



THE ARCHIVIST METHOD FIELD GUIDE

Attraction to Harm

Your 90-day protocol for identifying, interrupting,
and overriding the pattern destroying your life.

PATTERN ARCHAEOLOGY, NOT THERAPY

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WELCOME

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This is not a book you read cover to cover and put on a shelf.

This is a field guide. You take it into the field. You use it when the pattern activates. You reference it when you're in the middle of the fire, not after.

HERE'S HOW THIS WORKS:

Read the Four Doors Protocol first. Understand the system.

Then go deep on YOUR pattern. That's Section 3. That's where you'll spend most of your time. Learn it. Know it. Memorize the circuit breaks.

Use the 90-Day Protocol as your structure. It tells you what to focus on each week.

When shit hits the fan, go to Crisis Protocols. That's your emergency kit.

Track your interrupts. The data matters. Every interrupt--successful or not--is information.

The other patterns are there for awareness. You'll recognize people in your life. You might recognize yourself. But stay focused on YOUR pattern first. Master one before you try to master all.

YOU FOUND THE THREAD. NOW PULL IT.

THE RULES

RULE 1: ONE PATTERN AT A TIME

You probably have multiple patterns running. Most people do. Ignore them for now. This guide is about ONE pattern--yours. Master this one first. The others can wait.

RULE 2: PROGRESS, NOT PERFECTION

You will try to interrupt your pattern and fail. The pattern will run anyway. That is not failure. That is data.

Write down what happened. What triggered it. How fast it ran. That data makes tomorrow better than today.

RULE 3: TRACK JUST ENOUGH

When the pattern activates, write one sentence. What happened. Move on.

This is not journaling. This is data collection. You're building a map of your own mind.

RULE 4: USE THE CRISIS PROTOCOLS

When you're in the middle of the pattern running, you won't remember what to do. That's why the Crisis Protocols exist. Bookmark them. Screenshot them. Know where they are.

THE ONLY WAY TO FAIL THIS

Quit before Day 90.

A pattern running on Day 30 is not failure. A pattern running on Day 60 is not failure. Closing this PDF and never opening it again is failure.

90 days. That's the commitment.

WHAT THIS IS

This is pattern interruption. Behavioral forensics. You have a program running. We are going to interrupt it mid-execution.

This is a field guide for people who are tired of understanding why and ready to focus on stopping it.

This is the 90-day protocol to take a pattern that has been running for years--maybe decades--and break its automatic grip.

WHAT THIS IS NOT

This is not therapy. We are not processing your trauma. We are not exploring your inner child. We are not journaling about feelings.

This is not self-help. We are not affirming your worth or teaching you to love yourself. That might come later. But that's not the work.

This is not a cure. Patterns don't disappear. They lose power. They stop running automatically. But the circuit remains. This guide teaches you to catch it before it runs, not to pretend it doesn't exist.

THE DIFFERENCE

Therapy explains why the house caught fire.

This teaches you to stop lighting matches.

PATTERN ARCHAEOLOGY, NOT THERAPY.

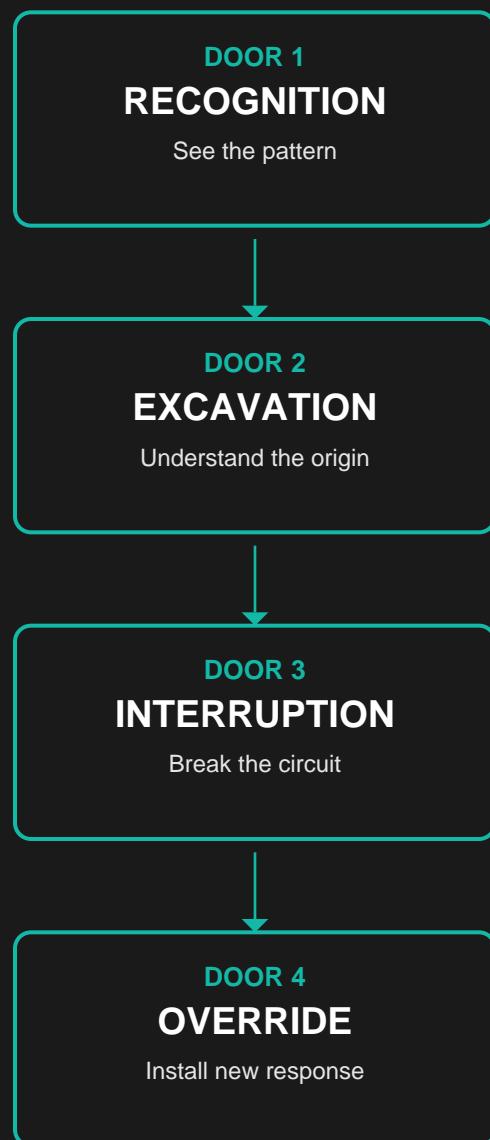
SECTION 2

THE FOUR DOORS PROTOCOL

THE FOUR DOORS PROTOCOL

Every pattern interruption moves through four doors.

You cannot skip doors. You cannot rush doors. Each one builds on the last.



Most people spend their whole lives at Door 1--seeing the pattern, hating the pattern, but never moving through the other doors.

This guide walks you through all four.

DOOR 1: RECOGNITION

Before you can interrupt a pattern, you have to see it.

Not after it runs. Not the next day when you're full of regret. In the moment. As it's activating.

This is harder than it sounds. Patterns are fast. They run in 3-7 seconds. By the time you realize what's happening, it's already happened.

Recognition has three layers:

LAYER 1: THE TRIGGER

Something happens right before your pattern activates. Always. A word. A tone. A silence. A look on someone's face.

Your job: Identify your top 3 triggers.

You'll map these in Section 3.

LAYER 2: THE BODY SIGNATURE

Before your pattern runs, your body signals it. Every time. Chest tightness. Stomach drop. Throat closing. Heart racing.

This is the 3-7 second window. The body knows before the mind catches up.

Your job: Learn what your body does before the pattern runs.

LAYER 3: THE THOUGHT

Between trigger and action, there's usually a thought. Fast. Almost invisible. But it's there.

""They're going to leave anyway. ""

""I shouldn't have asked."""

""Here we go again."""

Your job: Catch the thought.

RECOGNITION COMPLETE WHEN:

You can feel the pattern activating BEFORE it runs. You notice the trigger, feel the body signature, and catch the thought.

You don't have to stop it yet. You just have to SEE it.

DOOR 2: EXCAVATION

Your pattern didn't come from nowhere.

It installed in childhood. Not because something happened TO you--because you learned to DO something to survive.

Excavation is not about blame. It's not about processing. It's about understanding where the pattern learned to run.

THE ORIGINAL ROOM

Every pattern has an Original Room. Not a literal room--an emotional environment. The place where this pattern made sense.

Maybe closeness led to pain, so you learned to disappear. Maybe your needs were a burden, so you learned to apologize. Maybe love was unpredictable, so you learned to test it.

The pattern was a solution once. It kept you safe. It helped you survive.

But you're not in that room anymore. And the pattern keeps running like you are.

WHY THIS MATTERS

You don't excavate to heal. You excavate to understand why the pattern feels so automatic.

When you know where it came from, you stop thinking something is wrong with you. You start seeing it as a program that installed in a specific environment for a specific reason.

Programs can be rewritten.

EXCAVATION COMPLETE WHEN:

You can name the Original Room. You understand what the pattern was protecting you from. You see why it made sense then--and why it doesn't now.

DOOR 3: INTERRUPTION

This is the door most people never reach.

They see the pattern (Door 1). They understand it (Door 2). But they never learn to STOP it mid-execution.

Interruption is the skill that changes everything.

THE CIRCUIT BREAK

A circuit break is a pre-written script you say when the pattern activates. Out loud or in your head.

It interrupts the automatic sequence.

WITHOUT CIRCUIT BREAK:

Trigger -> Body signature -> Pattern runs (3-7 seconds)

WITH CIRCUIT BREAK:

Trigger -> Body signature -> CIRCUIT BREAK -> Choose different response

The circuit break creates a gap. In that gap, you can choose.

HOW TO USE A CIRCUIT BREAK

1. Feel the body signature
2. Say the script (out loud or in your head)
3. Take one breath
4. Choose a different action

That's it. Simple in concept. Hard in practice.

INTERRUPTION COMPLETE WHEN:

You successfully interrupt the pattern at least once. It doesn't have to be perfect. It doesn't have to stick. You just need ONE successful interrupt to prove the circuit can break.

DOOR 4: OVERRIDE

Interruption stops the old pattern. Override installs a new one.

You cannot just stop a behavior. You have to replace it with something. Otherwise the vacuum gets filled by the old pattern running again.

THE OVERRIDE PROTOCOL

An override is the new behavior you do INSTEAD of the pattern.

- PATTERN: Disappear when someone gets close.
- OVERRIDE: Stay and communicate what you're feeling.
- PATTERN: Apologize before asking for something.
- OVERRIDE: Ask directly without preamble.
- PATTERN: Test if they really love you.
- OVERRIDE: Ask for reassurance directly.

WHY OVERRIDE IS HARD

The pattern feels natural. The override feels fake.

That's because the pattern has been running for years. Maybe decades. It's worn a groove in your brain.

The override is a new path. It feels awkward. Forced. Wrong.

This is normal. You're not being fake. You're being intentional.

Keep running the override. Eventually, it wears its own groove.

OVERRIDE COMPLETE WHEN:

The new behavior starts to feel less forced. You reach for the override without having to consciously remember it.

This takes time. Usually somewhere between Day 60-90.

SECTION 3

YOUR PATTERN: ATTRACTION TO HARM

PATTERN 4: ATTRACTION TO HARM - AT A GLANCE

ATTRACTION TO HARM - AT A GLANCE

WHAT IT IS: You are drawn to people who hurt you. Safe people feel boring. Dangerous people feel electric. You mistake chaos for chemistry.

SHOWS UP: Romantic relationships (primary), friendships with volatile people, jobs with toxic dynamics

THE TRIGGER: Meeting someone new—especially someone showing red flags. Or a safe person showing interest (feels flat, wrong, boring).

THE BODY SIGNATURE: Intense excitement, "butterflies," obsessive thinking, what you call chemistry. Also: boredom/flatness around safe people.

THE BEHAVIOR: Pursue the dangerous person. Ignore red flags. Leave or reject the safe person. Confuse intensity with love.

THE COST: Serial toxic relationships. Leaving people who would have loved you well. Years lost to people your friends warned you about.

THE WIN: One moment where you feel "chemistry" and pause to check: safe or familiar? One date with a safe person you give a real chance.

TIME TO FIRST WIN: 2-3 weeks (pattern is deeply body-level; requires retraining what "attraction" means)

DIFFICULTY: (Hard—the body signature is misleading. Danger feels identical to desire.)

READ TIME: 12-15 minutes

4.1 ATTRACTION TO HARM: WHAT IT IS

The nice ones bore you. The dangerous ones light you on fire.

You know this about yourself. You have known it for years. Your friends know it. Your therapist knows it. Everyone who has watched you walk past the kind, stable person and straight toward the one with a trail of wreckage behind them—they all know.

You know it too. And you do it anyway.

THE PROGRAM

Attraction to Harm is a threat-recognition system running as a desire program. Your nervous system learned, early, that love comes with danger. Not separately from it. Fused with it. The caregiver who was supposed to be safe was also the source of pain. Or chaos was the only environment where connection happened. Or intensity was the only proof that something was real.

Your body learned: this feeling—the electricity, the obsession, the cannot-eat-cannot-sleep—this is love. This is what it is supposed to feel like.

It is not love. It is recognition. Your nervous system is detecting a familiar threat pattern and coding it as attraction. The "butterflies" are your fight-or-flight response misread as desire. The "chemistry" is your amygdala recognizing a pattern from the Original Room and flooding you with the same neurochemicals that kept you bonded to an unsafe caregiver.

You are not attracted to bad people. You are attracted to familiar danger. There is a difference. One is a choice. The other is a circuit.

GOLD NUGGET

What you call chemistry is your nervous system

recognizing a threat it was trained to bond with.

The electricity is not attraction. It is recognition.

Your body is saying: "I know this. This is the room I grew up in." Not: "This is the person I should love."

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

From the outside, you are the person who dates disasters. Who leaves the gentle accountant for the volatile artist. Who ignores red flags that are visible from orbit. Who has a "type" that everyone else can see is a pattern of harm.

Your friends say: "Why do you always pick the wrong ones?" As if you are selecting from a menu. You are not selecting. Your body is selecting for you. And your body's criteria were set by a child who did not know the difference between love and danger because they arrived in the same package.

From the inside, the safe person feels like nothing. Flat. Grey. Like hugging a wall. No electricity. No obsession. No heat. You try. You go on three dates. You feel nothing. You conclude: no chemistry. And you walk away from someone who would have been good for you because "good" does not register in your nervous system as "real."

Then someone walks in who runs hot and cold. Who is unpredictable. Who is intense and withholding and magnetic. Your body ignites. This is chemistry. This is alive. This is love.

It is not love. It is the program running.

THE CONFUSION

This is the hardest pattern to interrupt because the body signature is misleading.

Every other pattern has a body signature that feels bad. Chest tightness. Guilt. Panic. Flooding. You can feel the alarm and recognize: something is wrong.

Attraction to Harm has a body signature that feels good. Excitement. Electricity. Obsession. The neurochemicals flooding your system—dopamine, norepinephrine, cortisol—create a

cocktail that feels like falling in love. Because it is the same cocktail. The early stages of love and the early stages of danger produce nearly identical neurochemistry.

The difference: real love settles. It calms over weeks and months into something warm, stable, deep. Familiar-danger "love" does not settle. It cycles. High and low. Intense and absent. The cycle itself produces the neurochemical hits—because each return from low to high is a fresh dopamine surge.

You are not addicted to the person. You are addicted to the cycle.

WHO RUNS THIS PATTERN

You run Attraction to Harm if:

- Your friends have stopped being surprised by your relationship choices
- "Chemistry" is your primary criterion and it always leads to the same outcome
- Safe, available people feel boring or suffocating
- You have used the phrase "I know they are bad for me but I cannot help it"
- Your relationships follow a pattern: intense beginning, volatile middle, devastating end
- You have left or rejected someone kind because "there was no spark"
- You feel most alive in the presence of someone unpredictable

If four or more apply, this is your pattern. The excitement you feel reading this—the recognition—that is the pattern activating. Even here. Even now.

4.2 ATTRACTION TO HARM IN CONTEXT

This pattern runs hardest in romance. But it shows up anywhere intensity is mistaken for meaning.

ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP

Zara, 33. Architect. Currently dating two people.

Zara matched with two people in the same week. Person A is Ben—reliable, kind, texts back consistently, plans real dates, asks her about her day. Person B is Kai—texts at midnight, cancels plans then shows up unexpectedly, says things that are either deeply vulnerable or mildly cruel, has a past he hints at but will not explain.

After three dates with each:

Ben: Zara feels comfortable. Warm. Safe. She describes him to her friend as "nice." Her friend says "He sounds great." Zara says "Yeah." She checks her phone for his texts. They are there. Consistent. She does not feel a pull. No obsession. No electricity.

Kai: Zara cannot stop thinking about him. She checks her phone 30 times a day for his texts. When they arrive—unpredictable, sometimes midnight, sometimes days apart—her whole body responds. Heart racing. Skin tingling. She feels alive in a way Ben does not make her feel. She describes Kai to her friend as "incredible chemistry."

Her friend says: "He sounds like the last three."

Zara knows. She knows Kai's pattern. She has dated this person five times with five different names. She knows how this ends. She also knows that her body does not care what she knows.

She stops seeing Ben. "No spark." She leans into Kai. Six months later, after a cycle of intensity, withdrawal, reconciliation, and betrayal, Kai disappears. Zara is devastated. She calls Ben. Ben has moved on. He is dating someone who recognized what he was worth on the first date.

WORKPLACE

Nate, 38. Sales director. Third toxic job in a row.

Nate has options. He has had offers from stable, well-managed companies. Clear expectations. Reasonable bosses. Good benefits. He turns them down. They feel boring. Corporate. Dead.

Instead, he takes a job at a startup run by a charismatic founder who swings between genius and tyrant. The energy is electric. Midnight calls. Impossible deadlines. Praise that feels like sunlight and criticism that feels like annihilation. Nate is alive. More alive than at any corporate job.

The founder fires people without warning. Changes direction weekly. Takes credit for Nate's work, then calls him brilliant in front of investors. The cycle is identical to Nate's childhood: a father who was either his biggest champion or his harshest critic, with no way to predict which.

Nate stays for two years. Leaves burned out, with a resume gap and stress-related health problems. Takes three months off. Then finds another startup. Another charismatic founder. The cycle resets.

His wife asks: "Why do you keep choosing these jobs?"

Nate does not know. The stable jobs feel wrong. The volatile ones feel like home.

FRIENDSHIP

Cassie, 26. Barista. Best friend is someone everyone warns her about.

Cassie's closest friend is Morgan. Morgan is charismatic, funny, the center of every room. Morgan is also unreliable, manipulative, and occasionally cruel. She cancels plans without notice. She talks about Cassie behind her back. She borrows money she does not return. When Cassie confronts her, Morgan cries, apologizes beautifully, and the cycle resets.

Cassie has other friends. Reliable ones. The kind who show up on time and remember her birthday and do not need to be managed. She likes these friends. She does not feel the same

pull.

Morgan creates intensity. The reconciliation after a betrayal produces the same dopamine surge as the reconciliation after a romantic betrayal. Cassie is bonded to the cycle, not to Morgan.

She has had this friend before. In middle school. In college. Always the same person with a different name. Always the one who makes her feel most alive and most destroyed.

FAMILY

Rafael, 45. Engineer. Reconnecting with his father after 10 years.

Rafael's father was an alcoholic. Brilliant, charming, terrifying. When sober: the best father in the world. Stories, laughter, pride. When drinking: unpredictable, cruel, sometimes violent. Rafael never knew which father was coming home.

At 35, Rafael cut contact. Ten years of peace. Stable marriage. Good career. Calm life.

Then his father calls. Sober for two years. Wants to reconnect. Rafael's wife says: "Be careful." Rafael says: "He has changed."

The first visit is warm. His father is present, kind, everything Rafael ever wanted. Rafael feels the pull—not just love, but that specific electricity. The alive feeling. The feeling he has been chasing in jobs, relationships, and friendships his entire life without knowing it.

Within six months, the father is drinking again. The cycle reinstalls. Rafael is 11 years old in a 45-year-old body, waiting to see which father walks through the door.

His wife says: "This is the pattern." Rafael knows. He does not leave.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Attraction to Harm runs in romance, work, friendship, and family—anywhere intensity exists.
- Safe people feel flat. Dangerous people feel electric. The body cannot tell the difference between chemistry and threat recognition.
- The pattern repeats with different names. The person changes. The dynamic does not.

- The cycle (intensity → withdrawal → return) produces dopamine surges that mirror addiction.
- Everyone around you can see the pattern. You can see it too. The body overrides what you see.

4.3 ATTRACTION TO HARM: PATTERN MARKERS

QUICK WIN: DO THIS NOW (2 minutes)

Think of the last person you felt intense "chemistry"

with. Feel your body as you remember them.

Now think of the last safe person you rejected.

Notice the difference in your body.

The first feeling is the pattern. The second is

what safety actually feels like before your

nervous system learns to trust it.

Write down both sensations: _____

BODY SIGNATURES

Attraction to Harm has two sets of markers. One for the dangerous person (feels like desire). One for the safe person (feels like nothing). Both are the pattern.

AROUND DANGEROUS/FAMILIAR PEOPLE:

- 1. Intense excitement.** Heart rate elevated. Energy spiking. Feels like being plugged into an electrical socket. This is the primary marker—and the most deceptive, because it mimics genuine attraction.
- 2. "Butterflies."** Stomach fluttering. Not the gentle warmth of connection. The sharp, dropping sensation of a roller coaster. This is your fight-or-flight system activating and your brain labeling it as attraction.
- 3. Obsessive thinking.** Cannot stop thinking about them. Replaying conversations. Analyzing texts. Fantasizing. This is hypervigilance relabeled as infatuation. Your brain is tracking a threat and calling it love.

4. Cannot eat, cannot sleep. Appetite suppressed. Sleep disrupted. These are stress responses. Cortisol and norepinephrine are elevated. Your body is in a low-grade threat state. It reads as "falling in love."

5. Magnetic pull. A physical feeling of being drawn toward them. Hard to stay away. This is the trauma bond forming. Your nervous system is recognizing a familiar attachment pattern and locking on.

6. Heightened senses. Colors brighter. Music hits harder. Everything feels more vivid. This is dopamine flooding. Same chemical. Same feeling. Different cause.

AROUND SAFE/AVAILABLE PEOPLE:

7. Flatness. Nothing. No electricity. No obsession. No pull. This is not "no chemistry." This is your nervous system not detecting a threat—and interpreting the absence of threat as absence of connection.

8. Boredom. They are "too nice." "Too available." "Too predictable." These are not flaws. These are features of a safe person. The pattern codes safety as boring.

9. Urge to leave. After one or two dates. "There is no spark." The assessment is instant and feels certain. But it is the pattern making the assessment, not you.

10. Restlessness. Around safe people, you feel antsy. Understimulated. Like you are missing something. What you are missing is the cortisol spike. Your body is accustomed to danger. Calm registers as empty.

GOLD NUGGET

The "boring" person is not boring. They are safe.

Your nervous system has never learned what safe feels like from the inside. It feels like nothing.

That nothing is actually what peace feels like before you learn to recognize it.

AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS

ABOUT DANGEROUS PEOPLE:

1. "This is different. They are different."
2. "The chemistry is too strong to ignore."
3. "I have never felt this way before." (You have. Every time.)
4. "I know they have issues but I see the real them."
5. "I can handle it."

ABOUT SAFE PEOPLE:

1. "There is no spark."
2. "They are too nice."
3. "Something is missing."
4. "I do not want to lead them on."
5. "I need passion, not comfort."

Notice: the thoughts about dangerous people romanticize. The thoughts about safe people dismiss. The pattern is curating your options. Elevating danger. Eliminating safety.

BEHAVIORAL URGES

1. **Pursue the unavailable person.** The more unavailable, the stronger the pull. If they are hot and cold, your pursuit intensifies during the cold. This is the intermittent reinforcement schedule—the same mechanism that makes slot machines addictive.
2. **Reject the available person.** Quick assessment. "Nice but no spark." Gone by date three. Sometimes date one.
3. **Ignore red flags.** You see them. You rationalize them. "Everyone has a past." "They are working on it." "Nobody is perfect." The red flags are visible. The pattern applies a filter.
4. **Research and monitor.** The obsessive thinking extends to behavior: checking their social media, driving past their place, rereading texts for hidden meaning. This is surveillance coded as romance.

5. Return after harm. They hurt you. You go back. The return after pain produces the strongest dopamine hit of the cycle. This is the mechanism of trauma bonding.

PRACTICE PROTOCOL: NEXT 24 HOURS

Step 1: Write down the last 3 people you were intensely attracted to. For each one, write: were they safe or dangerous?

Person 1: _____ . Safe / Dangerous

Person 2: _____ . Safe / Dangerous

Person 3: _____ . Safe / Dangerous

Step 2: Write down the last 3 people you rejected or felt nothing for. Were they safe or dangerous?

Person 1: _____ . Safe / Dangerous

Person 2: _____ . Safe / Dangerous

Person 3: _____ . Safe / Dangerous

Step 3: Look at the two lists. If the pattern is running, List 1 is all dangerous and List 2 is all safe. That is the pattern selecting for you.

Step 4: If you are currently pursuing someone or in the early stages with someone, ask: "Is this excitement or is this recognition? Am I attracted to this person or am I recognizing a familiar threat?"

You do not have to answer today. Just ask.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The pattern has two marker sets: intensity around danger, flatness around safety.
- "Chemistry" with dangerous people is threat recognition mislabeled as desire.
- "No spark" with safe people is the absence of danger mislabeled as incompatibility.

- Automatic thoughts romanticize danger and dismiss safety. The pattern curates your options.
- Practice: list your last attractions and rejections. Look at who was safe and who was dangerous.

4.4 ATTRACTION TO HARM: EXECUTION LOG

PATTERN EXECUTION LOG: ATTRACTION TO HARM

Subject: Zara, 33 | Duration: 3 weeks (slow-burn activation)

[T-00:00] BASELINE STATE

Zara has been single for four months. She is stable. Working. Seeing friends. She signed up for a dating app "casually." She has been on two dates with Ben—a landscape architect. Kind. Consistent. Texts back within the hour. Plans real dates.

She feels: fine. Comfortable. Warm. No electricity.

[T+00:00] TRIGGER DETECTED

Zara matches with Kai. His profile is sparse. One photo with a guitar. Bio: "Probably overthinking something." She messages. He responds twelve hours later. One sentence. Funny. Sharp.

Her heart rate increases. She smiles at her phone. Something has activated.

[T+00:05] BODY SIGNATURE INITIATED (immediate, escalating over days)

First text exchange: heart rate elevates. Skin tingles. She reads his message three times. Dopamine hit.

Day 2: He does not text. She checks her phone 14 times. When his text arrives at 11 PM—"Still thinking about your answer. Interesting"—her body floods. Excitement. Relief. The same neurochemical cocktail as a gambler hitting a jackpot after a dry streak.

Day 5: First date. He is late. He is magnetic. He says something that could be a compliment or an insult. She cannot stop looking at him. She feels more alive than she has in months.

Heart rate during the date: sustained 95-105. This is fight-or-flight. Her body is reading it as desire.

[T+Day 3] AUTOMATIC THOUGHT SEQUENCE

Thought 1: "This is different."

Thought 2: "The chemistry is undeniable."

Thought 3: "Ben is nice but there is no spark."

Thought 4: "I have never felt this way before." (She has. With Marcus. With Jordan. With Eli. All volatile. All ended badly.)

[T+Day 5] THE GAP

The gap for Attraction to Harm is not seconds. It is days. The pattern builds over multiple encounters. There is a window—usually in the first 1-2 weeks—where the rational brain is still online, still comparing, still noticing the red flags. After that window, the neurochemistry takes over and the rational brain goes quiet.

Zara's gap: she notices Kai's inconsistency. She notices the red flags. She tells her friend: "He is kind of hot and cold." Her friend says: "That sounds familiar." Zara laughs. She sees it. She is in the gap.

WHAT ZARA DID: Chose Kai. Stopped seeing Ben.

WHAT ZARA COULD HAVE DONE:

"I feel chemistry with this person. Let me check: are they safe or familiar? This is pattern recognition, not love. I am choosing not to pursue."

Then: continued seeing Ben. Gave safety three more dates. Let the nervous system adjust.

[T+Week 2] PATTERN EXECUTION

Zara cancels her next date with Ben. "Sorry, I do not think there is enough of a spark." She leans into Kai. The cycle begins: intensity, withdrawal, return. Each cycle produces a stronger bond.

[T+Week 3] PATTERN REINFORCEMENT

Kai cancels a date. Shows up the next day with flowers. Zara's body floods with relief and dopamine. This is the trauma bond solidifying. The withdrawal-return cycle is the strongest bonding mechanism the nervous system has. It is the same mechanism used in prisoner-of-war interrogation. Withdraw safety. Return it. The bond deepens.

Zara tells her friend: "He is complicated but I see the real him."

Her friend has heard this sentence four times. With four different names.

POST-ANALYSIS:

The gap lasted approximately 5-7 days—the window where Zara could see the red flags and had not yet been neurochemically captured. After day 7, the dopamine-cortisol cycle made rational assessment increasingly difficult.

Ben was dismissed as "no spark" within 10 days. He was safe. Available. Consistent. The pattern coded these as: boring, flat, wrong.

Kai displayed: intermittent availability, unpredictable communication, intensity followed by withdrawal. The pattern coded these as: chemistry, passion, connection.

Cost: Another 4-8 months of volatile relationship. Ben, who would have been a healthy partner, is gone. The pattern will run identically with the next person.

GOLD NUGGET

Ben was not boring. Ben was safe. Zara's nervous system could not tell the difference because it had never been taught what safe feels like from the inside. It only knew what danger feels like. And danger felt like home.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The gap for this pattern is days, not seconds. The window is the first 1-2 weeks before neurochemistry takes over.
- The body reads intermittent availability (hot/cold) as intensity. It is the same mechanism as gambling addiction.
- "No spark" with a safe person is the pattern dismissing safety, not an accurate assessment.
- The withdrawal-return cycle is the strongest bonding mechanism the nervous system has.
- Friends can see the pattern. The body overrides what everyone sees.

4.5 ATTRACTION TO HARM: THE CIRCUIT

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TRIGGER: Meeting someone new with familiar danger signals
(intermittent, unpredictable, intense, unavailable)

↓ (immediate)

BODY SIGNATURE: Excitement, "butterflies," obsessive thinking
↓ (hours to days)

AUTOMATIC THOUGHT: "This is chemistry. This is different.
This is the one."

↓

THE GAP (days—first 1-2 weeks)

↓

BEHAVIOR: Pursue dangerous person / reject safe person

↓

CYCLE: Intensity → Withdrawal → Return → Deeper bond

↓

REINFORCEMENT: "This is what love feels like. Safe = boring.
Intense = real."

...

SIMULTANEOUS REJECTION CIRCUIT:

...

TRIGGER: Meeting someone safe

(consistent, available, predictable, kind)

↓ (immediate)

BODY SIGNATURE: Flatness, boredom, nothing

↓ (1-3 dates)

AUTOMATIC THOUGHT: "No spark. Too nice. Something is missing."

↓

BEHAVIOR: Reject / stop pursuing

↓

REINFORCEMENT: "Safe people are not for me. I need intensity."

...

THE ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY

...

TRIGGER: Meeting someone who creates intense "chemistry"

↓

BODY SIGNATURE: Excitement, obsession, electricity

↓

AUTOMATIC THOUGHT: "This is chemistry."

↓

THE GAP

CIRCUIT BREAK: "I feel chemistry with this person.

Let me check: are they safe or familiar? This is

pattern recognition, not love. I am choosing not to pursue until I assess."

↓

OVERRIDE: Check for safety vs familiarity.

Are they available? Consistent? Kind? Or are they intermittent, unpredictable, intense?

↓

ASSESSMENT: If the "chemistry" correlates with danger signals → pattern. Pause. Do not pursue.

↓

SIMULTANEOUSLY: Give the safe person 3 more dates.

Let the nervous system learn what safety feels like.

↓

NEW DATA: "The intense person was familiar, not special. The safe person was uncomfortable because safety is unfamiliar, not wrong."

...

WHY THIS CIRCUIT RUNS THE WAY IT DOES

The neuroscience is specific here. Your attachment system was calibrated in childhood by whoever was your primary caregiver. If that caregiver was safe and consistent, your nervous system learned: safety = love. Calm = connection.

If that caregiver was unpredictable—sometimes warm, sometimes cold, sometimes present, sometimes absent—your nervous system learned a different equation: unpredictability = love.

Intensity = connection. The cortisol-dopamine cycle of an inconsistent caregiver became the template for what "love" feels like in your body.

When you meet someone safe, your nervous system checks its template. Safe. Consistent. Available. The template says: this is not love. No match. No chemistry. Move on.

When you meet someone dangerous, your nervous system checks again. Unpredictable. Intense. Hot and cold. The template says: match. This is love. Activate bonding protocol.

You are not choosing wrong. Your template is wrong. The template was set by a child who had no choice in their caregiver. The template has never been updated.

The Circuit Break is the first step in updating the template. It inserts a conscious check—safe or familiar?—into the gap between the body's assessment and your behavioral response.

CIRCUIT SPEED

Trigger to body: Immediate (first interaction)

Body to thought: Hours to days (builds over encounters)

Gap duration: 1-2 weeks (before neurochemistry captures)

Total trigger to full bonding: 2-6 weeks

This is the slowest circuit in the system. That is both good news and bad news.

Good: the gap is wide. Days to weeks where you can intervene. You can see the red flags. Your friends can point them out. Your rational brain is still online.

Bad: the circuit uses the time to build a neurochemical case. Each interaction with the dangerous person deposits more dopamine. By week 2-3, the rational brain is no longer driving. The neurochemistry is. And neurochemistry does not respond to logic.

Intervene in week 1. Not week 3. By week 3, you are bonded. The Circuit Break is most effective before the bond solidifies.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Two circuits run simultaneously: pursue danger, reject safety.

- The body's "chemistry" detector was calibrated by childhood caregivers. If they were unpredictable, unpredictability = love.
- The gap is days to weeks—wide but the neurochemistry fills it fast.
- Intervene in week 1. By week 3, bonding has occurred and interruption is much harder.
- The safe person feels boring because safety is unfamiliar, not because they are wrong.
- Updating the template requires choosing safety despite the body's objection.

4.6 ATTRACTION TO HARM: PATTERN ARCHAEOLOGY

BEFORE YOU EXCAVATE

Pattern Archaeology involves remembering the Original Room.

For some, this activates trauma response.

You do NOT need excavation to interrupt your pattern.

Recognition and Circuit Break work WITHOUT excavation.

Excavation helps you understand why pattern exists, but it is not required for interruption.

If remembering feels overwhelming:

- Skip this section entirely
- Come back later (or never)
- Do excavation with therapist instead of alone

Your safety matters more than completing every section.

HOW ATTRACTION TO HARM INSTALLS

This pattern installs when love and danger arrive in the same package. The child's nervous system cannot separate them because the source is the same person.

Condition A: The caregiver was both source of love and source of pain. Not two different people. The same person. Warm and cruel. Attentive and neglectful. The child bonded to the cycle because the cycle was the relationship.

Condition B: Chaos was the family's baseline. Yelling, unpredictability, volatility—not occasionally but consistently. Calm was the anomaly. Chaos was home. The child's nervous system calibrated to chaos as the default and experiences calm as emptiness.

Condition C: Intermittent reinforcement. Love arrived unpredictably. Sometimes present, sometimes not. The child learned to scan for love the way a slot machine player scans for a win. The unpredictability made each instance of love more neurochemically potent.

Condition D: Intensity as the only proof of love. In families where emotion was either explosive or absent, the child learned: real feelings are intense. Calm feelings are not real. Moderate is the same as nothing.

PATTERN ARCHAEOLOGY: ATTRACTION TO HARM

Subject: Zara, 33 | Installation Age: 5 years old

THE INSTALLATION EVENT:

Zara's parents had a volatile marriage. Her father was charismatic, passionate, and unpredictable. When he was present, the house was alive—music, cooking, laughter. When he was angry, the house was terrifying—yelling, doors slamming, her mother crying.

Zara loved her father's alive days. She lived for them. She would come home from school scanning for signals: is it a good day or a bad day? Music playing = good. Silence = bad. This scanning became the foundation of her hypervigilance.

Her mother was the opposite. Quiet. Stable. Dependable. Always there. Making lunches. Doing homework. Driving to school. And Zara felt... nothing particular about her mother. She was just there. Consistent. Invisible.

WHAT ZARA HEARD:

Primary message: "Love is loud. Love is intense. Love is unpredictable."

Secondary message: "Consistent presence is not love. It is furniture. It is background."

WHAT ZARA LEARNED:

Survival Logic: "Real love feels like electricity. Real love keeps you guessing. If it is calm, it is not love. If it is predictable, it is not passion. The alive feeling—that is love. Everything else is settling."

THE CIRCUIT INSTALLED:

Intense person detected → Nervous system activates (recognition: "This is the alive feeling. This is love.") → Bond initiates → Cycle begins → Consistent person detected → Nervous system does not activate (no recognition: "This is not love. This is furniture.") → Rejection.

PATTERN REINFORCEMENT EVENTS:

- Age 9: Parents divorce. Father moves out. Zara misses the chaos more than she misses the stability her mother provides. The absence of intensity feels like the absence of everything.
- Age 15: First boyfriend. Older. Unpredictable. Writes poetry one day, ignores her the next. She is obsessed. He breaks up with her. She is devastated. She describes it as "the most intense thing I have ever felt."
- Age 19: Dates a classmate. He is kind. Consistent. Texts back. She feels nothing. Ends it after three weeks. "No chemistry."
- Age 23: Marcus. Volatile. Brilliant. Passionate. Three years of intensity-withdrawal-return. She calls it the love of her life. It ends when he cheats.
- Age 27: Jordan. Same pattern. Different face. Two years. Ends badly.
- Age 30: Eli. Same. One year. Her friend says: "You always pick the same person."
- Age 33: Kai. The current one.

EXCAVATION COMPLETE.

28 years active. Five versions of the same person. The template was set by a charismatic, volatile father and a steady, invisible mother. Zara learned: electricity is love. Calm is settling. She has been choosing electricity ever since. The electricity burns her every time.

THE ARCHIVIST OBSERVES

"The child loved her father's alive days so much
that she spent the rest of her life chasing that
feeling in other people. She did not know she was
chasing danger. She thought she was chasing love.
They felt the same."

QUICK WIN: ONE SENTENCE (60 seconds)

Complete this sentence:

"I am attracted to dangerous people because when

I was __ years old, love looked like _____."

One sentence. The origin of your template.

...

YOUR PATTERN ARCHAEOLOGY

Installation age: ____

Who taught me what love feels like: _____

What love looked like in the Original Room:

What "chemistry" actually reminds me of:

What safe looked like in the Original Room:

_____ (often: invisible, boring, nothing)

The template: "Love should feel like _____."

Is that template accurate? Or is it a threat

detector running as a desire program? ____

...

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- This pattern installs when love and danger are fused in the same caregiver.
- The nervous system calibrates its "love template" from childhood attachment.
- If the template was set by chaos, chaos feels like love. Calm feels like nothing.

- You are not attracted to bad people. You are attracted to a familiar neurochemical signature.
- The template can be updated. It requires choosing safety despite the body's objection.

4.7 ATTRACTION TO HARM: WHAT IT COSTS

This pattern costs you the relationships you could have had. Not the ones you did have—those were the pattern. The ones you walked past. The ones you rejected. The ones you called boring.

RELATIONSHIPS

Zara has rejected an estimated 8-12 safe partners over 15 years of dating. Each one dismissed within 1-3 dates for "no chemistry."

She has had 5 volatile relationships averaging 10 months each. Total time in toxic dynamics: approximately 4 years. Total recovery time between them: approximately 3 years. Total time spent in or recovering from pattern relationships: 7 of her 15 dating years.

During those 7 years, safe partners existed. They showed up. They were interested. They were dismissed.

The cost is not the volatile relationships. Those are the visible wreckage. The cost is the invisible wreckage: the good relationships that never happened because the pattern selected against them.

CAREER AND MONEY

Nate has worked at three toxic companies in six years. Each one led by a charismatic, volatile leader. Each one ended in burnout.

Cost per toxic job:

- 6-18 months of recovery (reduced earning, therapy, health costs)
- Resume instability (3 jobs in 6 years raises flags)
- Health costs (stress-related illness: \$2,000-\$10,000 per episode)

- Opportunity cost of stable jobs declined

Nate turned down a position at a Fortune 500 company because it felt "corporate." That position would have paid \$40,000 more per year with equity. Over 6 years: \$240,000+ in foregone income. Plus stability. Plus health.

TIME AND OPPORTUNITIES

Every volatile relationship or job follows the same timeline: 2-3 months of intensity, 4-8 months of cycling, 2-6 months of aftermath. Total: 8-17 months per cycle.

If you run 5 cycles between ages 20 and 35: 40-85 months. That is 3-7 years in cycles that produce nothing except the repetition of the cycle.

Those years could have been spent building one relationship. Deepening one connection. Growing one career. Instead: start over. Start over. Start over.

HEALTH

The intensity-withdrawal-return cycle produces chronic cortisol elevation. Your body is in fight-or-flight for weeks or months at a time. Not because of a single event but because of the ongoing unpredictability of the person you bonded with.

Physical costs:

- Weight fluctuation (cortisol affects appetite and fat storage)
- Sleep disruption (hypervigilance does not sleep)
- Immune suppression (chronic stress = more illness)
- Cardiovascular strain (sustained elevated heart rate)
- Mental health: anxiety, depression, and PTSD-like symptoms from repeated volatile relationships

The cruellest health cost: after multiple cycles, your baseline anxiety is permanently elevated. Each volatile relationship raises the floor. You become more anxious, more hypervigilant, more prone to bonding with the next dangerous person. The pattern accelerates.

YOUR NUMBERS

...

THE COST OF ATTRACTION TO HARM: YOUR DATA

Volatile relationships: _____

Average duration: _____ months

Total time in toxic dynamics: _____ years

Recovery time between: _____ years

Safe people rejected: _____

Reason given each time: _____

(Probably "no chemistry" or "no spark")

Toxic jobs/friendships chosen over stable ones: _____

Income or opportunities lost: \$_____

Years running this pattern: _____

People your friends warned you about: _____

Times you said "this one is different": _____

This is data, not shame. The pattern selected for

you. Now you are learning to select for yourself.

...

GOLD NUGGET

The pattern did not cost you bad relationships. You

knew those were bad. The pattern cost you the good

ones you never had. The quiet, steady ones you dismissed before they could prove what love actually looks like.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The visible cost: years lost in toxic relationships and jobs.
- The invisible cost: safe partners and stable opportunities rejected as "boring."
- Each cycle costs 8-17 months (intensity + cycling + aftermath).
- Health cost: chronically elevated cortisol, anxiety baseline rising over time.
- The pattern accelerates. Each cycle makes you more prone to the next one.

4.8 ATTRACTION TO HARM: HOW TO INTERRUPT IT

QUICK WIN: YOUR FIRST INTERRUPT (90 seconds)

Say this out loud 5 times RIGHT NOW:

"I feel chemistry with this person. Let me check:

are they safe or familiar? This is pattern

recognition, not love. I am choosing not to pursue."

Short version: "Familiar, not safe."

Say it. 5 times. Do it before reading further.

RECOGNIZING IT IN THE GAP

The gap for Attraction to Harm is days to weeks. It opens the first time you feel "chemistry" and begins to close as the neurochemical bond forms (usually by week 2-3).

Here is how to recognize you are in the gap:

- 1. Intensity is disproportionate to time spent.** You have known this person for days or weeks. You are already obsessing. You check your phone constantly. You cannot focus on work. If the emotional intensity is at a 9/10 and you have known them for a week, the pattern is running.
- 2. Red flags are visible but you are rationalizing.** You can see the inconsistency. The hot and cold. The cancelled plans. The vague answers. You know these are red flags. You are explaining them away. "They are just busy." "They have been hurt before." "Nobody is perfect." Rationalization is the pattern's cover story.
- 3. Safe person comparison.** You are simultaneously dismissing someone available. The contrast between "electricity with the dangerous one" and "nothing with the safe one" feels like proof. It is the pattern presenting its case.

4. Friends are concerned. Your friends have seen this before. If more than one person says "this sounds like the last one," they are not wrong. They are seeing the pattern from outside, where it is obvious.

Critical timing: Intervene in the first week. Before the neurochemistry solidifies. After week 2-3, the bond is forming and rational assessment becomes much harder.

THE CIRCUIT BREAK SCRIPT

FULL VERSION

Say out loud:

"I feel chemistry with this person. Let me check: are they safe or familiar? This is pattern recognition, not love. I am choosing not to pursue until I assess."

SHORT VERSION (FOR OVERWHELM)

"Familiar, not safe."

Three words. Said when the electricity surges. When the obsession spikes. When you reach for your phone to check if they texted.

WHEN TO USE IT

Use the Circuit Break when:

- You feel intense "chemistry" with someone you barely know
 - You are rationalizing red flags
 - You are about to dismiss a safe person as "boring"
 - You check their social media more than 5 times a day
 - You cannot stop thinking about someone who is inconsistently available
 - Your friends have expressed concern about this person
 - You recognize the pattern: "This is the same person with a different name"
-

THE SAFETY ASSESSMENT

The Circuit Break includes "let me check: safe or familiar?" Here is the check.

Safe indicators:

- Texts back within a reasonable timeframe (not immediately, not days later—within hours)
- Plans dates and keeps them
- Says what they mean
- Available and does not make you guess
- You feel calm around them (not flat—calm)
- Their behavior is consistent week to week
- No one in your life is worried about them

Familiar-danger indicators:

- Hot and cold (intense one day, absent the next)
- You cannot predict their behavior
- They hint at depth but withhold information
- You feel "electricity" within the first 1-2 meetings
- You are already making excuses for inconsistent behavior
- They remind you of someone (often a parent or past volatile partner)
- Your friends are concerned

The assessment is not subtle. You do not need a scoring system. Read both lists. Check the one that applies. If the "familiar-danger" list matches, the pattern is selecting.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CHOOSE SAFETY INSTEAD

The first time you stay with a safe person instead of pursuing a dangerous one:

Week 1: Flat. Boring. You feel nothing. The voice says: "See? No chemistry. This is not right." The voice is the pattern.

Week 2: Still flat. Maybe a flicker. The safe person does something kind and you feel a small warmth. It is not electricity. It is warmth. You are not used to warmth.

Week 3-4: The warmth increases. Slowly. You start to notice things: they show up. They do what they said. They text back. These are not exciting events. They are reliable events. Your nervous system begins to register: this person is consistent. Consistent is not the same as boring. Consistent is safe.

Month 2-3: Something new. A feeling that is not electricity and not flatness. It is closer to trust. You relax around them. Not the buzzing aliveness of a dangerous person. A quieter aliveness. Like settling into a warm bath instead of jumping into cold water.

Month 3+: What you called "no chemistry" on date one is now a deep, steady connection. It does not cycle. It does not spike. It does not crash. It just stays. And you realize: this is what love is supposed to feel like. Not the roller coaster. The ground.

This timeline is real. It has been documented in attachment research. Anxious and avoidant attachment styles can learn to bond with secure partners. It takes 3-6 months for the nervous system to recalibrate. During that time, the safe person will feel wrong. They will feel boring. They will feel insufficient. And then, gradually, they will not.

PRACTICE PROTOCOL

WEEK 1: THE ASSESSMENT HABIT

Every time you feel attraction—to anyone—run the safety assessment. Is this safe or familiar? Are they available or intermittent? Am I excited or activated?

Do this as a written exercise. Not in your head. On paper or in your phone. The pattern is compelling in your thoughts. It is less compelling on paper.

WEEK 2: THE 72-HOUR RULE

When you feel intense chemistry with someone new, do not act on it for 72 hours. No texting (beyond basic politeness). No social media deep-dives. No fantasizing about a future.

At the 72-hour mark, run the safety assessment again. The chemistry will still be there. But so will your ability to evaluate.

WEEK 3: THE THREE-DATE MINIMUM

If you meet someone safe and feel nothing, give them three dates. Not one. Three. Your nervous system needs multiple data points to begin registering a new pattern. One date is not enough data. Three is a start.

After three dates, if you still feel nothing: okay. Move on. But give safety a real chance before dismissing it.

COMMON INTERRUPTION OBSTACLES

1. "But what if the chemistry is real this time?"

It might be. Genuine chemistry exists. The test: does the chemistry come with red flags? Is the person available and consistent? If yes—real chemistry. If no—the pattern. Chemistry + availability = real. Chemistry + unavailability = familiar.

2. "I cannot help what I am attracted to."

You cannot help the initial body response. That is automatic. You can choose what you do with it. Feeling attraction and pursuing attraction are different decisions. The Circuit Break gives you the pause between feeling and pursuing.

3. "Safe people are genuinely boring to me."

They are boring to your pattern. Not to you. You are not your pattern. Give safety three dates. If on date three you feel nothing—not flat, not uncomfortable, but genuinely nothing—then this specific person may not be a match. But make sure it is you assessing, not the pattern.

4. "I already bonded. It is too late."

It is harder after bonding. Not impossible. The Circuit Break can still work, but you may need additional support—therapy, a friend who can be blunt, or the Draining Bond chapter (Pattern 5) if you cannot leave.

5. "I like intensity. I do not want a boring life."

Intensity is available in safe relationships. Safe people have passions, depth, humor, complexity. What they do not have is unpredictability and cruelty. You can have intensity without danger. The pattern has convinced you these are the same thing. They are not.

GOLD NUGGET

You do not have to stop feeling the electricity. You

have to stop trusting it. The electricity is a signal.

It has been signaling the wrong thing for years. Trust

the assessment, not the feeling.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Circuit Break: "Safe or familiar? This is pattern recognition, not love."
- Short version: "Familiar, not safe."
- Intervene in week 1. After week 2-3, neurochemistry makes rational assessment harder.
- The 72-hour rule: do not act on intense chemistry for 3 days. Reassess.
- The 3-date minimum: give safe people three dates before dismissing them.
- Safe love takes 3-6 months to register. The nervous system must recalibrate.
- Chemistry + availability = real. Chemistry + unavailability = pattern.

4.9 ATTRACTION TO HARM: THE OVERRIDE

The Circuit Break pauses the pursuit. The Override gives you a different selection criteria.

Attraction to Harm meets the survival need for familiar connection. Your nervous system knows what danger-love feels like. It does not know what safe-love feels like. The Override: **choose based on safety assessment, not on feeling. Give safety time to register.**

WHY THIS OVERRIDE WORKS

The survival need is connection. The pattern meets it by pursuing what feels familiar—which happens to be dangerous. The Override meets the same need by pursuing what is actually safe—which happens to feel unfamiliar.

The override is not "stop being attracted to intense people." You cannot override a body response. The override is: when attraction fires, check whether the person is safe before pursuing. And when safety feels boring, give it enough time to register before rejecting.

You are not changing your desires. You are adding a filter between desire and action.

OVERRIDE: GRADUATED APPROACH

LEVEL 1 (Minimal disclosure):

When you feel intense chemistry, pause. Do not pursue for 72 hours. Run the safety assessment privately. No one needs to know.

LEVEL 2 (Partial disclosure):

Tell a trusted friend about the new person. Ask: "Does this sound like my pattern?" Let them answer honestly. Follow their assessment for one week.

LEVEL 3 (Pattern disclosure without vulnerability):

If dating someone safe and feeling flat, say to yourself or a friend: "I feel nothing. That might be the pattern, not the person. I am giving this three more dates."

LEVEL 4 (Full vulnerability):

To the safe person, if the relationship develops:

"I want to be honest. I have a pattern of being drawn to intensity and dismissing safety. I am working on it. You might need to be patient with me while my nervous system catches up to what my brain already knows—that you are good for me."

Start with Level 1-2. Level 4 requires a relationship that has proven safe over weeks.

SCENARIOS: OLD PATTERN VS. OVERRIDE

SCENARIO A: Two options—one dangerous, one safe

Old Pattern:

Meet Person A (safe) and Person B (dangerous) the same week. Feel electricity with B. Feel nothing with A. Pursue B. Reject A. Six months later: B is gone. A is gone. Pattern confirmed.

Override (Level 2):

Feel electricity with B. Circuit Break: "Familiar, not safe." Tell friend about both. Friend says: "B sounds like Marcus." Agree to three dates with A and 72-hour pause on B. By date 3 with

A: small warmth beginning. B's texts have already become inconsistent. Data collected.

SCENARIO B: Early stages with a dangerous person

Old Pattern:

Two weeks in. Obsessed. Cannot focus on work. Checking phone constantly. Rationalizing the red flags. "They are just guarded."

Override (Level 1):

Two weeks in. Feel the obsession. Circuit Break. Run safety assessment on paper:

- Available? Sometimes.
- Consistent? No.
- Red flags? Yes—hot and cold, vague about past, cancelled twice.
- Do they remind me of someone? Yes.

Assessment: familiar, not safe. Decision: do not pursue further. Delete number if necessary. The neurochemistry will protest for 1-2 weeks. It fades.

SCENARIO C: Dismissing a safe person on date one

Old Pattern:

First date with a kind, available person. Nice conversation. No electricity. Drive home thinking: "No spark." Do not schedule date two.

Override (Level 3):

First date. No electricity. Notice the pattern's verdict: "boring." Circuit Break: "Safe, not boring. The pattern is dismissing this person. I am giving three dates." Schedule date two. On date two: slight warmth. Laughter. A moment of genuine connection. Not electricity—connection. Schedule date three.

SCENARIO D: Currently in a volatile relationship

Old Pattern:

Six months in. The cycle is running: intensity, withdrawal, return. You know this is the pattern. You cannot leave. The bond is too strong.

Override (Level 2):

Name it: "I am in a pattern relationship. The chemistry is the bond, not love." Tell a friend. Ask for accountability. Begin the process of disentangling. This may require therapy, especially if the relationship has escalated to abuse. See Pattern 5 (Draining Bond) if you cannot leave.

EXECUTION STEPS

Step 1: When chemistry fires, run the safety assessment. On paper. Safe or familiar?

Step 2: If familiar: 72-hour pause. No pursuit. No texting beyond basic politeness.

Step 3: If currently dismissing a safe person: three-date minimum. Give safety time.

Step 4: Check with a trusted friend. "Does this person sound like my pattern?" Trust their external view more than your internal assessment during the first 2-3 weeks.

Step 5: Track the pattern. Log each attraction. Note: safe or familiar? Pursued or paused? Outcome? Over time, the data builds a case your body cannot ignore.

TIMELINE TO NATURAL

Weeks 1-4: The Circuit Break feels like fighting your own body. The chemistry screams pursue. The break says pause. It is exhausting. You will feel deprived. The pattern says: you are missing out.

Months 1-2: The first safe person you give a real chance begins to register differently. Not as electricity. As something quieter. The nervous system is confused—this is new input. It does not match the template. It does not dismiss it either.

Months 2-3: If you stay with a safe person, the bond begins to form. Slowly. Without the cycle. Without the crash. It does not feel like "falling." It feels like "arriving."

Months 3-6: The template begins to update. Safe starts to register as attractive, not boring. You may still feel the pull toward a dangerous person—the electricity does not fully disappear. But you recognize it now. It is not love. It is recognition. You can feel it without obeying it.

Months 6+: Choosing safety becomes a skill. Not automatic—the old template is deeply wired. But available. Reliable. You can feel the electricity and choose not to follow it. That is freedom.

REPS NEEDED

This pattern requires fewer reps but longer duration per rep. You do not need 50 swaps. You need 2-3 experiences of choosing safety over danger and staying with the choice long enough for the nervous system to recalibrate (3-6 months each).

2-3 sustained experiences of safe connection. That is the prescription. Not easy. Not fast. But specific.

GOLD NUGGET

You do not have to stop feeling the electricity.

You have to stop following it. Feel the pull.

Acknowledge it. Then walk the other direction.

Toward the person who does not make your heart

race. Yet. Give it time. Safety is a slow burn.

It is also the only thing that lasts.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Override: choose based on safety assessment, not feeling. Give safety time.
- 72-hour rule for intense chemistry. 3-date minimum for safe people.
- Trust friends' assessments over your own in the first 2-3 weeks.
- The nervous system recalibrates in 3-6 months with a safe partner.
- 2-3 sustained safe experiences update the template.
- You can feel the electricity and choose not to follow it. That is the goal.

4.10 ATTRACTION TO HARM: TROUBLESHOOTING

WHEN INTERRUPTION IS NOT WORKING

You can see the pattern. You know who is safe and who is familiar. But you are still pursuing danger and rejecting safety.

WEEK 1-2: STILL PURSUING THE DANGEROUS PERSON

What is happening: The Circuit Break fires but the neurochemistry is stronger. You said "Familiar, not safe" and texted them anyway. You know it is the pattern and you are following it anyway.

This is normal. This pattern has the strongest body pull of all nine. The neurochemistry of trauma bonding is similar to substance addiction. Knowing it is bad does not override the craving. Not yet.

What to do: Reduce access. Delete the number. Block the social media. Unfollow. You are not strong enough to resist a craving while staring at the substance. Remove the substance from your environment. This is not weakness. This is strategy.

WEEK 3-4: GAVE THE SAFE PERSON A CHANCE. FELT NOTHING.

What is happening: You went on three dates with someone safe. Felt nothing. The pattern is saying: "See? I told you. No chemistry. Boring."

Check: Did you feel genuinely nothing—no warmth, no enjoyment, no ease? Or did you feel the absence of electricity and interpret it as nothing?

There is a difference. Nothing is: you do not enjoy their company. Their conversation is flat. You are not interested in who they are. Absence of electricity is: the conversation was fine. They were interesting. You laughed. But no surge. No obsession.

If it is genuine nothing: this specific person is not a match. That happens. Try another safe person.

If it is absence of electricity: the pattern is making the assessment. Give it three more dates. That is six total. The warmth starts slow with safe people. You are checking for growth, not for an explosion.

WEEK 5+: THREE POSSIBLE ISSUES

Issue 1: You are still bonded to the last dangerous person.

You cannot move toward safety while actively bonded to danger. If you are still in contact with, thinking about, or recovering from the last volatile relationship, your nervous system is still in that template. New safe connections cannot register while the old bond is active.

Fix: Clean break from the dangerous person. No contact. No social media monitoring. No "checking in." The bond dissolves in 4-8 weeks without reinforcement (contact). During those weeks, sit with the withdrawal. It will feel like grief. It is not grief—it is the dopamine cycle ending.

Issue 2: You are selecting "safe" people who are actually avoidant.

Some people look safe but are emotionally unavailable. Stable, yes. Kind, yes. But not present. Not connected. If you are giving "safe" people a chance and still feeling flat, check: are they safe, or are they avoidant? Available means: emotionally present, willing to connect, responsive to your bids for closeness. Not just: not dangerous.

Fix: Look for warmth, not just stability. Safe and warm is the target. Safe and cold is avoidant—and the flatness you feel may be accurate, not the pattern.

Issue 3: The pattern is too deeply wired for self-help alone.

Attraction to Harm, especially when it involves repeated trauma bonding or a history of abusive relationships, may need professional support. The neurochemistry of trauma bonding is complex. A therapist who specializes in attachment or trauma can provide tools this book cannot.

Fix: Find a therapist who works with attachment patterns or trauma bonding. Use this system alongside therapy. The Circuit Break and safety assessment are compatible with professional

treatment and strengthen it.

FAILED INTERRUPT CASE STUDY

Subject: Nate, 38. Running Attraction to Harm for 20 years.

Nate meets a woman at a conference. She is smart, direct, and slightly intimidating. He feels the electricity immediately. Circuit Break fires: "Familiar, not safe."

He runs the safety assessment in his head: Is she available? She mentioned a recent breakup. Is she consistent? He does not know yet. Red flags? The intimidation factor. The immediate intensity.

He decides: 72-hour rule. No pursuing for 3 days.

Day 2: She texts him. Something witty. His hand moves to respond. He puts the phone down. Picks it up. Puts it down. Texts his friend instead: "I met someone. Electricity. Pattern?"

Friend responds: "What does she remind you of?"

Nate types: "My dad's energy."

He does not respond to her text. The 72 hours pass. The electricity fades from 9/10 to 6/10. He runs the assessment again. Unavailable (recent breakup). Intense (immediate). Familiar (reminds him of his father's energy). Assessment: pattern.

He does not pursue.

What Nate learned: The 72-hour rule worked because it interrupted the neurochemical escalation. At hour zero, the chemistry was at 9/10 and felt irresistible. At hour 72, it was at 6/10 and felt manageable. Time plus no contact reduced the signal strength.

What he also learned: Texting his friend was the critical move. His friend's question—"What does she remind you of?"—bypassed the rationalization. The answer was instant and honest: his father's energy. That was the data that confirmed the pattern.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- If still pursuing danger: reduce access. Delete, block, unfollow. Remove the substance.

- If "nothing" with safe person: check—genuine nothing or absence of electricity?
- Clean break from the last dangerous person is required before new safe connections register.
- Distinguish safe-and-warm from safe-and-avoidant. You need warmth, not just stability.
- The 72-hour rule works because it interrupts neurochemical escalation.
- Friends can ask the question you cannot: "Who does this remind you of?"

4.11 ATTRACTION TO HARM: QUICK REFERENCE

ATTRACTION TO HARM - QUICK REFERENCE

PATTERN MARKERS:

Around danger: Intense excitement, "butterflies," obsessive thinking, cannot eat/sleep

Around safety: Flatness, boredom, "no spark," urge to reject

Thoughts (danger): "This is chemistry." "This one is different."

Thoughts (safety): "Too nice." "Something is missing." "No spark."

THE GAP: Days to weeks (intervene in week 1, before bond forms)

CIRCUIT BREAK:

"I feel chemistry with this person. Let me check: are they safe or familiar? This is pattern recognition, not love. I am choosing not to pursue."

Short version: "Familiar, not safe."

SAFETY ASSESSMENT:

Safe = available, consistent, kind, no red flags, friends not worried

Familiar = hot/cold, unpredictable, intense, red flags, reminds you of someone

OVERRIDE SCRIPTS:

Level 1: 72-hour pause. Do not pursue. Run assessment privately.

Level 2: Ask a friend: "Does this sound like my pattern?"

Level 3: "I feel nothing. That might be the pattern, not the person. Three more dates."

Level 4: "I have a pattern of chasing intensity. You are safe. I am learning what that means."

FIRST WIN: One moment where you feel electricity and pause to check: safe or familiar? One date with a safe person you give a real chance.

PRACTICE: Safety assessment for every attraction (week 1). 72-hour rule (week 2). Three-date minimum for safe people (week 3).

COPY TO PHONE. USE WHEN "CHEMISTRY" FIRES AND
RED FLAGS ARE VISIBLE.

SECTION 4

THE OTHER PATTERNS

You're focused on your pattern right now. Good.

But patterns rarely run alone. As you do this work, you may recognize other patterns in yourself--or in people you love.

This section gives you quick identification for all 9 patterns. Not mastery. Just awareness.

If you want to go deep on all 9 patterns, the Complete Archive has the full archaeology for each.

THE DISAPPEARING PATTERN

You leave before they can leave you. When relationships get close, you feel walls closing in. You ghost, pull away, or end things before they can end you.

Signs: Relationships that never get past 3 months. Serial almost-relationships. Chronic loneliness despite meeting people.

THE APOLOGY LOOP

You apologize for existing. For asking. For needing. You make yourself small before anyone can tell you you're too much.

Signs: Starting sentences with "sorry." Minimizing your needs. Feeling like a burden. Can't negotiate or set boundaries.

THE TESTING PATTERN

You don't ask if they love you--you make them prove it. You create tests to see if they'll stay. Most people fail.

Signs: Late-night fights. Loaded questions. Pushing people away to see if they'll fight to stay.

THE DRAINING BOND

You know you should leave. Everyone tells you to leave. You stay. Guilt keeps you locked in.

Signs: Years in situations you've outgrown. Can't leave without feeling like the bad guy. Slow disappearance of self.

COMPLIMENT DEFLECTION

Praise makes you flinch. You deflect, minimize, explain why it wasn't that good. Visibility feels dangerous.

Signs: Career stagnation despite talent. Can't accept acknowledgment. Hide your best work.

THE PERFECTIONISM PATTERN

If it's not perfect, it's garbage. So you don't finish. Or you don't start. The gap between vision and output paralyzes you.

Signs: Projects that never launch. Ideas that die in your head. Endless tweaking instead of shipping.

SUCCESS SABOTAGE

You get close, then blow it up. Right before the win, you pull the pin. You're not afraid of failure--you're afraid of success.

Signs: Pattern of almost-then-not. Destroying things right before breakthrough. Self-fulfilling prophecy of failure.

THE RAGE PATTERN

It comes fast. One second fine, next second saying things you can't take back. The anger runs you.

Signs: Damaged relationships from words you didn't mean. Regret after outbursts. A version of yourself you're ashamed of.

SECTION 5

THE 90-DAY PROTOCOL

THE 90-DAY PROTOCOL

This is your structure. What to focus on each phase.

PHASE 1: RECOGNITION (Days 1-7)

Focus: See the pattern in real-time.

- [] Day 1: Identify your pattern (done--you're here)
- [] Day 2: Learn your body signature
- [] Day 3: Map your triggers
- [] Day 4: Catch the thought
- [] Day 5: Practice noticing without stopping
- [] Day 6: Track activations (minimum 3)
- [] Day 7: Review--what did you learn?

Success metric: You can feel the pattern activate BEFORE it runs.

PHASE 2: EXCAVATION (Days 8-30)

Focus: Understand where the pattern came from.

Week 2: The Original Room

- [] Where did this pattern install?
- [] What was it protecting you from?
- [] Who taught you this was necessary?

Week 3: The Function

- [] What did this pattern do for you?
- [] How did it keep you safe?
- [] What would have happened without it?

Week 4: The Cost

- [] What has this pattern cost you?
- [] Relationships? Opportunities? Health?
- [] What do you want back?

Success metric: You understand why the pattern exists--and why it no longer serves you.

PHASE 3: INTERRUPTION (Days 31-60)

Focus: Break the circuit.

Week 5-6: Circuit Break Practice

- [] Memorize your primary circuit break
- [] Practice it 3x daily (not just when activated)
- [] Use it in low-stakes situations first

Week 7-8: Live Interruption

- [] Use circuit break in real activations
- [] Track outcomes: AUTO / PAUSE / REWRITE
- [] Refine based on what works

Success metric: At least ONE successful interrupt where you chose a different behavior.

PHASE 4: OVERRIDE (Days 61-90)

Focus: Install new behavior.

Week 9-10: Override Practice

- [] Identify your override behavior
- [] Practice override scripts
- [] Use override after successful interrupts

Week 11-12: Integration

- [] Override becomes more automatic
- [] Notice when old pattern tries to return
- [] Reinforce new pathway

Week 13: Review + What's Next

- [] What changed in 90 days?
- [] What still needs work?
- [] Other patterns to address?

Success metric: Override feels less forced. New behavior is becoming default.

SECTION 6

CRISIS PROTOCOLS

WHEN THE PATTERN IS RUNNING RIGHT NOW

Stop. Read this.

1. You are not your pattern. The pattern is running through you. But it is not you.
2. You noticed. That matters. Most people don't even see it.
3. You have a choice right now. Not a perfect choice. But a choice.

Say this out loud:

"The ATTRACTION TO HARM just activated. I feel it in my body. I am choosing to pause before I act."

Take 3 breaths. Slow.

Now: What is ONE different thing you can do right now? Not the perfect thing. Just a different thing.

Do that.

EMERGENCY CIRCUIT BREAKS

When you can't remember your scripts, use these:

"This is the pattern. Not me. The pattern."

"I can feel it running. I'm going to pause."

"I don't have to do what the pattern wants right now."

"What would I do if the pattern wasn't running?"

WHEN THE PATTERN ALREADY RAN

It happened. You did the thing. Now what?

DO NOT:

- Spiral into shame
- Decide you're broken
- Give up on the process

DO:

- Write down what happened (one paragraph)
- Identify the trigger
- Note when you first felt the body signature
- Ask: Where could I have interrupted?

This is data. Not failure. Data.

The pattern ran for years before you started this work. It doesn't stop in a week. Every time it runs, you learn something.

THE MORNING AFTER PROTOCOL

You woke up and remembered what happened. The shame is heavy.

1. Get out of bed. Shower. Eat something.
2. Open this guide. Read your pattern section.
3. Write: "The pattern ran. I noticed. I'm still here. Today is a new data point."
4. Do ONE thing from your 90-day protocol today.

That's it. You don't have to fix everything. You just have to keep going.

WHEN YOU WANT TO QUIT

The pattern might tell you this doesn't work. That you're too broken. That you should give up.

That's the pattern talking.

Patterns don't want to be interrupted. They fight back. Wanting to quit IS the pattern trying to protect itself.

Read this:

"Quitting is the pattern winning. I don't have to be perfect. I just have to keep going. One more day. One more interrupt attempt. That's all."

If you're thinking about quitting, you're closer than you think. The pattern is fighting because it's losing.

Keep going.

SECTION 7

TRACKING TEMPLATES

DAILY INTERRUPT LOG

Date: _____

Activation 1:

Time: _____

Trigger: _____

Body signature: _____

Circuit break used? [] Yes [] No

Outcome: [] AUTO (ran anyway) [] PAUSE [] REWRITE

Notes: _____

Activation 2:

Time: _____

Trigger: _____

Body signature: _____

Circuit break used? [] Yes [] No

Outcome: [] AUTO [] PAUSE [] REWRITE

Notes: _____

Activation 3:

Time: _____

Trigger: _____

Body signature: _____

Circuit break used? [] Yes [] No

Outcome: [] AUTO [] PAUSE [] REWRITE

Notes: _____

TRIGGER MAP

My top triggers for ATTRACTION TO HARM:

1. _____

Situation: _____

Who's usually involved: _____

2. _____

Situation: _____

Who's usually involved: _____

3. _____

Situation: _____

Who's usually involved: _____

Patterns I notice: _____

WEEKLY PROGRESS TRACKER

Week ___ of 13: _____

Total activations this week: _____

Successful interrupts: _____

Override attempts: _____

What's getting easier: _____

What's still hard: _____

Insight of the week: _____

SECTION 8

WHAT'S NEXT

WHAT'S NEXT

You have what you need to master this pattern.

The Field Guide. The 90-day protocol. The crisis protocols. The tracking templates.

This is enough to change your life.

But patterns rarely run alone.

WHEN YOU'RE READY FOR MORE

The Complete Archive contains:

- Full deep dives on all 9 patterns
- Pattern combinations (when you run more than one)
- Relationship protocols (how patterns interact with partners)
- Workplace applications (patterns at work)
- Parenting contexts (breaking the cycle)
- Advanced interruption techniques
- Lifetime updates as the method evolves

You don't need it now. Focus on YOUR pattern first.

But when you're ready--when you've tasted what interruption feels like and you want the full picture--the Archive is there.

thearchivistmethod.com

YOU FOUND THE THREAD. NOW PULL IT.

THE ARCHIVIST METHOD

Pattern Archaeology, NOT Therapy