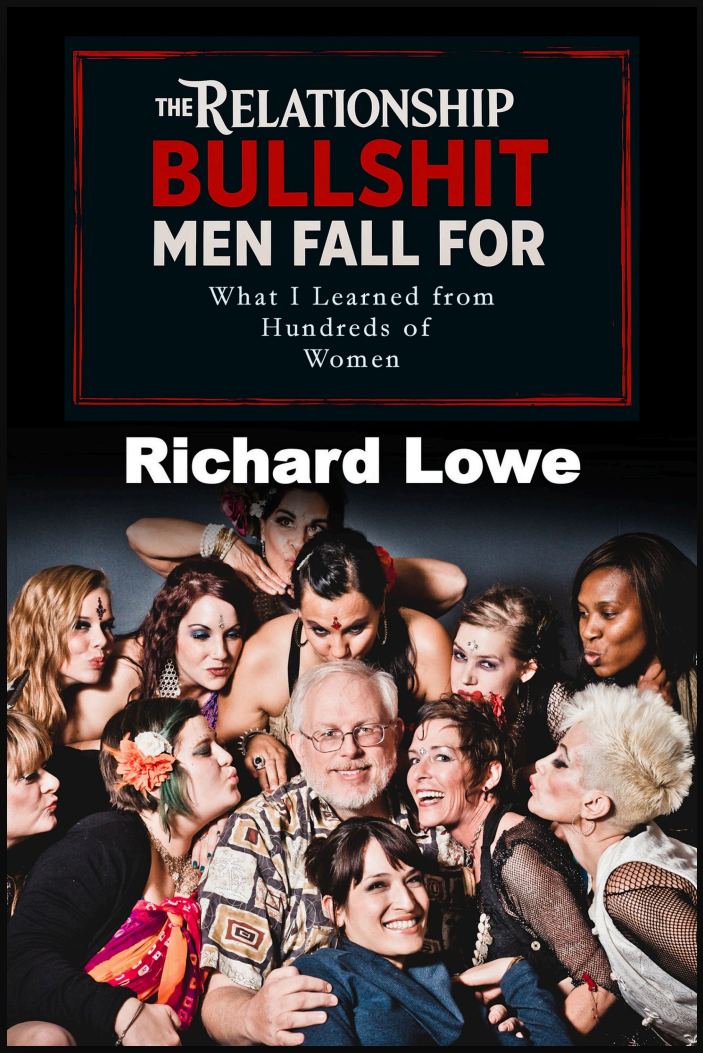
A FREE COMPANION TO THE
RELATIONSHIP BULLSHIT MEN FALL FOR

Pattern-Proof

A field guide for men: check the beliefs you were handed, spot the patterns that start fights, hold your boundaries, and know when to walk.



RICHARD LOWE

How to Use This Guide

No system, no technique, no script for getting a woman to do what you want. Just a way to see clearly and decide.

The Relationship Bullshit Men Fall For names what men believe about relationships that isn't true, and what those beliefs cost. This guide turns the book into pages you write on. Use a pencil. Nobody else needs to see it.

1. **The programs you were handed**, checked one at a time.
2. **The everyday patterns**, and what to say when you see one.
3. **Your boundaries**, written down before you need them.
4. **The red flags**, with a log for keeping your own record.
5. **The walk-away check**, for deciding to stay or go.

Richard Lowe is not a therapist, and neither is this guide. It is one man's experience in usable form. If you are in danger, call 911. If you are afraid of what a partner will do when you leave, the National Domestic Violence Hotline is 1-800-799-7233, and it helps men too. If someone threatens suicide, call 911 or 988.

Part 1: The Programs You Were Handed

Most men walk into relationships on autopilot, running programs installed by somebody else.

Your father, your mother, your friends, the internet, the red pill, radical feminism: every one of them had an opinion about how a man should behave with a woman. Write down what each one taught you, by word or by example. Then ask whether you ever checked it.

SOURCE	WHAT IT TAUGHT ME ABOUT WOMEN AND ABOUT BEING A MAN	DID I EVER CHECK IT?	KEEP, CHANGE OR DROP
My father			
My mother (including what she went along with)			
Friends			
The internet and media			
Faith or family tradition			

> *Respect is always two ways.*

Part 2: The Everyday Patterns

These patterns show up in ordinary relationships between decent people. Nobody is evil. You are wired differently.

Check the ones you recognize from your own life. The right-hand column is what the book says to do about each.

	PATTERN	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHAT TO DO OR SAY
☐	**Hint and hope**	She mentions the party, the venue, how boring it is alone. You hear information. She hears that you didn't care.	"Are you telling me this because you want me to do something about it?" And say straight what you want.
☐	**Stress styles**	You need quiet to come down. She reads it as shutting her out.	Say it before you walk in: "Give me an hour, then you have all of me." Then keep your end of it.
☐	**Space and togetherness**	Your hobbies and privacy get treated as something to hide.	You're allowed to need space. Know your boundaries, say them early, enforce them.
☐	**Action and process**	She brings a problem. You offer the fix. She didn't want one.	"Do you want my help with this, or do you want me to listen?" If the same problem comes back the tenth time, it's a pattern.
☐	**Appreciation**	The effort only runs one way.	Tell her what lands with you, and notice whether she ever goes out of her way.
☐	**Selective equality**	Who pays turns into a test you can't pass with logic.	Say what you're going to do before the check comes. Keep the first date simple. Watch what she does with it.
☐	**Sex and identity**	Her wanting you becomes the measure of you as a man.	Your worth isn't hers to hand out. If sex matters to you, say so early. If it becomes a lever, leave early.
☐	**Visual processing**	"I paid, so she owes me." "She dressed like that, so she owes me."	Nobody owes anybody anything for a dinner or an outfit. When you feel your thinking narrow, slow down.
☐	**Emotional labor**	You carry all of it and say nothing.	Carry your share. Don't carry hers too and call it love.
☐	**Risk tolerance**	One of you wants the leap, the other wants the house.	Find out hers and tell her yours before you bet anything that matters. Don't trade away your whole life to settle it.

The pattern I fall into most: _____

What I'll say next time: _____

Part 3: Your Boundaries, in Writing

Know your needs and desires, and make them clear early in the dating. You are not unimportant.

Preferences and deal-breakers

You can compromise on what movie to watch. You can't compromise on whether to have kids. Sort your list now, while nobody is across the table from you.

PREFERENCES (I CAN BEND ON THESE)	DEAL-BREAKERS (I CAN'T)

Three boundaries to lay down on the second date

BOUNDARY	THE QUESTION	MY ANSWER
Who pays	What will I say before the check comes?	
Whether she'll talk	Can we talk openly about needs, including sex?	
Who leads	What does leading mean to me, without treating her as an object?	

The five pattern-proof skills

SKILL	WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE
Direct communication	“I'm getting mixed signals. Can you tell me directly what you need right now?”
Boundary setting	“I understand this is important to you, but I'm not available for that. Here's what I can do instead.”
Emotional regulation	“I care about you, but I can't be responsible for fixing your mood. What can you do to take care of yourself right now?”
Reality testing	“That's not how I remember it. Let me tell you what I observed.”
Flexible problem-solving	When talking isn't working, try something else. When boundaries aren't respected, follow through or walk away.

Part 4: The Red Flags

The everyday patterns can be worked out by two people who are trying. These can't be talked away.

Gaslighting: check any you hear regularly

- [ ] It never happened. You're making it up.
- [ ] "You're being too sensitive."
- [ ] "You're remembering it wrong."
- [ ] "You're crazy. You're paranoid. You're jealous."
- [ ] "Everyone thinks you're being ridiculous."
- [ ] The conversation started with what she did and ended with you apologizing

Your response: trust what you saw, write it down right away, and don't argue about reality. Say, "I know what I experienced," and end the conversation. Then talk to someone you trust.

Narcissism: signs the book lists

- [ ] Any criticism brings rage, tears, deflection or an attack on you
- [ ] Empathy shows up only when it helps her image or comfort
- [ ] Your achievements get minimized; every conversation ends up about her
- [ ] She keeps backup sources of attention
- [ ] History gets rewritten to make her look better
- [ ] Charming in public, raging or silent in private
- [ ] You've stopped voicing opinions and stopped seeing friends she doesn't like

The record

Writing it down protects you from anyone who rewrites history. Save texts, screenshot posts, note witnesses. Check your state's law before you record anyone, and keep copies where your partner can't get at them.

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED, IN PLAIN WORDS	WITNESSES	SAVED EVIDENCE

Part 5: The Walk-Away Check

From the first text, through the marriage, years in, ask one thing: is this working for me?

IS THIS WORKING FOR ME?	
IF NOT, WHY?	
CAN THAT WHY BE RESOLVED? BY WHOM?	

If the why can't be resolved, it's time to stop. Better before the marriage, before it gets too deep. But at any point.

Signs it's time to go

- [ ] Physical violence or threats of violence. No acceptable level exists
- [ ] Steady lying, gaslighting, or threats of self-harm used to control you
- [ ] Active addiction she refuses to address
- [ ] Infidelity. By the time you catch it once, it has usually happened before
- [ ] Financial abuse: stealing, debt in your name, money used as control
- [ ] Opposite answers on a deal-breaker, like whether to have kids
- [ ] Mental illness she refuses to treat
- [ ] Boundaries you've stated clearly, crossed again and again

The lies that keep men in

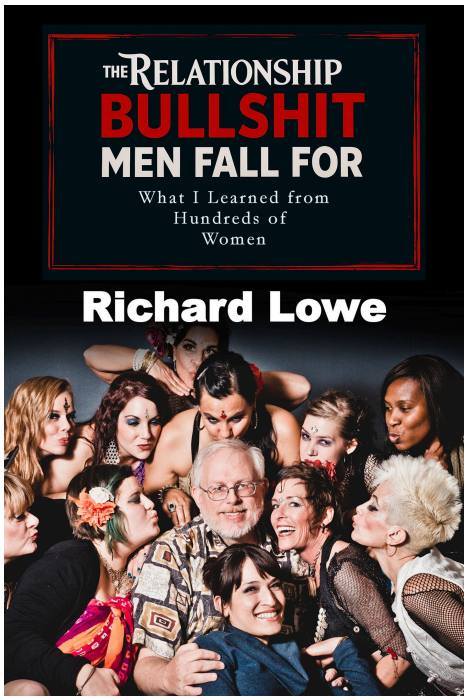
- [ ] “Real men don't get divorced.”
- [ ] “She'll change.” Whatever she shows you on the date is the best she's going to be
- [ ] “This is just how people are.” If you grew up with it, it will feel like home
- [ ] “Maybe she's right about me.” Asked once, fair. Asked every week, it's how the thing works

If several of these are checked, borrow somebody else's eyes. Tell a friend what's happening and listen to what they see. If you're planning to leave, keep the plan to yourself.

> *Stand up for yourself, in nonviolent ways, and don't put up with crap.*

The Whole Story

This guide gives you the checklists. The Relationship Bullshit Men Fall For gives you the whole story behind them: thirty-plus years of dating, marriage and friendship with women, why both the red pill and radical feminism get men wrong, and the nineteen patterns told the way they actually happen.



The Relationship BULLSHIT Men Fall For:
What Thirty Years Taught Me
Real Life, Handled

Get the full book

thewritingking.com/library/the-relationship-bullshit-men-fall-for/

More free books: free.coolauthor.com

Copyright © 2026 by Richard Lowe. You may print and share this guide for personal, noncommercial use.