

Many people with sex and love compulsivity rush through—or skip over—two important aspects of dating, namely choosing an appropriate partner and the dating timeline, which undermine the potential for a healthy romantic relationship. A sound recovery dating plan includes these two basic components that clearly outlines a suitable (as well as unsuitable) partner and then plans out an appropriate timeline for healthy dating behavior.

Part I. The Partner:

This portion of the exercise is to assist in the selection of an appropriate partner. In the grid below, list ideal qualities (**GREEN**), warning signs (**YELLOW**), and deal-breakers (**RED**). Be specific as well as general with your list. Parameters to consider are integrity, consideration for others, wreckage, addiction, age range, interests, hobbies, relationships, family, etc. The more qualities you identify, the more useful your plan will be. If you identify a deal-breaker in a person you are dating, then this person is not a good match for you and you should discontinue seeing that person romantically. The goal is to find someone with as many ideal qualities as possible, hopefully with very few warning signs. Feel free to use another sheet of paper to expand your list.

GREEN <i>(ideal qualities)</i>	YELLOW <i>(warning signs)</i>	RED <i>(deal-breakers)</i>
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Part II. The Timeline (EXAMPLE): the following is a list of examples for behaviors that may be considered appropriate along a slow-to-moderate dating timeline.

<p>Dates 1-4 (~1st month)</p>	<p>Dates 5-8 (~2 months)</p>	<p>Dates 9-15 (~3 months)</p>	<p>Dates 16-20 (~6 months)</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk on phone or computer 1-2x/week max 2. No text messages 3. Dating others 4. No serious talk about your history or past relationships 5. Hug, kiss on cheek 6. Both take cars, meet there 7. Spending <\$100 on a date 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Light” petting, above the waist (hands), outside clothes 2. French kissing 3. Talking on phone or computer <2x/week 4. Text messages used sparingly, if at all 5. Seeing each other’s house/home 6. Physically affectionate 7. Spending > \$100 on a date 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discontinue dating others before having intercourse discussion 2. Disclosure about sexual history and addiction (before intercourse!) 3. Discussion about STDs 4. Intercourse with condom only 5. Oral sex 6. Sleep over at each other’s house 7. Short vacations (ie, weekends away) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unprotected sex (no condoms) only after STD testing 2. Longer vacations (7+ days) 3. Introduce to family members 4. Ok to discuss long-term plans of relationship