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1. What first drew you to relationship science?

From writing personality tests for my family when I was six years old, I've always been interested in understanding individual differences between people and how those influence their interactions with others. Specifically, why do certain people get along and others conflict? Why are some people drawn to form relationships, and what predicts which relationships end and persevere? My first experiences researching in a business school as an undergraduate gave me an interest in studying questions like these from a research lens, which I later applied to better understanding romantic relationships.

2. What's a project you're especially proud of right now, and why?

After three years of development, my lab at University of Michigan recently launched a research study and fully-functional dating app, Revel, that allows researchers to track users as they match, interact, and eventually form relationships. This is definitely the most involved and interdisciplinary project I have ever been involved in, and it's exciting to already see people using the app, matching with others, and forming relationships in real time!

3. What do you find most exciting or rewarding about studying relationships?

I think relationships are one of the most complicated problems you could study. Humans are endlessly complex, and when you bring them together, there are so many interesting dynamics at play—making this an area of research with an endless number of fascinating, unanswered questions to study. Moreover, these relationships lie at the core of what makes our lives rich and fulfilling, which means our work is both personally fulfilling and meaningful to those outside the field.

4. What's something about relationships that people often misunderstand—or that your work has changed your mind about?

People spend so much effort trying to find the “right” person to be in a relationship with, but extant research emphasizes the importance of developing a responsive, positive relationship with whoever you are with, rather than finding the perfectly compatible partner. For example, many people think that being similar to one's romantic partner is important for relationship satisfaction, but my ongoing work shows that doesn't seem to be the case.

5. What are you working on next, or what question are you most excited to pursue?

That being said, I'm still interested in trying to better understand romantic compatibility and whether there are any predictors of who people have better relationship outcomes with. Specifically, I'm interested in taking an idiographic perspective to this question. In other words, maybe there are predictors of who we are compatible with, but these predictors are person-specific rather than true across a population. Being aligned in religious beliefs might be

important to my relationship quality, but maybe being with someone passionate and adventurous is more important to my friend's relationship.

6. What advice would you give to students or early-career scholars interested in relationship science?

Do what you have to in order to stay connected to your passion for what you do. This includes taking breaks, cultivating a life outside of your work, living in alignment with your values, and surrounding yourself with people who will be honest about the highs and lows of conducting research. If you don't take self-care seriously, you'll burn out!