

RELATIONSHIP AUDIT

STAY OR GO DECISION GUIDE

A Structured Audit for a Difficult Relationship

25 questions across respect, growth, safety and trust, compatibility, and effort reciprocity,
followed by a decision path and practical next steps.

CLARITY • PATTERNS • NEXT STEPS

When the Decision Is Hard

Knowing that something is wrong and knowing what to do about it are different problems. A relationship can contain love, history, good memories, shared responsibilities, real effort, and serious problems at the same time. That is why a difficult decision can remain difficult even when part of you thinks the answer should be obvious.

This guide gives you a structure for looking at patterns rather than making the entire decision from the emotion of one unusually good or unusually bad day. Answer based on the relationship as it has actually operated over time.

Important

This is a self-reflection tool, not professional advice and not a diagnostic test. A numerical score should never override your judgment about safety. If you are experiencing abuse, threats, coercion, stalking, or fear for your safety, consider contacting a qualified counselor, domestic-violence service, emergency service, or another trusted support resource appropriate to your situation.

The 25-Question Relationship Audit

Mark YES when the statement is generally true over time. Mark NO when it is generally false or only true during unusually good periods. Each YES = 1 point.

Respect

- ☐ YES ☐ NO I can disagree without being mocked, humiliated, or punished.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO My boundaries are taken seriously even when my partner dislikes them.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO My partner speaks about me respectfully to other people.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO I can express needs or concerns without routinely being dismissed.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Apologies, when needed, are followed by meaningful changes in behavior.

Respect score: _____ / 5

Growth

- ☐ YES ☐ NO I can pursue interests, friendships, education, work, or goals without being undermined.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO We can discuss problems and learn something from them.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO The relationship leaves room for both people to change over time.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO I generally like who I am becoming inside this relationship.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO We can acknowledge mistakes without turning every conversation into blame.

Growth score: _____ / 5

Safety & Trust

- ☐ YES ☐ NO I feel physically safe with my partner.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO I can say no without fearing retaliation, intimidation, or punishment.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO I do not routinely feel I must monitor, hide, or alter normal behavior to avoid an explosive reaction.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Trust is supported by behavior, not only promises.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO My privacy, money, communications, and personal autonomy are treated with appropriate respect.

Safety & Trust score: _____ / 5

Compatibility

- ☐ YES ☐ NO We want broadly compatible things from the relationship.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO Our major life priorities are workable together.
- ☐ YES ☐ NO We can enjoy ordinary life together, not only intense or special moments.

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** Our expectations around commitment, intimacy, family, lifestyle, or future plans can realistically coexist.

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** The differences between us are manageable without requiring one person to become someone else.

Compatibility score: _____ / 5

Effort Reciprocity

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** Both of us initiate repair after conflict.

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** Both of us make time and effort for the relationship.

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** I am not carrying nearly all of the emotional or practical work.

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** When one person raises a recurring problem, the other makes a genuine effort to address it.

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** I can point to recent actions from both of us that show investment in making the relationship work.

Effort Reciprocity score: _____ / 5

Scoring the Audit

Category Score	What It Suggests	What to Examine
5	This area appears consistently strong.	What is helping it work?
3-4	Mixed but potentially workable.	Which specific NO answers keep repeating?
1-2	This area needs serious attention.	Is there willingness and concrete action from both people?
0	This area is not functioning well.	Do not let a high total elsewhere erase what this category is telling you.

TOTAL SCORE: _____ / 25

Use the total carefully

A total score is a summary, not a verdict. Category patterns matter. A relationship scoring well on shared interests and effort does not cancel a serious safety problem. Likewise, a lower score may identify repairable incompatibilities rather than dictate an ending.

A practical way to read the total:

20-25: Many core conditions are present. Focus on the specific NO answers and whether they can be addressed.

14-19: The relationship contains meaningful mixed signals. Identify the weakest categories and look for repeated patterns, not promises.

8-13: Several core conditions are weak. The next step should involve clear boundaries, specific changes, and an honest assessment of whether both people are participating.

0-7: Many foundational conditions are absent. Give serious weight to what the pattern is costing you and what would realistically need to change.

Decision Flowchart

START	Complete the audit based on the relationship as it normally operates.
1	Is there abuse, coercion, intimidation, threats, stalking, or a genuine fear for your safety?
YES	Prioritize safety and outside support. Do not use the score to talk yourself out of a safety concern.
NO	Continue.
2	Is any category 0-1, especially Safety & Trust or Respect?
YES	Examine that category before relying on the total. Ask whether the pattern is changing through concrete behavior.
NO	Continue.
3	Are the same important problems recurring after repeated conversations?
YES	Ask what is materially different now. Promises without changed behavior are part of the pattern.
NO	Continue.
4	Are both people willing to name the problem and make specific changes?
YES	A defined repair period with boundaries, actions, and a review date may give you better information.
NO	The relationship cannot be repaired by one person's effort alone. Consider what staying under the current conditions would mean.

5

Do you need distance to think clearly, and can distance be taken safely and practically?

YES

A structured break with explicit terms may help clarify the decision.

NO

Use the audit, your lived experience, trusted support, and the realistic likelihood of change to choose your next step.

Friction or Red Flag?

Normal relationship friction can be painful and still occur inside a basically respectful relationship. Red flags concern patterns that compromise safety, autonomy, dignity, or trust.

NORMAL FRICTION CAN INCLUDE	RED FLAGS CAN INCLUDE
Occasional arguments where both people remain free to disagree.	Threats, physical violence, sexual coercion, or intimidation.
Different preferences that require negotiation.	Controlling access to money, transportation, work, friends, family, or communication.
A mistake followed by accountability and changed behavior.	Monitoring, stalking, or punishing ordinary independence.
Periods of stress that temporarily reduce patience or availability.	Repeated humiliation, degradation, or deliberate fear.
Needing clearer communication about chores, time, money, affection, or expectations.	Persistent deception or boundary violations followed by denial, blame, or retaliation.

Pattern matters

A disagreement is not automatically abuse. At the same time, repeated coercive or threatening behavior should not be minimized as ordinary conflict.

If You Decide to Stay

1. Name the exact problem

Replace “we need to be better” with the specific behavior or pattern that needs to change.

2. Set a boundary

Decide what you will and will not participate in, and what you will do if the boundary is crossed.

3. Define observable actions

Choose changes you can actually see, such as attending counseling, changing a recurring behavior, sharing responsibility, or following an agreed communication practice.

4. Set a review date

Give the repair effort a real point at which you will assess behavior rather than letting the decision drift indefinitely.

5. Get appropriate support

Trusted people or a qualified professional can help you maintain perspective, especially when the same conflict has repeated for a long time.

The three changes I need to see:

Review date: _____

If You Decide to Go

1. Tell someone you trust

Do not carry the practical and emotional load entirely alone.

2. Plan the logistics

Think through housing, belongings, money, transportation, pets, children, accounts, and other shared responsibilities that apply.

3. Choose the communication method

Use a method appropriate to the circumstances. Safety takes priority over an idealized face-to-face breakup.

4. Set post-breakup boundaries

Decide what contact, social media access, shared obligations, and practical communication will look like.

5. Protect safety where relevant

If you fear retaliation, stalking, violence, or coercion, seek specialized support and make a safety plan rather than treating the separation as a routine breakup.

My first three practical steps:

My Decision Page

The pattern I can no longer ignore:

What is working and worth protecting:

What would have to change for me to stay:

What evidence would show that change is real:

What I fear about leaving:

What I fear about staying under the current conditions:

The next action I am choosing:

Date I will revisit this decision, if needed: _____