

Healing Heart Protocol Online Course
Module V– Wood Element: Birth Your New Life
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Worksheet #4:

Creating a new Paradigm of Relating with your Ex

As part of the work in this module of birthing your new life, we'd like to offer some suggestions for a new paradigm of relating with your ex.

This paradigm needs to be adjusted to your unique situation, and the kind of relationship you want with your Ex going forward.

The new paradigm of relating has two components.

The first component has to do with your attitude, or perspective. You could call it creating a shift in your orientation of relating to your Ex.

The question to ponder here is:

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How do you want to relate to your Ex going forward?

Is this a person that you want to relate to:

- As a close friend?
- As a parenting partner for your children?
- As somebody that isn't a friend but that you relate to as amicably and pleasantly?
- As someone that you respect as a fellow human but from whom you still need to keep a healthy distance?
- As someone, that because of their behavior, you cannot have in your life at all?

Write down what feels like the most appropriate way for you.

The second component of the paradigm refers to the practical agreements that may need to be made in relating to your Ex. We'll be going through a series of questions to guide the process. Some of these may or may not apply to your situation. We encourage you to work with the questions that do apply and skip over those that don't.

The questions to ponder here are:

What needs to be changed or updated regarding any existing logistical arrangements? Examples:

- Regarding child care or a new custody/parenting schedule:
- Changes to finances:
- Changes to a project that you may have worked on together; this could be a volunteer project that you took on when you were a couple, or a business that you created together, or any other project or activity that you did together as a unit. How do you want to structure your involvement in that project now?

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-Changes to housing: this can be a potential minefield because there is often \$\$ involved and that can bring out the worst in us humans. We are not specialists in these practical matters, yet they are people out there who specialize in the legal and logistical side of amicable divorce. We recommend that you approach these questions from a win-win perspective, which will serve the kids in the long term.

Suggestions for relating to your Ex:

Below are some specific suggestions on how to relate to each other within the new paradigm that you are creating with each other. And, you and your Ex need to work out the specifics, particularly the degree of support and closeness.

- +Do not speak negatively about each other with anybody
- +Honor each other and remember the good times and the good that came from the relationship –especially your children if you have them.
- +When in doubt, be generous with each other for the sake of your own emotional well-being and for the sake of the children
- +Work together as much as possible and get agreement from each other regarding anything related to the children
- +Be a willing and equal co-parents
- +Speak positively and respectfully of each other to the children
- +Become friends if that feels appropriate, and decide the new level of care and support your friendship would offer one another.
- +Create an extended family system that potentially includes both family wings.

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+If applicable, create a guideline for yourself and if possible an agreement with your Ex about how to be with each other families and circle of friends and community going forward.

+If applicable, create a guideline with your family and friends about how you want them to be towards your Ex now that you've decided to separate as consciously as possible.

+Put boundaries and agreements in place for yourself (and if applicable with your Ex) that mirror the new form of your relationship with each other.

Reflect and then choose with suggestions you want to include in your new set of agreements and add your own ones.

Additional Considerations:

- **Intimacy and Physical Contact:**

Any long-term relationship has a set of intimacies and endearments and by bringing consciousness to this subject you will be able to transition into a new and more formal way of relating with each other.

Be very clear here in setting boundaries. This subject reaches from talking about how you want to greet each other to any physical contact.

- **Conventionality:**

Very likely you've had very informal ways of relating to each other which now, within the structure of the new paradigm, are no longer appropriate. We suggest bringing much greater sensitivity to any lingering ways of relating to your Ex in these old ways.

Some examples to think about:

- when you come to each other's houses, don't enter without ringing the bell
- don't just go into the kitchen and help yourself
- don't enter into the private space of your Ex, including their bedroom.

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Bring the normal conventions to interacting as if you were a guest in each other's home. This shows respect and puts the new relationship back on a healthy footing similar to what both of you have with a friend.

- **Specialness:**

Being in a romantic relationship has us be the special one for each other. Now you are asked to shift out of this unique way of relating to each other. Here bring in the understanding that you're no longer expected to be put first nor are you expecting that the other puts you first. This will also create the space in you to be able to put someone else first in your life and in your heart.

We suggest that you let the creation of this new paradigm be guided by a brotherly/sisterly sense of love and care.

If you're creating this paradigm on your own, trust your inner sense to help you intuit the appropriate boundaries and agreements that feel right to you at this time.

Regarding sharing your new paradigm with your Ex, likely there are some agreements that clearly need to be stated, i.e. anything related to the children, finances or any other practical, logistical, or material support. All of this should be part of a written agreement.

Regarding everything else, trust yourself to determine what needs to be shared with your Ex.

If your Ex is also participating in the HHP, then we encourage you to share what you've written with each other and negotiate a common new paradigm.

One last point

We want you to really get that you are a pioneer in the conscious separation movement. All the work you've done in these modules is allowing you to bring something incredibly special and very new into our world. It's still quite rare that people transform the pain of a breakup or divorce into an opportunity for growth, healing, and transformation. It's even more rare to bring a conscious closure to the end of a painful relationship. This is truly

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something that you can be incredibly proud of. There are very few models and we thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for your contribution. You're work and modeling this in our society is what will help and inspire others on this path.

Because there are not many role models on how to do this well, be easy on yourself.

There will be times when this new model doesn't seem to work and you might want to drop the ball. Stick it out. Something in you knows that doing the separation in this conscious way is ultimately in the best interest of yourself, your kids, and actually everyone involved.

Creating a new paradigm with your Ex-partner

In this next segment we are guiding you to create a new paradigm or relationship agreement with your Ex-partner. Part of this might be that there are agreements from the past that need to be completed and then many need to be created together. This new relationship paradigm is of particular importance if you have children.

Let's assume your Ex doesn't want to be part of it and cuts you out of his or her life, even then it is still very helpful to formulate and be clear where you are standing.

If you are doing this journey together with your Ex, we suggest you start out first by reflecting for yourself what agreements you would like to negotiate about with each other. Allow yourself each to have your own ideas and wishes first and then you discuss the common vision together.

Here a series of questions that we place before you to guide the process. As before, pause the audio, reflect and write.

1. What needs to be evolved about existing agreements?

I.e. Child care

I.e. Finances

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I.e. Housing.

This is the minefield arena because there is often \$\$ involved and that does often bring out anything but the best in human beings.

We are not specialists in these matters, yet there are now more and more mediator services available. We again recommend that you are both coming from a WIN-WIN perspective, which will serve the kids in the long term. And if you don't have kids, just know that ultimately generosity wins over protectiveness.

2. What new agreements can you now make together with your Ex-partner that will support the new form of the relationship?

Below some suggestions and we encourage you to be creative and adjust ours to your specific situation:

- +To not speak negatively about each other with anybody
- +To honor and remember the good times and the good that came from the relationship
- +When in doubt to be generous with each other for the sake of a future relationship and for the sake of the children
- +to get agreement from each other regarding anything related to the children
- +to be a willing and equal co parent
- +To speak respectfully of each other to the children
- +If appropriate and desired, to become friends
- +If appropriate and desired, to create an extended family system that potentially includes both family 'wings'

3. Create agreements on how to be with each other families and circle of friends and community.

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4. Create agreements with family members and friends on how you want them to be with you and your Ex now inspired by the this amicable separation.

5. Create agreements that put new boundaries in place, mirroring the new relationship with each other: Consider the following issues:

- **Intimacy and sexuality:**
Be very clear here in setting boundaries. This subject reaches from talking about how you want to greet each other to any physical contact. Any relationship has developed a set of intimacies - we called it our 'sweet nothings' - and endearments and by bringing consciousness to this subject you will be able to transition into a new more formal way of relating.
- **Conventionality:**
Very likely you had very informal ways of relating to each other which is now within the structure of the new relationship paradigm not more appropriate. We suggest to be sensitive to that so when you come to each other's houses, not to enter without ringing the door bell, not to just go to the fridge and serve yourself, not to just enter into bedrooms, but to bring the conventions as if you were a guest to each other. Particular for the transition time be consciously more formal than informal. This shows respect and puts the new relationship back on a healthy footing similar to what both of you have with friends.
- **Specialness:**
Being in a couple relationship has us be 'special' to each other. Now you are asked to shift out of this unique way of relating to a more general way of being with each other. We suggest you make part of the new relationship paradigm the understanding that you are not any more expected to be put first and are also not expecting that the other drops whatever they do, when you show up or have a request.

We suggest that you let the creation of this new paradigm be guided by a brotherly/sisterly sense of love and care.

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If you are creating the contract without your Ex, trust you inner sense to help you intuit the appropriate boundaries and agreements.

Regarding sharing the agreements with your Ex there are some agreements that clearly need to be stated, i.e. anything related to the children, finances and other material support should be part of a written agreement.

Regarding the other mentioned possible agreements, again you have to trust yourself to determine on what will be helpful or what would be detrimental to the new developing relationship.