



The Relationship Revolution Study Guide

Reflecting on a book like *The Relationship Revolution*, especially in a group setting, can be a potent experience that deepens the learning and commitment. There is a group wisdom and synergy that happens, and coming together obviously fits with the overall themes in the book. I encourage you to find or create such a group and work through this study guide, chapter by chapter, together. You can also join me for the Book Group I'll be facilitating starting September 30th. More information and registration can be found [HERE](#).

Whether you are using this Study Guide on your own or in a group setting, I hope the prompts will help to draw out reflections that resonate in your heart and soul as you rise to meet the challenges ahead with clarity and courage.

Part One: A Big Picture View

Chapter One: The Great Unravelling

How do you define the Great Unravelling for yourself? What feelings arise as you contemplate its implications? What is your process for grappling with the unravelling and any strong feelings that arise?

What are your thoughts on viewing the illusion of separateness as the root cause of our collective predicament and the confluence of crises?

The End of the Myth

There is much about this section that feels very personal to me. I started posting in Substack about *Unlearning the American Myth* after realizing that it was work I needed and wanted to do. As I engage it, it only becomes clearer just how thoroughly indoctrinated I was and how deeply it lives inside me.

How do you define the American myth for yourself? How indoctrinated were/are you? Are there related memories and experiences you can recall? What does the work of unlearning the myth look like for you?

What is your experience of the American kind of social-political innocence?

What did this section inspire?

Capitalism and the End of Everything

What feelings arise as you contemplate capitalism and its shadow side?

This is not in the book, but there is a phrase, *capitalist realism* (based on a book by the same name), which is described as "the widespread sense that not only is capitalism the only viable political and economic system, but also that it is now impossible even to *imagine* a coherent alternative to it." Are you a capitalism realist? If so, there are reasons for that. What are some of those reasons? To the extent that you are not, what alternatives can you imagine?

What are your main take-aways from this section of the book?

Hegemonic Train Wreck

This short section was a late comer to the book. It reflects my thinking early in 2026 as I was witnessing the opening weeks of the U.S./Israeli war on Iran, the escalation of economic warfare on Cuba, and the intervention in Venezuela. In thinking about all that insanity and the trajectory we seem incapable of escaping, hegemony was the word that came up. It might be helpful to read what I [posted on Substack](#) at the time.

What is your response, and what are the implications of your response, to the two questions posed toward the end of the section: Why be surprised that fascism has risen to take the reins? Why not expect the hegemonic project to get increasingly deranged and dangerous?

How does an understanding of the hegemonic agenda tie in with unlearning the American myth?

What are your main overall take-aways from this chapter as a whole?

Chapter Two: Weaving Wholeness

Is the evolutionary view presented on pages 29-30 supportive for you? If so, how?

How do you relate to the word *revolution* in the context of the book? Does it fit? If so, how/why? If not, why not?

I included the paragraphs addressing violence and nonviolence and other revolutionary contexts on pages 31-132 because of the belief that our moment is not separate from what has come before. The violence is still there. Imperialism, still there. The deep longing for freedom, still there. I'm interested in foundations for meeting the moment in the most constructive and transformational way possible. History seems important. What are your thoughts on this?

Do you see a relationship between the "Vision Fast" outlined in the book and presented as a rite of passage, and what is being called forth now? What connections do you see? How does the personal relate to the collective in this context?

A concluding paragraph in this chapter states:

In a rite of passage the old self dies to make room for new life. Is this not a useful lens through which to view what's being called forth in the Great Unravelling? Are we not plunging into the unknown where anything could happen, where it's both scary and sacred? Is it not a time when vulnerability is exposed, habitual patterns challenged, and defenses broken down? Is the door of transformation not being thrown open?

How do you respond to those questions?

A major premise of the book is that the Great Unravelling brings great opportunities. In your personal experience, do the opportunities get overshadowed by a focus on crisis? If so, why? Can the crisis be separated from the opportunities?

What spoke to you the most in this chapter? Did it feel relevant to you and your life? If so, how?

Chapter Three: Regeneration from Below

This chapter is an invitation to think about your own theory and practice of social change. The view presented in the book is that reliance on a top down approach is “part of the reason we are in this mess,” and that “a regenerative path directs us back to the local and new ways of viewing how to best meet our needs in the context of changed, perhaps dramatically changed, circumstances.” What are your thoughts on that? What are the consequences of such a view?

Resistance can be thought of in many different ways. Do you have your own ways of practicing resistance? If so, how?

What does “regeneration from below” mean to you? How do you practice and support it?

The book makes the claim that nonviolent resistance is an essential part of the overall movement toward healing and wholeness. How do you relate to that premise?

Several initiatives, organizations, and individuals are referenced in this chapter as a way to inspire and support a big picture view. What stands out for you from the list?

Toward the end of the chapter, it is stated that “active resistance breeds empowerment and solidarity.” What is your experience of that kind of empowerment and solidarity? How does it fit within your big picture view?

Has this chapter supported you in broadening your perspective? If so, how?

Part One of the book is entitled, “*A Big Picture View*.” What is your big picture view? What supports you in having a big picture view? What limits it? Do you have people in your life you can share it with? Does it continue to evolve? What is your commitment to cultivating a big picture view going forward?

Part Two: Seeding the Revolution

Chapter Four: The Primacy of Interpersonal Relationships

This is a short chapter designed to make important points that set up the focus on our human-to-human (interpersonal) relationships.

One sentence (from p. 58) speaks to the premise of the entire book: “In rising to the challenges ahead, our actual face-to-face relationships take on a whole new meaning and significance; healthy human relating becomes primary.”

Spend some time reflecting on healthy human relating becoming primary in the context of each of the bullet points included:

- The illusion of separateness tends to be much stronger in relation to other people than it is with nature or the spiritual. The latter don't tend to trigger folks; it's other people that trigger us because this is where separateness is strongest (and, consequently, where it can be most meaningfully confronted).
- Collectively, we do not currently have the relational capacity to collaborate sufficiently, hold challenging conversations, transform conflict into deeper relationships, and build the local resilience so desperately needed in the midst of the Great Unravelling.
- The interpersonal level is where the growth potential really lies for most of us. It's in relationships where trauma can be healed, and where our emotional intelligence and capacities are road tested.
- The many benefits of healing at the interpersonal level are life-changing and support the maturity and resilience needed to meet the challenges ahead.

Do these statements feel true? What do they bring up? Do they help to motivate you? If so, how? If not, why not?

Spend some time reflecting on the different points made in the first two paragraphs under *The Healing Context* heading. “Us versus them” thinking is deeply ingrained in most of us. How do you work with that in yourself?

How is the theme of healing relevant to your life and what you want to contribute?

This chapter includes the following paragraph. Please reflect on the questions and share your responses:

Reimagining and realigning culture and society will be done group by group, place by place. It’s work that we will do together or not at all. But who really wants to do that work? Who really wants to break with consensus reality? What is the immediate motivation and tangible benefit? Is it enough to say that we have the opportunity to transcend division and come more alive as we align with life in all its radical interrelatedness?

What stands out for you from this chapter as a whole and why?

Chapter Five: Trauma: A Short Overview

In the context of the book, why is trauma considered “a major feature of the Great Unravelling”? Why is trauma worthy of its own chapter?

Please characterize your experience and how you relate to the three pathways of trauma in terms of your own life history.

1. Prenatal and Attachment,
2. Generational and Ancestral, and
3. Collective.

Symptoms of Trauma

Please reflect on and respond to the following passage from page 70:

Unresolved and unintegrated trauma constricts and disrupts the natural flow and keeps us disconnected and stuck in separateness and insecurity. The limiting core beliefs that form early in life such as “I’m not good enough,” “I’m not worthy of love,” “I have to do it by myself,” all create stress and impair our health and our relational capacities. We’re left with an existential loneliness, an emptiness that can never be satisfied by material things or distractions.

Limiting core beliefs tend to drive people toward compensatory strategies. If it’s not safe to ask for help, then you learn how to do things for yourself. If you took in the message that you weren’t good enough, you may drive yourself toward high levels of achievement and become very good at one or more specific things.

Limiting beliefs such as those presented in the chapter can also lead people to become, for example, very vigilant and empathic, very responsible and competent, or very assertive and confident (at least to the outside world).

Did you form limiting core beliefs early in life? If so, what are they, what survival function did they serve? Are they still present today? What purpose do they serve now? Do they limit your relational capacities? Do they support your relational capacities?

What comes up when you think about and feel into your limiting core beliefs as symptoms of trauma? What connections can you make?

Healing Trauma and the Illusion of Separateness

This section includes the sentence: “Trauma thus offers a powerful lens into the truth of interbeing—the truth that we are not separate from anything, not from the Earth, not from the experiences of our ancestors, not from the experiences of others anywhere.” The word *interbeing* is sprinkled throughout the book. Take a moment and reflect on how you make sense of that word and concept. How does your understanding of interbeing relate to the healing of trauma?

Healing trauma is a multi-dimensional process that includes somatic, neurobiological, cognitive, and behavioral aspects. In the mix, the ability to put words to the experience and create a coherent narrative is important. Along those lines, the book includes the following steps in articulating a healing narrative:

- This happened to me.
- This is how it affected me.
- This is how it showed/shows up in my life.
- This is who I am now—and who I am is more than this event.

Notice if you feel that engaging these steps would be helpful to you. If so, please do them and then reflect on what comes up in the process and what you're left with. Does it bring additional understanding and acceptance? What other benefits do you intuit? What does the wisdom of your body say?

A major premise of the chapter is that because trauma happens in relationships, it will be healed in relationships. What comes up for you as you contemplate that? Do you have personal experience of it?

This chapter covers trauma in some depth. What did you learn? What was helpful, and how?

Part Three: Building Interpersonal Capacity

Chapter Six: Five Rs of Regenerative Relationships

Spend some time reflecting on each of the 5 Rs.

Relationship

The book includes these bullet points to describe what prioritizing relationships can look like:

- Staying present with ourselves and others; noticing what is actually happening in the moment in terms of mood and energy;
- Clearly expressing, when appropriate, our feelings and needs, and listening to the feelings and needs of others;
- Embracing vulnerability, and being open to whatever experiences arise, without having an attachment to particular outcomes; and
- Softening judgments and transmuting them into curiosity and openness.

How do you relate to each of these points? How do, or how could they support you and your relationships? What else would you include in the list?

What limits your ability to embody this overall capacity of prioritizing relationship? How could you work with that limitation? Are you inspired to do so?

In your own words, what does prioritizing relationship look like for you?

Responsibility

Referring to the first and second paragraphs of this section, how does responsibility-taking go against the grain of separateness and the wounds of trauma? How does your trauma inhibit your response-ability—your capacity to respond to others and to situations with full presence?

Give some specific examples of practicing, and not practicing, the following aspects of personal responsibility?

- 100% ownership of your feelings, needs, limiting beliefs—without self-blame or shame;
- Clean, clear communication;
- Challenging your own judgments, right/wrong thinking, and disconnection;
- Healthy, proactive feedback; and
- Repairing harm.

Does the closing sentence ring true for you? Whether yes or no, please elaborate. “Because it moves us beyond the blame game, responsibility is one of the greatest gifts we can give to ourselves and others.”

Repair

In your own words, why are the prioritizing of relationship and responsibility foundational to a mindset committed to repair?

What is the value of framing harm as unmet universal human needs?

What are some of the universal human needs that you value the most?

What is an example of a situation when you embodied a commitment to repair?

Can there be value in a process of repair even if it doesn't lead to a meaningful sense of repair? How would you characterize your own “attachment to outcome” in relational situations?

Have you experienced a situation where going for repair actually made things worse? How could this be avoided in the future?

Regenerative Mindset

The book lists some qualities associated with a regenerative mindset:

- Seeing reality more clearly by softening our judgments about ourselves, others, and the state of the world; challenging the belief that things should be a certain way;
- Being and becoming more fully attuned to the body and creating more space for deep levels of feeling and sensing;
- Paying more attention to how we hold others in their suffering and how we work with our own triggers and pain;
- Noticing how we participate in groups, setting intentions to widen our worldviews and grow our capacities to hold complexity and discomfort; and
- Cultivating the mind of not knowing and non-attachment to particular outcomes.

How do you relate to these qualities or capacities? Do you and your relationships benefit from any of them? If so, please elaborate.

What qualities/capacities would you add?

Does awareness of our shared predicament (the Great Unravelling) inspire you to cultivate a restorative mindset? If so, how so? If not, why not?

Resources

The first sentence in this section states that this “final ‘R’ of regenerative relationships reflects the depth of the challenge, encouraging us to attend to our own foundations and self-care with new passion and commitment.” How do you make sense of that statement?

What are some of your practices in the various resource categories? Do you use them when you most need resourcing? Is there a “felt sense” of support?

How does the support ripple out to influence your daily life and relationships?

Are there categories you'd like to strengthen? Are you inspired to do so? If so, what are some of those practices and what is your commitment?

Chapter Seven: Additional Capacities for the Revolution

Clear Motivation

What is your most basic motivation for leaning into relationships and the Relationship Revolution?

What are a couple of examples of you keeping your side of the street clean in a relationship? How did it feel? How did it impact the relationships?

Leaning into the Natural World

What are some of the ways you lean into the natural world? What are the benefits? What are the obstacles? Do you feel that this is more important than ever? What are you inspired to do going forward?

What did you notice doing the Aliveness Practice? Is it something you're inspired to do again, possibly on a regular basis? If so, why? If not, why not?

Celebrating Truth and Beauty

How do truth and beauty manifest in your life? Are there potent examples from the human realm? Can you name what it is that touches you about these experiences? What needs are met?

Vulnerability and Innocence

Spend some time with this one. These are tender topics. Is there an orphan (unseen/unloved) part of yourself that is particularly vulnerable? What would you name that part?

Vulnerability is sometimes automatically associated with defensiveness. What is your experience of vulnerability without defensiveness? How does it feel? How does it support healthy relating?

How do you relate to your own innocence? How is innocence operational in your relational life? What are the benefits? What are some of the main challenges in seeing through the pain to the innocence at the core of yourself and others?

How does adding vulnerability and innocence to the big picture support your overall regenerative mindset? What fosters these capacities in you? How do, or how will, you cultivate them?

Honoring and Transforming Grief

What has been your process up until now of owning and transforming grief? What impact has it had on your life?

Do the Transforming Pain Practice and give it the space needed to really unfold it. What were the unmet needs in play? Were you able to bring self-empathy to your experience? Were you able to get a felt sense of the beauty in the unmet needs? What was your take-away?

The Gift of Conflict

Why is conflict transformation important in the context of the book?

How would you characterize your approach to conflict (e.g., do you tend to be a conflict avoider)?

How do the other capacities covered in the book support the capacity to transform conflict?

What is your relationship to anger? What are the implications of reframing anger as simply a strong NO? What's an example of you meeting and using anger in a healthy way? What was the result?

Tending the Bond

Co-regulation requires self-awareness and self-acceptance. How do you feel about your progress with those foundations? What kinds of situations are most challenging in terms of self-acceptance?

How do your core limiting beliefs relate to the external events that trigger you?

How do you know when you are triggered, what happens in your body? How do you recover when you are alone? How could another person, in a tending the bond process, support you when you are triggered?

A sample interaction between two people is offered. What was/is your experience of that interaction? Do you think any initial awkwardness could be outweighed by potential benefits? What kinds of benefits can you imagine in a specific relationship? How could the process be unfolded in a way that would not feel awkward?

Realistically, can you see yourself using a practice like this with someone else? How about in a group setting?

What's Yours to Do?

What comes up for you as you reflect on what is yours to do? Is it a specific thing or a more general way of being in the world?

How is having some clarity on what's yours to do supportive in your day-to-day life? Is it a remedy to thoughts related to "not doing enough"?

In a sense, chapters six and seven can be considered the heart of the book, since building relational capacity is essential to a relationship revolution. What are your main take-aways related to strengthening interpersonal capacity?

Chapter Eight: Love in Action

What comes up for you as you reflect on this short paragraph?

With love as the matrix, it's no longer a question about whether or not love will prevail, but trusting that love is already and always in play— regardless of appearances and preferences. This is love as the engine of regenerative possibilities.

Love as Freedom

In your own words, why is the emphasis on love and freedom important in the context of the Great Unravelling and the Relationship Revolution?

What is your experience of love as freedom? How does it manifest in your life? What are the implications?

Transformational Nonviolence

What does transformational nonviolence mean to you?

Both Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. bring us back to a focus on relationship and community. In the context of the Great Unravelling, the Relationship Revolution, and the overall context of healing, what are your thoughts on the importance of community? Where does transpersonal love and transformational nonviolence fit in? How do they fit together?

What is your experience of consistent ends and means in your activism?

How does a focus on transformational nonviolence draw your attention back full circle to your own healing, your own resourcing, your own intentions, your own clarity and courage?

Spiritual Warriorship

What does an integrated spirituality mean to you? How do you embody it? What limits your ability to embody it?

How is the concept of spiritual bypass relevant to your experience? Have you seen it play out in groups? What does it look like? What are the consequences?

How do you relate to the concept of spiritual warriorship in the context of the book as a whole? How do you situate yourself in that picture?

What comes up for you as you contemplate “reality as groundless”?

How does this final chapter of the book relate to the premise that we going through a rite of passage? Is this a useful framing for you personally? If so, how/why?

Towards the end, the book circles back to the political, to building the “political consciousness and power necessary to create alternative systems and ways of meeting our needs that don’t violate people and the planet.” What is your process of engaging at this level? What resources and support is needed to sustain your momentum? What potential do you sense in your own circles and community?

Now that you have read the book and worked through the Study Guide, what are you left with? What are your main take-aways? What are the main challenges you want to keep in mind and address?

What is most essential for you to remember in continuing to hold the big picture and all the paradox?

If we are in the midst of a grand adventure, how would you characterize it?

What are your thoughts at this point on the illusion of separateness and the primacy of relationships?

Is there an expression of empowerment—words or a sound or movement—that can help conclude and solidify your experience of the book and support you in going forward to do whatever is yours to do?

Thank you for being an integral part of the Relationship Revolution!