

the spark, or the pattern?

the pull you keep calling chemistry is often just recognition. five questions for working out whether you are drawn to a person or to a feeling you learned early, with space to answer on the page.

this is a page to be honest on, not just read. hold the actual person in your head as you go, the one you keep going back to or the type you keep picking. write the true answer, not the flattering one. nobody sees this but you.

01 notice how the spark arrives

when the pull hits, what does your body actually do? a jumpy stomach, a checked phone, a slight bracing: that is your nervous system on alert, and alertness is not the same as attraction. ease, curiosity, a settled kind of interest reads flatter and is far more often the real thing.

FROM ME *anxiety and excitement run on nearly the same chemistry, which is exactly why they are so easy to mix up.*

→ think of the last time you felt the spark. what did your body do first? write it exactly.

02 check whether calm reads as boring

think of someone kind, consistent and genuinely available who you felt nothing for. now be honest about the reason. if the word that comes up is boring, that is worth sitting with, because boring is often just what peace feels like to a nervous system that never learned to trust it.

FROM ME *the calm ones do not fail to spark you. they fail to alarm you, and you have been reading alarm as interest.*

- name a specific person you filed under boring. what did they actually do wrong? write it and see if it holds up.

03 trace the type back

line up the last three or four people you fell hard for and look for the shared trait. not hair or height, the emotional one: distant, unpredictable, hard to please, needing rescue. now ask where you met that trait first, long before any of them.

FROM ME *your type is rarely a preference. it is usually a familiarity, and familiarity is not the same as compatibility.*

- write the three names, then the one trait they share, then who in your early life had it.

04 run the consistency test

imagine they became completely reliable tomorrow. always texts back, never withdraws, no hot and cold, nothing to decode. would you still want them? if the answer is a quiet no, the pull was never them. it was the gap they left for you to chase.

FROM ME *if the wanting needs uncertainty to survive, it is the uncertainty you are attached to.*

- picture them as totally consistent. is the feeling still there? write the first honest answer.

practise tolerating peace

you cannot think your way out of this, you can only get more hours of evidence. stay in the calm thing slightly longer than is comfortable. let the flat feeling be flat. safety registers as boring right up until the moment it starts registering as safe, and that switch takes repetition, not insight.

FROM ME *this is the unglamorous part and the part that actually works. nobody has ever felt their way into a new pattern in one evening.*

- what is one calm, unexciting connection you could give more time to instead of writing off? name it.

THE FASTEST VERSION

ask what the feeling arrives as. if it arrives as alertness, a jumpy stomach, a need to check your phone, that is your pattern recognising something. if it arrives as ease and curiosity, that is more likely the person. the spark that needs uncertainty to stay alive was never about them.



SO IS IT THE SPARK OR THE PATTERN, AND WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO DIFFERENTLY THE NEXT TIME IT HITS?

the whole idea, and the diagnostic for one specific person, live at riadms.com/name-it

one letter a week, the words as i find them · riadms.com/free · youtube @ria-dms