we believe what they say **more than we believe the stories of our own ego or the reactions of our body**. Only with that trust can we build a truly deep relationship.

This requires an understanding that each of us is **not a single unified being**, but a constellation of at least three distinct parts: mind, body, and soul. And each of these parts can speak.

In Fair Talk Practice, clarity only arises when both partners are speaking from the same level.

The ideal level for an FTP conversation is the **soul level—the heart**. That's where trust lives.

That's where vulnerability is honored.

That's where real change, deep connection, and emotional healing happen.

When both partners speak from the heart, something sacred opens. You can even feel it in your body—**warmth in the chest**, a sense of openness between hearts, a kind of **energetic embrace**.

Unfortunately, I have to admit and accept that our FTP sessions don't always happen on this ideal, spiritual level. But we try. And when they do—it's a truly beautiful feeling. In those moments, FTP becomes more than just a communication tool. **It becomes a spiritual practice**. But that kind of deep connection requires presence—and alignment. (Most likely, I'll explore this more deeply in my next book.)

Don't Cross Levels in a Single Conversation

One of the most damaging things that can happen in FTP is this:

One partner opens their heart, and the other responds from the mind or the ego.

If your partner shares something intimate or vulnerable, and you respond with logic, critique, or cold analysis, you're not meeting them where they are. You're speaking a **different language** entirely. And in doing so, you may cause more harm than you realize. **Soul-level truths cannot be dissected by logic.** And heart-level sharing should never be answered by ego-level reactions.

When this mismatch happens, your partner may begin to close. They may feel unsafe. And over time, they may stop sharing altogether. It's not just about "being honest." It's about being honest **from the same level of consciousness.**

- When we speak from the heart, we must respond from the heart.
- When we share a thought, we should name it as **an ego thought**, and have the maturity to say to our partner:

"This is coming from my ego right now."

A Real Example From Our Journey

There was a moment during an FTP when something Analu said hit me deeply—not because it was "wrong," but because it **crossed levels.**

She said:

"I had the thought: *Do I really want to marry you?*"

She didn't say it in the heat of the moment.

She said it during our **sacred FTP space**, which automatically puts me in a state of full attention and emotional openness.

But she didn't name it as a thought, nor clarify that it came from the ego.

And **that's where the pain came in.**

Just a few weeks earlier, she had told me from her heart:

"I'm with you until the end."

So which was true?

To my soul, that contradiction felt like a **deep imbalance.**

My heart heard one thing—and was then pierced by something that sounded like its opposite.

But as we explored it together, I understood: That statement didn't come from her soul. It was a **passing thought from the ego**—one of those fleeting inner reactions that arise when we're tired, triggered, or uncertain.

We all have them.

But when those thoughts are shared without naming them, they can carry the full emotional weight of truth and deeply wound the person we love most.

The Rule Is Simple, But Profound:

Ideal FTP is a conversation on one level. Stay there.

- If you're speaking from emotion, stay in emotion. (*Though ideally, strong emotions should be expressed outside of FTP.*)
- If you're sharing a thought, say: "*This is something my mind told me.*"
- If your ego needs to speak, say: "*This is my ego speaking.*"
- If you're speaking from the heart—**stay in the heart**. And be sure your partner is meeting you there.

This isn't about censorship. It's about clarity. Responsibility. Integrity.

Because words spoken from the wrong level—without context—can wound deeply, even when not intended. Ideally, all vital decisions in life—and in a relationship—should be made from the **soul level**.

Not from fear.

Not from reactivity.

But from calm, centered love.

So before speaking during FTP, ask yourself:

"Which part of me is speaking right now?"

And just as importantly:

"Which part of my partner is listening?"

When we speak from the heart—and are met there—FTP becomes **divine**. Not just a conversation, but a **sacred space**.

Not just between two people, but **between two souls**.
And **that** is when love grows strongest.

Rule 6: Never Compare Your Partner to Anyone Else

In our relationship, we made an agreement that has become one of our most important guiding principles: **We do not compare our partner to anyone else—especially during our FTP.**

Comparison may seem harmless—sometimes even well-intentioned—but in truth, it always damages the relationship. When we compare our partner to someone else, even subtly, we devalue them. We elevate a third person—a stranger to our intimacy—to the level of our inner circle. And in doing so, we shake the foundation of trust and uniqueness that every strong relationship needs.

We have to remember always: **our circle is sacred, and there's no room in it for anyone else.**

Our partner is not meant to be “better” or “worse” than anyone. **Our partner is the best. Full stop.** That is the axiom we live by.

And if that doesn't feel true—if doubts begin to arise—then the deeper question must be asked: **Why am I with them?**

In *Part 1*, I offered a clear framework for what to do if this question arises.

And I believe that **we all have the relationships we deserve**. Not better. Not worse. If there's something in our partner's behavior that bothers us, it's very likely a reflection of something we also carry within. Maybe not in the same form, but in the same energy. Being conscious means seeing that behavior—and working on ourselves, not trying to fix or change our partner.

The truth remains simple: comparison should never be used as a weapon, a motivator, or a way to make a point. It always wounds. And worse—it creates distance between hearts.

It's also logically flawed. We never fully know the people we compare our partner to. We see fragments. Polished surfaces. Carefully edited impressions. We don't see their shadows, their flaws, or their inner struggles. We don't live with them, sleep beside them, or share real-life challenges with them.

So what are we actually comparing?
Often, nothing real at all.

When Analu and I first began working together professionally—a story I'll share more of later in this book—we were invited to host a Sound Healing Session at a luxurious five-star hotel. It was a high-profile event at a global conference, with participants from many countries. Naturally, it required preparation, collaboration, and communication with hotel management and other staff.

During that period, there was a moment when Analu compared me to the hotel manager. It landed like a stone in still water. It hurt—not because I doubted myself, but because it felt like an outsider had been given a seat in our sacred space. She had never been close enough to him to know how he would behave in my position. And like all of us, I'm sure he had both strengths and weaknesses. **We all do.**

And more importantly: **what one person can do, another can do too.**
Everything depends on context.

I don't need to be like that manager.

I need to be the best version of myself—for her, and for us.

And I must also add that I am not perfect—and I certainly don't want to give the impression that I am. I must admit—there were times when I also crossed this boundary. Sometimes, I compared Analu's behavior with that

of her mother. From my perspective, I believed I was helping her notice unconscious patterns—things she may have absorbed from childhood and was now repeating, almost like a copy-paste. But the truth is, I never knew her mother personally. My observations were based solely on the stories Analu had shared with me. That made it nothing more than a guess—my interpretation, shaped by my own filters.

And that's a dangerous trap: thinking we understand our partner better than they do themselves. Believing we see their patterns "objectively." Playing the role of the guru, the therapist, or the fixer.

But love is not about diagnosis. It's about presence. And if we want to help our partner grow, the best path is not comparison—but curiosity. Not assumption—but compassion.

So we remind ourselves regularly: **We're not here to analyze each other. We're here to support each other.** And the more conscious we are of that, the safer love becomes.

And that kind of growth happens not through comparison—but through love, communication, and commitment. So in our relationship, we hold this as a sacred truth:

Comparison is the enemy of intimacy.

Our partner is incomparable—because our bond is unique.

That's not just a mindset.

That's a choice we make—every single day.

Chapter 14: Emotions: How to Feel, Express, and Transform Them

In the last chapter, I touched on emotions and promised to explain what we can do with them. Whether we like it or not, emotions play a constant role in our daily lives—and especially in our relationships.

As I say in my Fasting Program, emotions are like waves on the surface of the ocean. We can't stop the wave from coming. But we can choose how we surf it. So, how can we become masters of those waves?

One of the basics I also share in my program is the practice of **Ho'oponopono**. It helped me a lot during my period of living alone—

those two years of celibacy I describe in my *Part 1*. And it really worked for me then. But being in a relationship is a different level. It requires new instruments.

That doesn't mean Ho'oponopono doesn't work anymore. It simply means that for deep transformation to happen within a relationship, we need tools that help both partners understand what's going on emotionally, and consciously go through those processes together to grow.

But before we get into practical tools, let's spend a moment on some basic theory about emotions.

Emotions: What Are They?

Emotions are triggered automatically in our bodies. That means we have little to no control over when they appear. They arise from a complex mix of chemical reactions that happen in the body and reach the brain in a matter of milliseconds. One moment we're calm, and the next—boom—we're furious: heart racing, fists clenched. Or the opposite: we're flooded with warmth, eyes sparkling, heart full. In those moments, it feels like the emotion is in charge. And all of that happens unconsciously, just like most of the processes in our body—our heartbeat, breathing, the functioning of our organs and systems.

Depending on whether we enjoy the feeling in our body or not, we tend to divide emotions into positive and negative. But from a broader, more absolute point of view, emotions are neutral. They are messages. Energy in motion. Our system's way of saying, "Hey, pay attention to this."

So if we can't control when an emotion arises, what can we control?

We can control how long we stay there.

This is one of the most empowering realizations we can have—both individually and as partners. The initial surge of emotion is involuntary. But the duration of the emotion—that's something we can begin to choose, at least once we become aware of it.

Some people can process emotions quickly. They feel something, let it move through them, and then they're done. Others, however, get stuck. They dwell on what was said, how it felt, what it might mean. Days pass. Sometimes weeks. The emotion grows heavy, turns into resentment or sadness. In extreme cases, it can even lead to emotional dependency or depression.

Suppressing Emotions Doesn't Work

Many of us were taught to suppress emotions. Especially men. "Be strong." "Be calm." "Be silent." "Don't show weakness."

But emotions that are not felt and processed don't just disappear—they go underground. And like lava beneath the surface, they eventually erupt—often when we least expect it. Think of it like holding a beach ball underwater. You can do it for a while, but at some point, it's going to shoot to the surface—usually with force.

In a couple, when we suppress emotion rather than work through it, we often end up exploding later. And that explosion doesn't just contain one issue—it pulls in everything. All at once. Things that aren't even connected. A comment from last week. A conflict from the previous month. Even unresolved pain from past relationships. Everything mixes together. One emotion clings to another. Suddenly, our partner is confronted with a whole list of things that made us uncomfortable—many of which may have no real connection to each other. The only thing they have in common is that they triggered a "negative" emotion.

This emotional buildup can be dangerous. Even a small disagreement can become the spark that sets off a chain reaction. Everything comes out at once—yesterday's discomfort, last week's wound, even last year's argument. The result is a chaotic emotional snowball, where every unresolved issue gets dumped into the mix. And before we realize it, our partner is left staring at a tangled ball of thread, trying to figure out where it all started and what it all means.

Expressing Emotions Early

Analú understands how important it is to express emotions before they start affecting us. She even wrote a book about emotions—for children. It's beautifully done and available on Amazon (in Portuguese). It's called "Charlie's Map of Emotions". In the book, she talks about how crucial it is to feel our emotions and express them—gently, clearly, and without shame.

Teaching this to children is powerful.

But what about us—the adults?

Who teaches us?

Mirrors in a Couple

In a couple, we are each other's mirrors.

Analú can trigger me—not because she's doing something wrong, but because there's something in me that hasn't yet been seen, healed, or accepted. And I trigger her for the same reason. This is not something to fear. In fact, this is the very purpose of being in a conscious relationship: to grow, to become more aware, and to reflect each other's blind spots in a space of love—not judgment.

But for that to work, we must be willing to see. And to understand that the other person's emotional reaction is not necessarily about us—it's about something deeper inside them that's being activated. Temperament plays a big role here. What provokes one person might not touch the other—and that's okay.

What matters is getting to know your partner's emotional world. Respecting their limits. And defining your own.

In our relationship, Analú and I have learned to be mirrors for each other. I learn from her, and she learns from me. Sometimes this goes smoothly. Sometimes it's uncomfortable. But it's always valuable.

Being mirrors means recognizing that we won't always respond the same way to the same situation. Our temperaments are different. Our triggers are different. What upsets me might not even register for Analu—and vice versa. The key is to understand each other's reactions and, even more importantly, to define boundaries that must not be crossed—no matter what.

Sharing our Boundaries and Vulnerability

One of my personal boundaries is my body—especially my face. In the past, if someone physically hit me, even lightly, my reaction was almost instant. I didn't think—I reacted. Adrenaline flooded my body before I had time to mentally process anything. It's a primal response, and for a long time, I felt ashamed of it. But now, I understand that awareness is the first step toward change. I no longer allow situations to reach that critical point. I communicate earlier. I express when something doesn't feel right—before it festers. I choose to process emotions before they explode. It's not always perfect—but it's progress.

And I had to explain this to Analu. She used to make rapid movements in front of me—sometimes just a quick, innocent kiss. That was completely normal for her. But for me, it could be triggering—especially if it happened very fast.

So I shared that with her—not with blame, but with vulnerability and care. And she understood. She respected that boundary and tried not to repeat it.

Creating a Shared Emotional Language

In your relationship, take time to understand each other's emotional patterns:

- What triggers you?
- What calms you down?
- What does your partner need when they're overwhelmed?
- And what do you need?

Talk about this during peaceful times—not during a conflict. Create a shared emotional language. Give each other space to feel and express—without judgment or fear.

Because emotions are not enemies. They are guides. And when we learn to navigate them skillfully—together—they can actually bring us closer, not pull us apart.

Conscious Partnership Requires Emotional Maturity

In a couple, emotional maturity means:

- Recognizing when something is triggered in you—and not blaming your partner.
- Knowing your boundaries—and honoring your partner's.
- Creating space to feel emotion—without projecting it.
- Supporting your partner's waves—without getting pulled under.

This isn't easy work. But it's sacred work.

Because the couple that learns to move through emotions together—with awareness, care, and courage—is the couple that builds something truly unbreakable.

And now, let's get practical. Below, I share the practical tools and instruments that we use in our relationship:

One of the most effective tools I use to work with my emotions is very simple and part of my FTP: **I write things down.** When something upsets me, I make a note in my FTP journal. That small act alone already starts to settle the emotion. Writing creates distance. It allows me to begin observing the emotion, rather than being swallowed by it.

The more I write, the clearer things become. Often, I begin to see not just what triggered me, but **why**. I start to trace the emotion back to its source. Even if I don't reach a resolution right away, I know that I'll be able to speak about it calmly at our next FTP session. That knowing alone—that my voice will be heard—already brings a sense of inner peace. My nervous

system can relax. I don't need to explode or suppress. I just need to write and wait for the right moment to express during the next FTP session.

Sometimes the clarity doesn't come right away. But more often than not, by the time the next Fair Talk Practice comes around, I've already untangled most of the knot. And when I do speak, I'm no longer emotionally entangled. I can explain what happened calmly and clearly. I can express my point of view without emotional charge.

That's the power of writing things down. It turns a storm into a signal.

Another benefit of journaling is that it allows me to trace the entire chain of events that led to the emotional buildup. And once I understand that chain—when I can untangle the knot—everything becomes easier to deal with. In future situations, I can act more consciously and not on autopilot.

Sometimes, when Analu and I revisit a situation together, we even end up laughing. Because it all becomes so clear. Like watching a movie scene that escalated unnecessarily—but now we're sitting in the audience, observing it from the outside. No longer inside the storm.

A Real-Life Example: Serra da Estrela trip

Let me share a real example from our life.

We were on vacation in the Serra da Estrela mountains. After spending the morning in nature, we drove down and decided to walk around the city called Covilha, where Analu had studied for four years. She knew it well and was excited to show it to me.

It was around noon, so we went into a restaurant to ask about lunch. The manager said they'd start serving in half an hour. So we decided to go for a walk while we waited. Analu showed me the cozy streets and beautiful views. We even sat on a stone wall, legs dangling, enjoying the scenery. It felt peaceful.

But then things began to shift.

When it was time for lunch, Analu wanted to show me her university first. I was already getting hungry, but I didn't want to kill the mood, so I followed her—although I quietly said I wasn't feeling like it. That was the first crack. I was annoyed, but didn't say so directly. She was hurt that I wasn't excited to see something that mattered to her.

When we arrived at the restaurant more later, the menu options didn't look great to me. We don't eat meat, and sometimes that's a challenge in Portugal, especially in the small towns. I didn't really understand why Analu had picked this place. I ordered a risotto and a cheese plate. I finished quickly, and then I pulled out my phone to respond to some client messages about my bee suppositories.

That was the second hit.

We had already agreed during our FTP sessions that we'd avoid phones at the table. It's important to Analu that we're present during meals. And I agree with her. But I forgot. And I let my urgency override the agreement, and I was in my phone while Analu was finishing her meal. She didn't say anything at the moment. She stayed quiet. But the tension was growing.

After lunch, I suggested we visit a nearby church. Analu said it was closed at that hour. But I wanted to walk by anyway. She took this as a sign that I didn't trust her—and it hurt her again. By now, we were both triggered. And although we were still polite, we were also disconnected.

Eventually, we decided to drive to another part of the city before heading back to Porto. I put the next location into the GPS. Analu knew a shorter route and wanted to tell me, but I chose a different way to avoid narrow, sloping streets. She saw this as another act of distrust. Her frustration finally spilled over.

She expressed her emotions loudly and emotionally. At that moment, I didn't understand where it was all coming from. I just wanted to focus on the road, and I asked her to be quiet. That didn't help. A full-blown argument followed.

At the time, it wasn't clear to me what had gone wrong. The day had started so well. And then—boom—a scandal. Where did it come from? Later, I wrote it all down. And as I wrote, I began to see the chain of events. One small trigger. Then another. And another. One unresolved feeling attaching itself to the next. By the end, it wasn't just one problem—it was a storm of miscommunication, unmet needs, and unspoken disappointment. But once I mapped it out, everything became clear. Writing helped me see the full picture and later show it to Analu.

Writing transforms emotion into awareness.

It helps us return to the wiser part of ourselves. This method works well for me—and for many of the men I work with, too. For us, the act of observing, reflecting, and organizing our emotions on paper creates a space between the trigger and the response. That space is where transformation begins.

But for Analu, as a woman, emotions sometimes rise in stronger waves and call for more immediate release. Writing may come later. First, she needs to express herself—fully, freely, right in the moment.

So, we created an agreement in our relationship—an emotional understanding that protects us both:

If she feels the need to release something, she's free to do so in the moment. She can express her emotions as they arise. But we both understand that what's said during those emotional waves won't be taken too seriously. It won't shake the emotional safety of our relationship. She gets to release her wave. I stay grounded. It won't be taken personally by me, because I know that in those moments, it's not her soul speaking—it's her emotions. And she knows I may not respond at all in that moment—and that's okay.

This agreement has changed a lot for us.

It gives her space to feel and express. It gives me space to stay centered and not get pulled into the storm. We both get to stay safe. And we avoid unnecessary damage, escalation, or misunderstanding.

Emotional Monologue as a Mirror

One of the most dangerous things a man can do in the middle of a woman's emotional outburst is to try to debate with her. To respond. To defend. To fix. That's usually when everything goes downhill. Because the moment a man enters into discussion, he shifts from grounded presence into emotional engagement. Now he's reacting too. The container breaks. And what could have been a release becomes a conflict.

So in our case, when Analu needs to express her emotions, I let her speak. I listen—without trying to solve it, justify myself, or explain. I don't react. I don't respond. I stay present—but silent. **And it works.** She feels expressed and released. I feel safe. The emotion passes. We reconnect.

And there's a surprising bonus to this practice: even in an emotional outburst—even in what feels like a one-sided monologue—if you listen without taking it personally, you can sometimes hear something new. Something honest. Something that hasn't been said in any calm, rational moment.

Let me share one of those insights:

In the middle of one of Analu's emotional outbursts, I heard her say: *"I don't know anything about you."*

At first, it landed like a reproach. As if I were hiding myself from her. As if I were being closed or secretive. Inside me, I felt that it wasn't 100% true. But it was something she had never said during our Fair Talk Practice. And it made me listen more attentively.

On one hand, it was interesting—and true in some way. There are still parts of me she doesn't know. Not because I'm hiding anything on purpose, but probably because I do it subconsciously. And maybe that's absolutely okay. Everyone needs to have a place inside themselves where

there's no entrance for anyone. I think it's normal that we don't know our partner 100%. In fact, I believe it's even healthy. Passion often lives in mystery. And a little mystery helps keep that passion alive.

I'm not deliberately hiding myself. But maybe, on some level, I'm still discovering who I am—and sharing that gradually. That leads me to another realization: complete transparency is not always necessary. Sometimes, a little mystery actually makes the relationship more magnetic. Because what we fully know, we often lose interest and stop exploring. And that's just human nature.

The Endless Mystery of a Woman

When it comes to women, mystery is part of their essence.

Sometimes I look at Analu and wonder: *How many different people live inside this one woman?*

They say there are seven goddesses in every woman—and I really believe it. Each day, every new moment, I feel like I meet a different version of her. Not because she's inconsistent, but because she's rich. Multifaceted. Layered. Alive.

The worst thing a man can do is assume he already knows his partner. Because the moment he thinks there's nothing new to discover, his curiosity fades. And with it, so does connection. When a man loses interest in his woman, in most cases, I believe he simply hasn't looked deeply enough. He hasn't studied her.

Because when you truly begin to explore your partner—not just physically or mentally, but energetically and emotionally—you begin to realize that one lifetime may not be enough to explore her entirely.

And instead of looking for a new partner, maybe what he really needs is a new lens—a new way of seeing the woman already in front of him. She's a closed book that needs to be opened to submerge into an interesting journey. **She's a universe.** And the more we read her, the more beautiful, mysterious, and magnetic she becomes.

At this point, I can already hear some men's questions:

"So, wait... at any moment, a woman can just pour out everything that's been building up inside her? Are we now punching bags? Emotional sparring equipment?"

Let me let you in on a terrible secret.

One I was planning to reveal in my next book—but I'll do it now. Ready?

Regardless of gender, **your partner is your tool for self-discovery**. Yes, you heard that right. She's not your enemy. Not your emotional burden. She's your mirror. And so are you, for her.

And if you feel the same need from time to time—to release emotion, to be heard, to be vulnerable—you're completely allowed to behave like a woman. No one is stopping you. But in my experience—and in the experience of many of my male clients—men tend to process their emotions more easily through writing. A journal, a note-taking app, or even a draft message to themselves. It's not less valid. It's just a different route to the same clarity.

So choose the method that works best for you. But if you want to live with a happy woman, here's one golden rule:

Let her emotions out.

If you want to live with an unhappy woman, don't let her express what's going on inside her—but then don't be surprised when your life turns into a storm. Because an unhappy woman can turn your world upside down with astonishing ease.

Most women don't nag because they didn't get a new fur coat or a fancy car (though, okay, that might happen too). More often, they nag because they weren't heard. They weren't given the space to say what was going on inside. And the closest person—you—wasn't available as their sounding board.

So here's my advice for men:

Let your partner speak about her emotions. But don't take her emotional communication too much seriously and let yourself play in this "game" together.

This doesn't mean you become an emotional doormat. Yes, your partner can express herself—but **within clear and agreed-upon boundaries**. If you are the emotional punching bag, how that feels depends entirely on your level of awareness and self-respect. And it's up to you to define and communicate your limits.

In our case, Analu and I have set specific lines that we do our best not to cross. For example: shouting or raising one's voice—especially in situations where I need to stay focused, like driving. If I'm behind the wheel and a loud emotional wave hits that I can't process, it might not just be difficult—it could be dangerous.

Another man's boundary might be physical contact. For someone else, even that might not be a boundary at all (masochists exist, too). Or take the level of Jesus, who said to turn the other cheek. Though even he probably didn't apply that in every situation and had exceptions (just my opinion).

The point is: **there is no universal rule**. Like the division of responsibilities in a couple, boundaries are settled by partners. What matters is that both partners agree, feel respected, and know that their limits will not be crossed.

What If a Line Is Crossed?

So, what do we do when one of us crosses the line?

We breathe.

Yes, literally.

Being a yoga teacher, Analu introduced something simple, powerful, and effective: **diaphragmatic breathing**. And to make it easy, we created a quiet signal for us: we touch our nose three times so our partner can see it.

That small gesture means:

“We’re crossing a limit. Let’s pause. Let’s breathe.”

No one is wrong. No one is blamed. It’s just time to return to center.

Diaphragmatic Breathing for Emotional Reset

1. **Position:** Sit comfortably and relax your body.
2. **Hands:** Place one hand on your belly and the other on your chest (with practice, this step becomes optional.)
3. **Inhale:** Slowly breathe in through your nose, letting your stomach rise. Your chest stays still.
4. **Exhale:** Gently breathe out through your mouth—as if through a straw—pulling your belly in. The exhalation should be **twice as long** as the inhalation.
5. **Repeat:** Continue for at least **10** full breaths. More if needed. Until you and your partner feel relaxed.

This type of breathing activates the **parasympathetic nervous system**, which helps the body calm down. It softens the stress response, quiets the emotional storm, and brings us back to awareness.

After we’ve both calmed down, we can choose to return to the conversation—or not. Sometimes we continue. Sometimes we take notes and revisit things later during FTP. The practice itself is often enough.

But it’s not as simple as it might look at first glance. Because let’s be honest—when you’re drowning in emotion, the last thing your mind wants to do is slow down and breathe.

But that's exactly when you need it most. **And it works.** But like anything else, it requires practice.

The Breath Is the Master Key

Breathing is a key that unlocks many doors.

With breath, you can:

- Get high (conscious connected breathing like Holotropic Breathwork technique),
- Warm up (Wim Hof),
- Calm down (diaphragmatic breathing),
- And even suppress hunger.

The link to hunger-releasing breathing techniques I described in *Part 1* is available at the end of this book, too. You can also find them on my website about fasting (woh.api-son.com).

And once you start using your breath with intention, your emotional world becomes less threatening—and far more navigable.

You stop reacting.

You start choosing.

If We're at Home: Going Deeper into Emotional Practice

If we're at home—not driving, not out in public, not in the middle of something urgent—we have access to another, even more powerful practice that can completely shift our emotional and mental state:

Sadhu Board (or Nail Standing Practice).

Yes, it may sound intense. But don't let the idea of standing on nails scare you. This practice, rooted in ancient ascetic traditions, is one of the most effective tools I've encountered for emotional reset, nervous system recalibration, and deep inner clarity. This is what a Sadhu nail standing board looks like: a wooden board with evenly arranged nails, designed for the practice of standing on it barefoot.



At first glance, it might look like a physical challenge. And yes—it is. But more than anything, it's a **psychological mirror** and **spiritual accelerator**.

Why Stand on Nails?

Let me tell you what happens when you do.

You place your bare feet on a board of sharp, evenly spaced nails. The pressure is intense. Your brain screams, *"Get off!"* Your body trembles. Your breathing becomes shallow. And everything in you wants to escape.

But you stay. You breathe.

And something begins to shift.

After just 30–40 seconds, your nervous system starts recalibrating. The panic slows. Your breath deepens. You drop into your body. This practice relieves stress and fatigue, improves mood, and increases your focus and cognitive clarity. You step off the board feeling like a superhuman—sharp, centered, and clear. Your coordination improves. Your awareness expands.

But that's only the beginning.

Going Deeper: Emotional and Energetic Release

If you stay for more than one minute, the practice moves to a whole new level of **full acceptance**. Here, you start to access the emotional and energetic layers of yourself. Suppressed emotions rise. Fears become visible. Desires surface. And the internal dialogue you've been avoiding—

the one under all the noise—comes right to the front. You begin to see yourself clearly.

- What you truly want.
- What you're afraid of.
- What's blocking you from love, peace, clarity, or purpose.

You might feel the urge to cry. To scream. To confess something to yourself that you've been pushing down for years.

Let it happen.

This is not weakness—it's healing.

The nail board becomes a **sacred space of purification**.

- Where you meet your pain—without running.
- Where you see your shadow—without judgment.
- Where you feel your emotion—without shame.

Pain as a Portal

Most of us spend our lives avoiding pain.

We numb it. Medicate it. Distract ourselves from it.

We take pills for physical pain.

We turn to alcohol or substances for emotional pain.

We keep ourselves busy, so we don't have to feel.

But those are only **temporary escapes**. They **delay the inevitable**. Because pain doesn't go away until we meet it. And the truth is—there's another way.

We can walk toward the pain—**consciously, safely**, and with **deep awareness**. When we stand on the Sadhu Board, we're not hurting ourselves. We're simply confronting the sensation of pain. Not avoiding it. Not resisting it. But watching it, feeling it, and letting it teach us.

We begin to understand:

Pain is not the enemy.

Pain is the messenger.

Pain is the gateway to peace—if we walk through it.

When we say **yes** to pain, something magical happens:

It begins to release us.

We cry. We tremble. We breathe. We face ourselves.

And in that moment of surrender, **healing begins.**

The Power of Letting Go

Sadhu Board practice has shown me that the greatest strength is not holding it all together—it's knowing **when to let go**. It's knowing when to stop fighting and simply feel.

We don't need to fear our emotions, our pain, our intensity.

We just need **safe, conscious ways** to meet them.

So if you're at home... and the emotional storm hits... and the breathing isn't enough...

Try nails standing.

- Step up onto the board.
- Let your breath guide you.
- Let your fear surface.
- Let your pain speak.
- Let your heart melt.

This practice is not just for yogis or ascetics. It's for couples that want to grow together with their partners. For warriors. For anyone who wants to move through life **awake** and **emotionally free**.

Because once you face your pain with love, you become unstoppable.

All my clients who complete my Fasting Program receive a Sadhu Board as a gift, along with everything necessary to complete the Week of Health program.

A Final Word on Emotional Tools

These are the tools we use in our relationship—not to avoid emotions, but to meet them consciously, to grow from them, and to protect the space between us. You can use them in your relationships, but you don't need

to copy them exactly. What matters is that you and your partner co-create your own toolkit—based on your needs, your energy, your rhythm. Discover what works for you. Turn it into a shared practice. A ritual. Even a game.

Because in truth, emotions are not something to be feared or suppressed. They are the pulse of our inner life. And when we meet them with awareness—when we give them space without letting them rule us—they become messengers. Guides. Teachers.

The goal is not to be perfectly calm all the time. The goal is to stay connected—to yourself, and to your partner—even when storms arise. And that happens not through control, but through compassion. Through self-knowledge. Through tools that allow us to move from reactivity to presence.

So stay curious. Stay open. And above all—stay kind, especially when emotions run high.

Remember: **emotions are waves**. Sometimes gentle. Sometimes wild. But if we learn to surf—together—they no longer knock us down. In fact, the bigger the wave, the more thrilling the ride becomes. And with courage, balance, and love... even the wildest storm can bring us closer.

Because the moment we stop fearing emotions, we begin to create something rare and beautiful:

A relationship rooted in truth.

A partnership anchored in trust.

And a love that's strong enough to hold it all.

Chapter 15: New Family Rules

Over time, every couple finds its own rhythm. But rhythm without structure can easily fall apart—especially when emotions run high. That’s why, as we’ve grown together, Analu and I have added some family rules. Not to restrict each other. But to protect the love we’ve built—and to give our connection a safe, solid foundation. These aren’t rigid laws. They’re agreements. Living guidelines born from experience, reflection, and yes—many emotional waves.

They helped us stay grounded when things got messy, and came back to each other more quickly and kindly.

Rule 1: When One Partner Speaks Emotionally, the Other Listens and Does Not Respond

This rule grew directly out of our emotional work. When one of us is speaking from a place of rawness, emotion, or deep truth, the other listens.

Fully. Quietly. Without interruption.

Why is this so important?

Because every emotion needs fuel to survive. And nothing fuels it more than resistance. If the other person responds—especially with defense, logic, or correction—it’s like throwing wood on the fire. The emotional charge escalates. The ego gets involved. Dialogue turns into debate. And soon enough, both people are lost in the storm.

But if one partner stays centered—calm, silent, present—something powerful happens:

The emotional wave begins to settle on its own.

It’s not about ignoring your partner.

It’s about holding space.

Letting the emotion rise, peak, and release—without feeding it.

Don’t Feed the Ego

At the same time, we must be aware of our own ego’s tricks.

Every ego craves attention. And when it doesn’t get it, it gets louder, more dramatic, more persuasive. It starts disguising itself as the soul. It says things like: “You’re not listening to the real me.”

Sometimes, it really is the voice of the soul.

But sometimes... It’s the wounded ego in disguise.

I remember moments when Analu would say, “I’m talking to you!” in the middle of an emotional release. She wanted me to respond. And trust me—I’ve fallen for it more than once. I’d try to explain, justify, comfort... And every time I did, things got worse. Why?

Because what was spoken wasn’t her truest self. It was the unspoken frustration that had been quietly building for days, maybe even weeks.

It was resentment trying to be heard—but without clarity.

And by engaging with it, I gave it more power.

But when I stopped responding—and simply listened—everything changed.

Eventually, the storm would pass. She would breathe.
And on the other side, her true voice—the one beneath the emotion—
would gently come through.

Here's What I've Learned

In a relationship, true acceptance doesn't mean agreeing with everything
your partner says. It means allowing them to feel what they feel—without
trying to fix, control, or silence them. It means learning to see the
difference between the soul and the wound...

...and still loving both.

And this is why our first rule matters so much.

It protects us from reacting to shadows.

It helps us stay anchored in presence.

It reminds us that love isn't about controlling the waves.

It's about learning how to stand still while they pass.

Rule 2: Do Not Respond to Aggression with Aggression

When one partner is triggered or acting out, the other does not respond in
kind.

No matter how justified the reaction may feel.

No matter how unfair the situation seems.

No matter how much your ego wants to clap back.

Why?

Because aggression multiplied is never a solution. It's a fuse leading
straight to an explosion.

This rule isn't about tolerating unacceptable behavior. It's about stopping
emotional escalation in its tracks—and choosing a higher way to respond.

There's a deep feminine wisdom in Analu that has often softened the
sharp edges of my rough masculine energy. She's shown me that strength
doesn't always roar. Sometimes, it simply stays still—and lets the storm

pass. Let me give you a real example. When I Was Wrong—and She Was Wiser.

One day, I came home in a good mood—but things quickly took a turn. The kitchen was messy after her cooking. The floor was untidy. And the greens I had bought for our salad—Analu didn't want to use them. She said they were full of sand and bugs. I'd expected her to clean and prepare the salad, since cooking was her domain. Instead, they were still sitting there, untouched.

I started cleaning them of sand, irritated. My frustration bubbled up as I didn't see any bugs.

Then Analu asked me to add salt to the soup. That triggered me more. I snapped inside: *Why am I being asked to salt the food? Isn't that part of cooking too? Why am I finishing the job?*

As a businessman, I've often said: *"A task that's 99% done is not done."* That mindset spilled partly into my home life, which is not ideal for relationships. And instead of expressing my concerns calmly, I got sarcastic and rude.

Meanwhile, Analu tried to lighten the mood by showing me some biscuits she had bought while I was still cleaning the greens.

But the final straw came when she—again, with good intentions—tried to show me how to wash the greens properly. My mind exploded. I let frustration speak. Not my best moment.

But here's where something beautiful happened.
Instead of matching my aggression with more aggression...
Instead of defending or attacking back...

Analu paused.

And then, softly, she said:

"I'm sorry. I was wrong."

It stopped me in my tracks. Not because she was wrong. But because she was wise enough to recognize that someone had to break the pattern. And in that moment, she chose peace over pride.

It wasn't a submission.

It was a strength.

Why This Rule Matters

In that situation, we were both wrong in some ways. But it was Analu's response that taught me a powerful lesson:

When you meet fire with fire, you burn the whole house down.

But when you meet fire with water, everything cools.

This doesn't mean swallowing your truth or avoiding honest conversations. It just means not reacting from the same level of pain or pride that triggered the situation.

It's not a weakness.

It's emotional mastery.

Because when one partner stays calm, the energy of the room shifts. The storm loses its power. And space opens for resolution.

So when tempers flare and voices rise, try remembering this:

Not every attack needs a counterattack.

Sometimes, the most courageous thing you can say is:

"I see you. And I'm not here to fight."

That's not giving up.

That's choosing love over ego.

Rule 3: When One Partner Apologizes, Accept the Apology—Don't Use It to Wound Them

There's something deeply vulnerable about an apology. It means someone has set their pride aside. It means they've stepped out of their ego and into their heart. It means they've taken responsibility—even if only partial—

for what happened.

And in that moment, when your partner is already disarmed, the last thing they need is to be attacked. We learned this one the hard way.

When we were just starting our sound therapy business together, I wanted to do things professionally. That included hiring a photographer to shoot high-quality photos for our new website. Later, during one of our events, I took some photos myself with my phone—and they actually turned out pretty good. We used them. Analu, seeing that the DIY approach had worked, teased me about the photographer idea. More than once.

Maybe she was right. We saved money and time. From a logical standpoint, she had a point. I even agreed with her. But the teasing touched something deeper in me. The repetition—three times in total—felt like mockery. My ego didn't like it. It stored that moment, quietly, waiting for a chance to "balance the scales."

Later, during a light moment, I made a joke about her. I thought it was harmless, playful. But it landed badly. She was still raw from something else—an old wound around feeling made fun of—and my comment hit a nerve. I saw it instantly. I felt her mood shift. So I did what I knew I had to do. I apologized—sincerely.

But instead of receiving it, she shouted at me. And that hurt more than anything else. Because I wasn't hiding. I wasn't defending myself. I was vulnerable. I was open. I was already down—and then came the blow. That moment taught us both something crucial. When one person apologizes, it's not the time to punish them. It's not the time to score a point, reclaim your power, or remind them of every mistake they've ever made.

It's the time to *listen*.

To *receive*.

To *honor the courage it takes to admit being wrong*.

We talked about it later during our Fair Talk Practice. And what emerged was this understanding:

Even if we are right, what do we gain by making our partner feel small?

Does it help us grow together?

Does it strengthen our bond?

Does it build energy or trust?

No.

It only feeds the ego. And ego always isolates. It never connects.

Relationships thrive not on being right—but on being kind.

When one of us apologizes now, the other person listens.

No sarcasm. No gloating. No “finally, you admit it.”

We don’t even believe that *forgiveness* is always necessary. Forgiveness is something sacred—a divine gesture, a gift. But what’s always possible—and always enough—is *acceptance*. Just hear the person. Feel their sincerity. Try to understand how the world looked from their eyes. This alone creates empathy. And empathy is what allows love to survive missteps and mistakes.

Because real relationships are not about proving who’s better. They’re about *accumulating energy*—not draining it through blame or judgment.

When one partner is down, the other lifts them.

When one apologizes, the other holds space.

This is how we build something lasting.

And this is why we follow Rule 3:

When your partner apologizes—*receive it with grace*.

Because that grace will one day be returned to you.

Rule 4: When Your Partner Asks for Space, Respect It

Some needs in a relationship are less visible—but just as vital.

One of them is the need for solitude.

Especially in today’s world, where presence is often expected on demand, creating space to simply be alone—without guilt, pressure, or

misunderstanding—is a sign of deep respect.

In our relationship, this became especially clear through my work. When I lead my fasting retreats, I give myself fully. My energy, attention, and intuition are directed entirely to the group or the individual I'm supporting.

It's not because I love Analu any less during those times. It's simply that my system shifts into a different mode—quiet, focused, tuned inward. My emotional frequency changes. My priorities realign. And small talk or social connection—even with my partner—becomes almost impossible. I focus on myself or on what my clients require, as we're on the same vibration, and I can help them better process their journey.

This understanding didn't come overnight.

When I Was Present—But Not Available

There was a moment during one of my Week of Health that helped us shape this rule.

Analú wasn't participating in the retreat that week—she had her own professional commitments—but she was staying in the same space. I was working with an individual client, fully immersed in their process.

At one point, Analú came to me and asked, “When are you going to pay attention to me?”

I understood her completely.

I had even imagined my fasting week as a way for us to spend more time together, when she was also in the process. But that week, she wasn't.

And the truth was, once the retreat began, I simply wasn't available in the way she hoped for.

Not physically, but emotionally and energetically.

It wasn't rejection. It wasn't disconnection.

It was just... where I needed to be in that moment—with my client's inner process.

And that's when we realized something important:

Love doesn't always look like a constant connection.

Sometimes, love means allowing your partner to retreat—and trusting they'll return.

We both agreed that, moving forward, when one of us asks for space—truly, intentionally—the other will honor that request.

No guilt.

No resentment.

No coming back two hours later demanding attention.

Just trust. Until the partner decides to come back.

Why This Rule Matters

In his book *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, John Gray writes about the masculine need for the “cave”—

a place where men withdraw to process, refocus, or simply recharge. It's true. But we've learned that women need space too—maybe not in the same form, but often for the same reasons.

Solitude creates clarity.

Distance creates perspective.

And silence, when it's chosen, can deepen connection more than a thousand words.

When your partner asks for space, it's not rejection.

It's not abandonment.

It's not a sign of lost intimacy.

It's a sign that they trust you enough to be fully honest about what they need.

And when that space is honored, it becomes sacred. It allows the individual to return more centered, more grounded, more present. And when they come back, they bring more of themselves into the relationship. That's why we follow Rule 4:

When your partner asks for time alone—give it to them.

Not as an obligation, but as a gift. Because in love, sometimes the greatest closeness comes from knowing when to let go.

Rule 5: Only Speak Positively About Your Partner in Public

Every couple has its ups and downs.

But not every disagreement needs an audience.

This rule is simple, but powerful:

In front of others, speak positively about your partner—or say nothing at all.

If there's something you don't like, something that triggered you, or something that needs to be addressed—bring it to your next FTP session. Speak about it privately.

To your partner. Not to others.

Because the moment we criticize our partner in front of someone else—even lightly, even as a “joke”—we open a door into our sacred circle. And when others step through that door, we unknowingly begin to fracture the space between us.

When We Developed This Rule

This lesson came to us in the first months of our relationship, when we were still learning how to navigate being a couple in social settings.

But here I'll share one specific moment that shows this in the best way:

Analú had signed up for a beekeeping course—to dive deeper into the world of bees, which we both love. I joined her to support her, practice my Portuguese, and connect with other local beekeepers.

One Saturday was the last class before the summer break, and my friend—the course instructor—organized a picnic. Everyone brought something homemade, and some food was ordered from a local restaurant.

The very next day, I was beginning my fasting retreat with an individual client. Now, Analú doesn't particularly like salads or greens. But that day, she chopped everything left in the fridge and made a delicious salad.

It turned out to be perfect—because there weren't enough greens at the table. Everyone loved it. And when my friend asked who brought the

salad, he thanked Analu personally. She deserved that appreciation. But instead of simply letting her receive it, I said something else.

I “joked” that the salad was just a way to not waste food—since I was starting a fasting retreat the next day, and she doesn’t even like greens.

I felt the discomfort the moment I said it.

Why did I say that?

To stroke my ego.

To shift the moment toward me.

Because deep down, I was a little hurt that Analu had decided not to participate in the retreat with me and my client.

But here’s the truth:

That comment didn’t help anything.

It didn’t give our couple energy.

It didn’t strengthen our bond.

It just made me feel distant from her—and probably made her feel unseen.

After the event, we talked about it.

And we both agreed:

When we bring outside people into our private emotional dynamic—even subtly—we weaken our connection. We make space for opinions, judgments, and energy that don’t belong in the sacred circle between us.

Why This Rule Matters

As I explained in Chapter 10:

Every couple is an energetic circuit.

Two people.

Two conductors.

Connected by love, trust, and shared energy.

That connection is delicate.

And words—especially in public—can either **charge it... or short-circuit it.**

When we criticize our partner in front of others, we do three things:

1. We feed our own ego—by trying to look “right,” “funny,” or “in control.”
2. We invite outsiders into a space that should belong to just two.
3. We diminish the safety and respect our partner feels in our presence.

And what for?

A passing comment?

A joke?

A moment of pride?

That’s not worth it.

So now we follow this rule:

In public, always speak positively about your partner—or stay silent.

Not because we’re perfect.

Not because there’s never tension.

But because the love we’ve built deserves to be protected.

We don’t use others as a mirror for our frustrations.

We don’t seek validation at the cost of our partner’s dignity.

We save the hard conversations for when we’re alone—and we keep the outside world out of them.

Because when a couple protects their bond in public, they reinforce it in private. And that quiet strength becomes the foundation of something rare, respectful, and resilient.

Rule 6: No Couple Action Without Mutual Agreement

One of the biggest sources of conflict in any relationship is **external pressure**—when decisions are rushed, one person takes the lead without alignment, or outside voices interfere before the couple has had a chance to check in and decide together.

That’s why we created Rule 6: **We don’t act as a couple until we’ve reached a mutual decision that satisfies both of us.**

This doesn't mean we always agree instantly. But it does mean we **pause until we do**. Because when we move forward without alignment—even with good intentions—we risk opening the door to misunderstanding, frustration, or outside influence that fractures our unity.

And unity is the energy that makes a couple strong.

When This Rule Became Clear

This rule was born not from theory, but from experience—like most of our rules. There were many small events that led us to this principle, but here's one that illustrates it best:

We had just arrived at a luxurious 5-star hotel, where we were scheduled to offer a series of sound healing sessions for guests throughout the week. It was a beautiful setting—perfect for deep work. I had already spoken with the hotel manager about our space and our stay. Everything was settled. They gave us a cozy private conference room that doubled as a VIP cinema. The space had wooden walls, warm energy, and the ability to dim the lights—ideal for daytime sessions.

We cleared the room, putting armchairs and tables by the wall, brought in our instruments, and set everything up. It felt right for our work.

And the manager told us clearly: **“This space is yours for the entire week. Leave your instruments here—no one will touch them.”**

But on the second evening, a hotel staff member approached us. She said the room would be used for a family movie night that evening, and suggested we remove our instruments.

This was unexpected. I knew what the manager had promised, so I felt confused—and a little frustrated.

I told Analu,

“Let's not move anything yet. I'll call the manager and get clarity.”

But instead of waiting, Analu began gathering the instruments. She started cooperating with the staff member, **before we had agreed on what to do.**

And that's when tension erupted.
I didn't feel supported.
I felt like the team we had built—our couple—had suddenly been split.
It wasn't about who was right or wrong.
It was about the break in alignment.

Why This Rule Matters

Later, when emotions had settled, we talked honestly about what happened. And together, we arrived at Rule 6:

As a couple, we don't act until we've made a mutual decision.

No matter the pressure.

No matter the outside opinion.

We don't move forward unless we both understand:

- What we are doing,
- Why we are doing it,
- And how it serves us as a couple.

If we can't reach a shared agreement in the moment, we don't push forward.

We pause.

We let the situation sit.

We wait until clarity and alignment return.

Why?

Because external stress shouldn't break a united couple.

But it can easily divide two people who haven't agreed on the direction.

Acting As One

This rule reminds us that **unity is a choice**.

Yes, we are two individuals with different views, instincts, and styles of reacting. But once we choose to act as a couple, we need to **move as one—or not at all**.

It's not about control.

It's about collaboration.

It's about honoring the sacred "we" before jumping into action.

Because when we make decisions as one, we become **unshakable**.

So now, when something happens—whether it’s a change in plans, a logistical hiccup, or even a disagreement—we remember:

No action until mutual agreement.

No matter how small the situation seems.

No matter who’s watching.

If it affects both of us, we decide together.

And only then... we move.

Rule 7: Never Act on Emotions—Especially When Making Life-Changing Decisions

Some moments in life carry more weight than others.

They involve choices that could shape your future, alter your path, or even end your relationship.

And it’s precisely in those moments that emotions—however intense, however sincere—**should not make the final call.**

Emotions are powerful.

They’re part of our truth—but not the whole truth.

They rise, they fall, they bring messages... but they’re not always the messengers of clarity.

Especially when we are out of balance—physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

This rule is here to protect us from acting on temporary storms... and mistaking them for final destinations.

The Ceremony That Almost Ended Us

This rule wasn’t born in a quiet moment.

It came after a time of deep spiritual confusion and emotional risk—a situation that almost ended our relationship.

Analú had attended a powerful ceremony. During the ceremony, she had a vision:

She saw us breaking up.

What made it even more intense was that I had also had a similar vision before, in one profound meditation. I had even shared it with her at the time. In that vision, I saw that part of my path might be to **help Analu unlock her talents as a master**, and that one day, I might have to **let her go**.

And the truth is—she is a master. A gifted, powerful, intuitive healer.

But when she returned from the ceremony and declared, with full confidence, that she had fulfilled her journey with me and was now ready to move on alone... it hit me like a wave.

Not just because of what she said.

But because of **how fast** it came—and how certain she was.

Like the decision had already been made.

And this followed an FTP session where I had shared my concerns about domestic imbalance—how I was feeling **not sufficiently supported** in our shared life, in the mutual responsibilities we had previously agreed on. So from my perspective, rather than working to restore that balance, my partner chose to step away entirely.

A Door That Closes Forever

After she told me about her decision, we had a deep and serious conversation.

I looked her in the eyes and said something from the core of my being:

“I want you to know that I will never run after you or try to stop you. For me, leaving means leaving forever. When I close the door, I close it for good. I thank God for teaching me this:

Don’t attach to people—let them go once your journey together is complete.”

And then I added:

“The only thing I ask is that if you ever decide to leave, let it come from the heart—not from a wave of emotion.” Because decisions like that should never be made from confusion or pain. They must come from deep

truth—soul-level clarity. Otherwise, they leave behind regret instead of peace.

Visions Are Powerful—but Not Always Truth

I deeply value spiritual practice.

We both do.

Ceremonies, meditations, visions—all of these can be gateways into deeper insight. But they can also **distort reality**, especially when the **mind, body, and soul are not fully aligned**.

Every vision is just one possible timeline. One thread in the web of possibilities. To follow it blindly is like navigating with a broken compass—you might believe you're heading north, when in fact you're lost in the fog.

Real intuition—true soul guidance—requires **inner balance**.

Without it, even the clearest message can be misunderstood.

What We Learned

After that experience, we sat down and created this rule:

Before making any life-changing decisions, we must be 100% sure that it's the voice of the soul—not the voice of temporary emotion or spiritual drama.

And if we do reach that certainty, then we must:

- Take **100% responsibility** for our decision.
- Not hold on.
- Not push away.
- Simply stand in truth—with love and clarity.

But until that clarity is present, **we wait and continue our journey together.**

We don't speak from emotional waves.

We don't act on spiritual fireworks.

We sit. We breathe.

We reflect—until **mind, body, and soul are in harmony**.

Rule 8: Always Kiss and Hug Goodbye—and Kiss and Hug When You Return

Some rules are practical. Others are emotional. This one is sacred.

Whenever one of us leaves the house, we kiss and hug. And when we return, we kiss and hug again. No matter the mood. No matter the rush. No matter how small or ordinary the moment may seem.

Because in truth, **no moment is ordinary**. And no goodbye should ever be taken for granted.

Why This Rule Matters

This rule was born not out of routine, but out of awareness. Awareness that life is fragile. That nothing is promised. That sometimes, people leave—and never come back.

During the war in Ukraine, there were countless heartbreaking stories. But one stayed with me more than the rest:

A rocket struck an apartment building. Inside were a mother and her three daughters. All of them were killed. The father survived—and was left to carry the weight of that unimaginable loss.

Since then, I've carried a more deeper truth inside me:

We all walk under God. None of us knows which moment will be our last. And that's not a reason to live in fear—It's a reason to live with **presence**.

A Kiss and Hug That Ground Us in the Present

This rule isn't about being dramatic. It's not about living with anxiety or dread. It's about something much more powerful: **Gratitude**.

When you know that every departure could be the last...

You start living with more care.

You start loving with more intention.

You start noticing the little things—the things that truly matter.

That kiss at the door?

It becomes more than a gesture. It becomes a vow:

“I see you. I love you. And I’m not leaving without making sure you know it.”

The Return Matters Just as Much

The same applies when we come home. Even if we’re tired. Even if the day was long, or difficult, or frustrating. Even if we had an argument earlier. When one of us returns, we greet each other with a kiss—and, when possible, a hug. Because our home is a **sanctuary**.

A place where we can be weak.

A place where we can be honest.

A place where we are safe, seen, and supported.

No matter what happened outside—Inside these walls, we meet each other with love.

A Simple Rule, A Powerful Habit

Rule 8 is about living with heart. It’s about remembering that the people we love are not guaranteed. And if we’re lucky enough to share a home, a life, a journey— Then let’s honor it every single day.

So we kiss and hug when we leave. We kiss and hug when we return. Not because it’s routine—but because it’s **real**. Because love is not something we should ever rush past. It’s something we stop for—even if just for a moment—and say:

“I’m here. I love you. Let’s not forget what we have.”

Chapter 16: The Art of Communication — Where Play Meets Love

Speaking the Language of Love Your Partner Understands

In every relationship, there's a subtle but powerful truth:

We don't all give and receive love in the same way. What feels like a grand romantic gesture to one person might barely register with another—not because they don't care, but because they're “speaking” a different love language.

This is why I believe every couple should take the time to have a look at *The 5 Love Languages* by Gary Chapman. It's not the only tool for understanding each other, but it's a very effective starting point.

The five languages he describes in his book are:

1. **Words of Affirmation** — verbal appreciation and encouragement.
2. **Acts of Service** — doing helpful or thoughtful things.
3. **Gifts** — giving/receiving tangible tokens of love.
4. **Quality Time** — undivided attention and presence.
5. **Physical Touch** — affectionate contact.

The challenge is that most of us instinctively give love in our own language—without realizing our partner might need something different. And that’s where miscommunication begins.

How We Discovered Our Languages

In our relationship, this difference showed up very clearly.

Analú’s main love languages are: **Quality Time** and **Physical Touch**.

She feels loved when we spend time together. She loves watching movies—sometimes the choice of film is less important than the fact that we’re holding each other close.

For me, it’s different. I naturally feel best when I have time alone—so “quality time” in my world often means my own time. And if I do watch a movie, it needs to have meaning, something to learn from. Otherwise, I see it as a waste of time. That’s why I always ask Analú before we choose a film to watch together, *“What can we learn from this?”*

We do share one love language—**Physical Touch**—but even there, the meaning is different. For Analú, it’s hugs and kisses. For me, it’s massages and stroking.

My second love language is **Acts of Service**.

I feel deeply loved and cared for when my partner helps me—especially with things that are important to me professionally—or when she creates a comfortable space for me to work and recharge.

Without knowing these differences, we could easily fall into the trap of thinking, *“I’m showing love... why doesn’t my partner feel it? Or I give love, but why don’t I receive it back?”*

Teaching Your Partner Your Love Language

By default, people express love in the way they themselves want to receive it. Here’s the truth: **Your partner is not a mind reader.** Even if you tell them once, they won’t automatically start speaking your love language fluently. It takes time, awareness, and practice to change that. That’s why we treat learning each other’s love language as a process. You can’t just say, *“I like physical touch”* and expect your partner to instantly match your expectations—especially if that’s not their natural love language. You need to be specific—and patient.

Making It Practical

Our material life is beautifully simple in one way—it can be measured. You can turn “I want more affection” into something clear and actionable. We actually made agreements about it—emotional agreements that help us meet each other’s needs every day.

For example, we discussed it and decided:

Analú’s daily needs:

- 20 hugs
- 6 kisses (3 short, 3 long)

My weekly needs:

- 2 massages

Once we agreed on these numbers, it became much easier to check in with each other.

So, just like some couples create financial agreements, we created **emotional agreements**—and that, in my opinion, is even more conscious, because it involves our hearts, not just lawyers and contracts.

Gentle Reminders, Not Drama

At the beginning, your partner will probably forget sometimes. That’s normal. The key is how you respond.

If you get upset, slam doors, or throw passive-aggressive comments, it pushes them away. And this is childish behavior. Instead, we take the **adult position**:

Go to your partner and say, *“I need your hugs.”*

Nine times out of ten, they’ll smile, remember, and give it happily.

Over time, it becomes a habit—something they do naturally, without being asked. And that’s when the magic happens: both partners get what they need, and love flows more easily.

Why This Works

Love languages are not just about romance—they’re about clarity, respect, and generosity. When you know what your partner needs and they know what you need, the relationship stops being a guessing game.

You move from frustration—*“Why don’t they appreciate what I do for them?”*—to fulfillment—*“We understand and meet each other’s needs every day.”*

And that’s one of the most effective forms of communication a couple can ever master. Because here’s the truth: once you understand your partner’s language, expressing love stops feeling like an obligation—and starts feeling like play.

Life itself is a game. Relationships are one of its most fascinating levels. And when you know the rules and enjoy playing, every hug, kiss, and small act of care becomes a joyful move in that game. The goal isn’t just to win—it’s to keep playing together, with love as the score that really matters.

And when love and relationships turn into a game, it becomes much easier to fulfill our partner’s every whim.

Before, we might have thought: *That’s not very nice... That’s not very cultured... I don’t really like that idea.*

As we took that too seriously. But when you’re playing—really playing—anything is possible.

Without shame.

Without second thoughts.

Because in this game, there's only one main rule: **make your partner feel happier.**

Personal Touches That Make It Fun

For example, I like it when Analu calls me *Sensei (Master)*.

She likes it when I call her *Child of the Sun*.

To an outsider, those nicknames might sound strange.

But in our world, they're filled with warmth, intimacy, and a language only we understand. So we say them freely. We laugh about them. We let them be part of our private game.

Play with it.

Call each other whatever you like—whatever your partner likes. It doesn't matter if it would make someone else raise an eyebrow.

If it works for you, use it.

Playing in Every Dimension—including Sex

We follow the same playful principle in our intimate life. After all, sexual connection is also part of the couple's "game." Periodically—whether after orgasms or during our next Fair Talk Practice session—we talk about what we enjoyed most and what could be even better next time.

Not as criticism.

Not as a checklist.

But as curious explorers, learning how to give each other more pleasure and deeper connection.

When approached this way, feedback becomes part of the game—not a heavy or awkward conversation. It keeps intimacy fresh. It keeps us from falling into silent routines. And it ensures that both partners keep discovering new ways to love each other.

When you start treating your relationship as a game you both want to win together, everything changes. Suddenly, your partner's happiness isn't a task—it's a challenge you're excited to take on.

And the prize?

A love that stays alive, creative, and endlessly fun.

When Play Turns Into Depth

In the end, learning by playing is not just a skill—it's a doorway. A doorway into playful moments that keep love light, and into deep conversations that make love strong.

When you can speak the language they understand, play the game they enjoy, and hold space for the truths they carry, you create something rare: a relationship where joy and depth grow side by side.

And once you have that, you realize—it's not just about understanding each other. It's about celebrating life together, one kiss, one laugh, one deep talk at a time.

And in such fun, without even realizing how it happens, a new depth emerges. Your partner is no longer just your teammate in the game—they become your best conversation partner. The one with whom you can discuss anything—your dreams, your doubts, your fears, your desires.

When you have such a person by your side, it is something to treasure. It's rare. It's worth protecting.

After nine months into our relationship, during a Fair Talk Practice, Analu said something I'll never forget:

"The experience we are going through together cannot be measured by any amount of money in the world. It's priceless."

And she was right.

Being Yourself, Fully

I am deeply grateful that I can be myself with my partner.

In my past marriage, I often felt shy or hesitant to share my thoughts because I didn't feel supported. But with Analu, I can speak freely.

I want to share everything that bothers me with her.

And that's not just nice—it's powerful.

Because it is *very important* to have a person with whom you can discuss any issue. Finding such a person is rare. And when you do, you should do everything in your power to make them happy.

The Simple Math of Happiness

Sometimes, I think the meaning of life could be this simple:

Make just **one** person truly happy.

If every person in the world did that—made just one person happy—the whole world would be happy.

And what makes us truly happy?

It's not a luxury. It's not even success. It's being *heard*.

The rest—gifts, acts, touches—is just the technique that delivers that feeling.

Learning About Yourself Through Your Partner

A relationship like this becomes a mirror.

Through our partner, we learn about ourselves—our triggers, our patterns, our hidden fears. We discover what really matters to us.

And once we know ourselves, once we understand why we are here, something beautiful happens:

We can share that understanding with the world.

That's why the game we play together—the love language we speak, the joy we create, the depth we share—is not just about us. It's about becoming the best version of ourselves, so we can give more to everyone we meet.

Chapter 17: Crisis as a Gateway to Growth

Crisis Is Not the Enemy

In any relationship, crisis is inevitable. It's not a sign of failure—it's a sign of movement. A crisis is an opportunity for growth, for rethinking, for stepping up to a new level. Without it, we would get stuck. Life would become repetitive and predictable.

Imagine a computer game with only one level. At first, it's exciting. But after a while, you know every turn, every hidden path, every secret corner. There's no challenge, no discovery. Eventually, you get bored. Relationships are the same. The "levels" are the challenges we face together. Each one pushes us to grow, adapt, and sometimes reinvent ourselves.

Why Crisis Matters

In everyday life, when everything seems fine, we rarely stop to rethink our family mission or renegotiate our rules. There's no urgency to change what "works"—even if inside we sense that something should already shift.

A crisis forces us to pause, look at things differently, and change what no longer serves us. It strips away the masks and forces us to see each other as we really are—not as the projections we first fell in love with. And that's a good thing. Because in most relationships, it's not two real people meeting—it's two projections. When the masks come off, we discover the truth—about ourselves and about our partner. That moment can be the beginning of a new, deeper relationship... or the end of one that cannot evolve to the next level.

The End of a Cycle and the Crisis

Our turning point came when Analu returned from a ceremony and told me she had learned all her lessons from me and was ready to go on her own. She felt that a cycle had been completed, though she didn't yet see how to begin a new one.

I also influenced her decision by something I had shared earlier. In meditation, I had seen a vision: that my role might be to help Analu reveal her talents as a master, and that one day, I might have to let her go. Later, I realized I shouldn't have told her that. Why?

It didn't bring energy into our relationship—and what doesn't bring energy shouldn't have a place in it. We must be careful with visions and dreams. Even when our intuition is strong, what we see is just one possible path. Our choices can create different outcomes. Silence is not lying. Not everything must be shared—especially information we are unsure about or which might weaken the bond. Influenced by my "prediction," her own ceremony experience, and a hard FTP session where I revealed my imbalance, Analu decided it was time to go.

Proposal in the Midst of Crisis

At first, I didn't take her words seriously. I even tried different ways to bridge the gap—including proposing.

She had asked me several times before: "*Why do you need me?*"

I interpreted it as a request for proof of commitment.

From my perspective, once I enter a relationship—especially when we live together—it already equals marriage, with all its responsibilities. But for women, things are different. Life is cyclical, and milestones such as a proposal, wedding, or children mark emotional and psychological shifts.

One day, she even told me, "*As long as we're not married, I have the right to do whatever I want.*"

That was not how I saw things. For me, marriage wouldn't change my commitment (male logic). But for her, each stage meant something different and could change behavior. Taking this into account, I assumed she needed more certainty about our future. So, on the 10-month anniversary of our meeting, I proposed.

She was shocked—and told me this was what she had dreamed of since we met. But after a moment, she added that something had changed. She wasn't ready to wear the ring. She took it in her hands but placed it back in the box, saying she was not ready.

When I realized she might truly go, I felt the same deep, almost physical pain as when my mother died—a profound letting go. My ego resisted. It couldn't comprehend how two people who loved each other might still part ways.

The ego whispered: *Don't give up. Fight for your love. Prove it.* The body longed for the connection we had before.

And on the level of the soul, the connection was still strong—even though our bodies and minds were no longer fully aligned.



I decided to try a few more ways to be sure—without pushing her. I wanted 100% certainty that this decision came from her soul. Because if it did, then I had to accept it, as it was written in our family mission described in the first book:

“If, for any reason, we find that our paths begin to diverge, we do not cling to each other. Instead, we allow our partner to follow their own path, as closely aligned as possible with the direction each of us has envisioned for ourselves.”

The Savior Pattern

What followed was one of the most revealing periods of our relationship. As we reflected together, a pattern became clear: I had been a “savior” in almost every serious relationship I’d had, which I described in *Part 1*.

With my wife, I provided a home and a car she couldn’t have on her own. With the girlfriend I came to Portugal with, I helped her end a toxic cycle, finalize her divorce, and restart life. I also helped her and her son leave when the war began. Another relationship in Portugal was about helping someone reunite with and save her family.

And with Analu... I met her when she was deeply broken—mentally and emotionally raw. At the festival where we met, many of our conversations ended in her tears. But at the same time, I felt a deep, almost divine call to help her. And I did. She joined my fasting weeks, started waking up at 5 a.m., changed her job, moved out of a toxic environment, remembered she was a yoga teacher and began giving classes, joined me in Sound Healing, and even wrote a book.

From her perspective, I came exactly when she needed saving. From mine, I was just answering a call from God. And this is exactly what happens with my clients: I feel a strong inner calling that I can help someone, and I do my best—without overthinking the complexity of their problems—focusing entirely on how I can support them.

After that profound talk that revealed my pattern, Analu even felt sorry for me and said, “*You can’t just give—you need to learn to receive as well, for balance.*” And she was right. Yet I didn’t regret any of it. I understood that each of us moves through our own lessons and purpose. Perhaps my mission was to help people. But I also know now that the desire to help often carries its own trauma—an unconscious attempt to heal something within ourselves.

When the Savior’s Role Ends

Here’s the truth: you can guide, you can share, you can inspire—but you cannot save. Change is always the other person’s choice.

When Analu and I started, she mirrored my routines. But at some point, she moved away from the practices we shared. I felt the imbalance growing and couldn’t understand why she no longer wanted the same things that had helped her so much before. I even took it personally.

Through long talks, we realized we had entered our relationship in two roles: one searching for a savior, and one wanting to help. That was co-dependence. We had to acknowledge it and consciously release it. When

Analú received her healing, she began walking her own path. And it wasn't about my instruments—they continued to work—but she had her own way.

I also realized something deeper: I must not project my way onto my partner. Subconsciously, I wanted recognition and wanted us to develop my projects together. But in truth, I didn't need anyone else to make my dreams come true.

Today, I think that in the first year of a relationship, it is often better not to mix professional activities. Otherwise, professional challenges may intertwine with fragile emotions, making the knot harder to untangle. This becomes even more complicated when third parties enter the picture. At the very beginning of a relationship, when the central circle is not yet strong enough, outsiders can easily enter and disrupt the balance. Communication with others is inevitable, but if it overlaps with business agreements and responsibilities, it can destabilize a young relationship. That's why my recommendation is simple: **avoid joint professional activities in the first year.**

In our case, the combination of professional entanglement, unbalanced responsibilities, and the visions of our practices that we shared—and gradually began to treat as fixed truths—slowly pulled us into a deep crisis. What began as subtle tensions, almost invisible at first, grew heavier with time. Layer by layer, the weight accumulated until Analú, with love still in her heart but pain in her soul, came to the difficult decision to leave our home.

Acceptance and Letting Go

Analú started looking for another house. Every day she told me how much she loved me and how grateful she was. My mind couldn't understand: *If she loves me, why must we separate?*

She was grateful for her new life. She had finally changed her job, became a teacher for adults, written a book, and was living in the city she loved most—Porto.

For me, it felt like being the partner of someone who is dying from an incurable illness—painful for the heart, but freeing for the spirit. The ego (mind) suffered the most. But at the same time, I began to feel a pure, unconditional love without attachment—without sex, without mutual responsibilities, with full acceptance of my partner exactly as she was. You become grateful to God for every single day together. You expect nothing. You feel blessed just to share one more moment side by side.

On the soul's level, we all understand this truth: we came into this world alone, and we will leave it alone. It's only in fairy tales and Hollywood movies that couples pass away together after "happily ever after." But real life is different. We meet each person in our life for a reason—for lessons and experiences. We must be brave enough to accept when the lesson is complete, and grateful for all it gave us—even when the moment whispers: *"This is almost the end."*

But even the end is not truly the end. The end of something is the beginning of something new. If God closes some doors, He (She) will certainly open others. In the end, everything is always good. And if it's still not good, it's simply not the end yet.

During one of our deep, soul-level conversations, we sat on the floor and looked into each other's eyes.

"I'll need time to gather my things, find a new place to live, and your help."
"

"I'll be there for you," I confirmed.

"Are you happy?"

"Yes."

"Me too."

At that moment, tears of joy, gratitude, and peace filled our eyes. I felt my heart overflowing with unconditional love—the kind that truly matters. My mind stopped its noise, and I was fully present in the moment, Here and Now.

How Acceptance and Ayahuasca Ceremony Saved Our Relationship

Through deep acceptance—and the decision not to interfere with my partner’s path—something began to shift.

When we insist or pressure, people withdraw. But when we give them freedom, they no longer want to leave if they feel at peace. It’s like with a bird: if we want it to sing, we must open the cage. Only then may it return on its own. If we keep it locked, it will never sing again.

I stopped pushing and trying to “save” our relationship. I let the situation flow.

Since the very beginning of our relationship, Analu wanted me to try an Ayahuasca ceremony with her. She was very experienced with this medicine and wanted us to share (what she thought was a life-changing experience) with me. When we started our journey together, we decided that, when we both felt it right, we would share a ceremony together.

But I didn’t feel the call. Throughout my life, I’d had many opportunities to try this medicine—through friends connected with shamans and rituals—yet I always held back. I never felt a true inner calling. I’ve never believed in entering practices out of curiosity or simply for the sake of experience. For me, there must always be a clear purpose and a deep understanding of why I do it.

To make it meaningful, I proposed a challenge to Analu: *“Let’s wake up at 5 a.m. for 66 consecutive days. If we succeed, we’ll go to the ceremony together.”*

This challenge felt right. It wasn’t only about discipline that could strengthen us as individuals—it was also a way to deepen our bond as a couple. And having the ceremony as a shared “prize” gave us both extra motivation to push through and succeed together. We had completed the marathon on our second attempt—126 days of waking at 5 a.m. (the first attempt had failed just six days before the end). After that, we had signed

up for the ceremony in advance, but after everything that had happened in our relationship, we decided to cancel our participation a couple of weeks before.

Yet, a few days before the event, I felt a deep calling. I sensed that I had met Analu to pass through this experience in my life. I contacted the organizers—there was one spot left. I booked it. Then, as if by magic, another place opened for Analu.

The ceremony helped us to see things from a different perspective—through each other's eyes. I personally saw new possibilities: how we might one day create a retreat center and use it for different activities—my fasting retreats, Analu's spiritual circles and ceremonies, Sound Healing sessions together, and other practices.

In my next book, I will share my Ayahuasca experience in detail as I explore the spiritual path of relationships. But what I can say here is this: after the second day of the ceremony, we had a deep conversation where we both realized we were ready to begin our second cycle together.

After our Ayahuasca ceremony, God entrusted us with another little being to care for. While watching the sunset after the ceremony, we heard a faint *meow-meow* from a crevice in the mountain. Climbing down, we found a tiny kitten, barely able to walk, thirsty and desperate. We searched for its mother, but she was nowhere to be found. So we carried the kitten home, stopped for milk along the way, and fed it gently. Now our family has grown with **Rose**, our tiny kitten.



When we returned home, Analu took the box with the ring and asked me to put it back on her finger. This time, she was ready to wear it.

That moment marked the beginning of a new cycle in our relationship. Some parts of us had died—old habits, old patterns, old illusions. There was a sense of loss, as if something had ended forever. But just a couple of weeks later, something new was born in its place. A fresh feeling emerged—so strong it felt like the very beginning, like the first spark of love one year ago when we met.

One evening, sitting together at sunset in wonderful Porto, I looked at Analu and felt as though we hadn't known each other for a year at all, but had just met a few days ago. She felt the same. It was as if a new passion had risen from the ashes of our struggle, and suddenly we both had butterflies in our stomachs again.

It was living proof that passion doesn't have to fade with time. It can be reborn within the same relationship—if both partners are willing to let go of what no longer serves, and step into the next cycle with open hearts.

The crisis had brought us to the edge, but instead of breaking apart, we found renewal. The source of our disagreements—lack of acceptance and projections—was resolved.

Yes, there will be more crises. There will always be another round, another level. But the important thing is this: we chose to continue together. And just like in *Part 1 Relationships Algorithm*, this choice must be made every day, facing new challenges, entering new cycles, and deepening the relationship.

Epilogue

The release of this book coincided with the anniversary of our meeting. The first year is the first real test every couple must pass. It is often the stage where many relationships break apart—when the first glow of infatuation fades and neither partner is willing to make the effort to grow their love. And let's be honest: the effort of only one partner is never enough. It may hold things together for a while, but the imbalance will grow, and eventually it will lead to separation.

The first year of a relationship is like a new car: at first, it must be carefully broken in until all the parts adjust and align to work together. Only then can you truly press the gas and feel its full power. After the first year, you begin to see clearly who truly stands beside you—and whether you are ready to continue the journey together.

The first stage of our journey has now passed. Many things happened during this time—beautiful moments, deep lessons, even crises. Sometimes we believe that once the first stage is complete, everything will run smoothly forever. But that is an illusion of the mind. In truth, after every level comes another—just as fascinating, but with its own lessons and challenges. It is like a matryoshka doll: each time you open one, you discover another inside. Or like a spiral—expanding, deepening, and accelerating as we move inward. And love, when chosen every day, continues to deepen—cycle after cycle.

Of course, the shared path of mutual growth requires flexibility and adaptation. During this year, we had to revise how we divided responsibilities. The model of energy distribution between men and women that I described in *Part 1* did not fully work for us in practice. According to that model, men are naturally more active in three chakras (first, third, fifth), and women in the other three (second, fourth, sixth). At first, I believed that if I carried my share—paying bills, maintaining the house and car, handling responsibilities—then Analu should fulfill her share equally. But life quickly showed me that this “perfect theory” can create imbalance in our relationships.

Some responsibilities simply cannot be done halfway. If I do not fully maintain the car, it will stop on the road. If I only pay half the bills, the lights will still go out. I was carrying my responsibilities 100%, and expecting the same in return. When I did not feel that balance, it created tension and became one of the roots of our crisis. Eventually, I realized it was easier to wash the dishes myself than to wait and watch frustration grow. For Analu, it also appeared easier to contribute 50% financially than to cook meals at fixed times. So, we shifted. Now we try to share everything 50/50.

It is a new experience for me, but I am always ready to discover new ways. This approach has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that both partners can easily substitute for each other, which makes the couple

more flexible. But at the same time, spreading attention across all tasks can pull focus away from our main life path and spiritual purpose.

I see the same 50/50 dynamic in many of my clients (mainly from the USA and Europe). In the East, traditional models of energy circulation and responsibility sharing still often work. But worldwide, roles are shifting, and balance must be found in new ways. Everything flows, everything changes.

But what if you want to use the “old” scheme while living in the West? One of my clients decided he could not. He told me, “*I cannot find balance with women here; they are too masculine.*” He sold all his real estate in Europe and moved to Thailand, hoping things would be different.

And yet, as I often say, you cannot run away from yourself. Even on another continent—even on another planet—you still carry yourself. The lessons you need to learn will always find you. I truly hope he finds his path, but I also know that peace comes not from escaping, but from growing.

The truth is that the world itself is changing. Old programs no longer work. In ancient times, women ruled. Later, men ruled for centuries. Now, that cycle too is ending. The future is not about dominance at all—it is about balance. Balance between masculine and feminine, within us and between us.

That is what I wish for you, dear reader: to find balance in your relationship, a balance that nourishes both of you. May your first year together not be the end, but the beginning of a deeper spiral. May you find joy, renewal, and wisdom as you continue this sacred path of love.

In my next book, I will explore more deeply the spiritual meaning of relationships and how long-term partnerships can become the foundation for our spiritual growth.

Until we meet again in my next book, I warmly invite you to join me in person. Just as said in my first book, you can take part in my **Week of Health**—a powerful fasting program designed to reset the body, clear the mind, and open the heart. That might be participated at any convenient time for you (online) or join the program once I do it (last week of the month). And if you wish to meet me personally, share tea together, you now have the opportunity to come to Porto for an individual **Week of Health**. By scanning the QR code below, you can watch a short video and feel what it's like to experience a week in Porto, including visits to the cities and natural treasures of Northern Portugal. For most of my clients, it is nothing less than a life-changing experience. I am grateful to be able to share: fasting, Sound Healing, and Discovering Portugal.



If you enjoy the video, I also warmly invite you to subscribe to my YouTube (@WeekOfHealth) and Instagram account (@woh.nz), where I share inspiration, updates about upcoming events, and glimpses into daily life in Portugal.

And so, dear reader, as I close these pages, I want to leave you with this wish: let the first year of your relationship not be the end of the story, but only the beginning. It is the stage where patterns are revealed, lessons surface, and the foundation for everything ahead is laid. What you discover about yourself, your partner, and the dynamics between you in this first year becomes the ground on which all future cycles of your relationship will grow.

The first year is not about perfection—it is about learning. Not about avoiding mistakes, but about transforming them into strength. What matters most is the daily choice to stay present, to keep growing, and to meet each new challenge with honesty and love.

My wish for you is simple: may you choose your relationship every day with awareness and gratitude. May each cycle bring you closer to balance, to trust, and to the deeper love that is built over time. Because the spiral continues, leading you step by step toward greater connection, growth, and meaning.

Acknowledgments

I am deeply grateful to all the readers who have read my first book, *Relationship Workbook for Couples*, and taken the time to share your feedback. Whether you left a glowing review or offered constructive criticism, your input has helped me grow—both as a writer and as a guide for couples seeking deeper connection.

One reader from Australia, Nina Grant, left a candid one-star review, expressing that the book didn't match her expectations of a traditional workbook. She noted the absence of a structured 4-week plan and questioned the value of my experience as a “mystic psychologist” without formal academic credentials. I thank Nina for her honesty—her feedback challenged me to reflect, refine, and communicate my intentions more clearly.

I now understand that the word *workbook* may have led some readers to expect a rigid, page-by-page exercise format. That's why this book has a new title and identity. It is no longer presented as a workbook, but as practical guidance—one that offers a more narrative, experience-based approach to love and emotional bonding in the first year of a relationship.

For those who expect daily exercises, I also made a workbook that you get with FTP practice sheets if you follow the link:



As for the “mystic psychologist” label—I embrace it. Those who know me personally understand why. Every month, I spend at least one week without food. What began as a healing method has evolved into a deep spiritual practice. Though I no longer get sick, I continue to fast not for physical health, but for inner clarity, balance, and spiritual depth. I also lived in celibacy for over two years and gained deep insight into sexual energy and its transformative potential. These practices have brought me into states of clarity that transcend conventional understanding. My life is rooted in observation, self-discipline, and spiritual exploration—not in textbooks.

I have always preferred to test ideas through direct experience, even when no scientific explanation is yet available. For me, lived results are the most honest form of proof. I often see outcomes long before the theory arrives. When I began fasting in 2002, there was no scientific basis or public support for its benefits. I trusted my body—and it healed me in ways modern medicine couldn't. Years later, Japanese scientist Yoshinori

Ohsumi earned a Nobel Prize for his research on **Autophagy**, providing the theoretical validation for what I had already lived. Science eventually caught up, but the truth had been working in practice all along.

Much of what I share cannot yet be proven in laboratories—but it works. It brings healing. It brings insight. And the hundreds of people I’ve guided over the years have felt the results for themselves.

Still, dear reader, I do not ask you to believe everything I write. My invitation is simple: try what resonates. Check it in your own life. If it works—apply it. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, I’ve lived through many humbling, life-defining situations. I’ve come to understand that I can only truly trust what people *do*, not what they say. As an example of my own life, I haven’t needed a hospital in over last 20 years—and that works for me. All I can do is share what I’ve learned and encourage others, if it resonates with them.

To all of you who have engaged with my work, whether through praise or challenge, thank you. Your reflections have helped shape this book, and I carry your voices with me on every page.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Arthur Apison.

About the Author

I'm Arthur Apison—writer, relationship explorer, and mystic psychologist. I am from Odesa, Ukraine. My professional background is as a Deep Sea Captain, a career that spanned over 15 years, including the time I spent studying at the Maritime Academy, from which I graduated with honors in 2005. My time at sea took me to nearly 60 countries and shaped a global perspective on life, people, and the human condition.

Between voyages, I discovered a profound connection with the world of bees. What started as a passion for apiculture led to the creation of the first Bee Sleep Therapy Center near Odesa. To support my clients, I wrote *Amazing World of the Bees*, originally meant as a simple guide for those who wished to keep bees—and unexpectedly, that became the beginning of my journey as an author.

My life took another turn when I began exploring healing, fasting, and

consciousness work. After a one-month fast in 2005 resolved a health issue that conventional medicine could not, I founded the **Week of Health (WoH)** program. It quickly grew into a successful and transformative experience, now available worldwide online.

Today, I live in Porto, Portugal, where my work centers on helping people reconnect with themselves through fasting retreats, sound healing, and a holistic path that unites emotional understanding, spiritual depth, and conscious living. In recent years, my personal journey has deepened through long periods of fasting, mindful celibacy, and a lifestyle free from alcohol and stimulants. These experiences have shown me that true freedom is not found in external comfort, but in clarity, simplicity, and self-awareness.

I don't see myself as a teacher, but as a fellow traveler—learning, stumbling, and growing alongside others. Writing, healing, and guiding are simply ways of sharing the insights life has entrusted to me.

You can learn more about my activities at my website: **api-son.com**

And if you ever find yourself in Porto, I warmly invite you to join me for a cup of tea or coffee—or to experience one of my Sound Healing sessions in person.