From Hannah Taylor via Facebook 9/12/21

I do not look for red flags in others' behavior. That's a losing game--it keeps me focused on the other person and whether their behavior is acceptable.
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I look for the red flags in myself, in what I am experiencing and how I am interacting.
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My experience is the law when it comes to relationships. My experience is the only reality that matters, because relationships are intimately subjective.
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When people talk about red flags, there's often this analysis of how reasonable/unreasonable a behavior is, what the behavior means about now, what the behavior means about the future... none of it is really material to how you will *feel* in the relationship.
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Some of the red flags in myself that get my attention:
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🚩When my voice is high in my throat and high in pitch
This one usually tells me that a woman is not a fit to be my friend. When I feel connected to another woman in friendship, my voice is low and deep. When my voice goes high, some part of me is performing something. I usually investigate what's going on for me, and if it keeps happening, I have limited engagement with that person.
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🚩When I explain myself more than once
This one applies to friendships and dating. I am not interested in relating to people who don't understand me on an energetic basis, and sometimes this takes a little verbal explanation to establish. Sometimes when someone understands me, explanation is like whipped cream on top of the delicious connection! But extensive explanation is a sign that I am feeling misunderstood and/or the connection isn't really there. Explaining myself to gain understanding drains my energy and leads to self-doubt, so I don't relate with people when the relationship requires that.
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🚩When I set a verbal boundary
My boundaries are mostly energetic, and very effective. It's a red flag for me to feel a need to set a verbal boundary, and it is a dealbreaker if I hear the same boundary come out of my mouth twice. I do not question whether I was clear enough, I simply know that person is not for me.
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🚩When I hear stress in my voice
When my throat is tight and I'm speaking with stressed emphasis trying to convince someone of something (usually this goes along with setting a verbal boundary more than once or explaining myself profusely) I understand that communication with this person is not flowing easily and I am tipping into dysregulation. Nervous system dysregulation on this level is a red flag for more profound dysregulation if the relationship continues or deepens.
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🚩When I notice myself judging or criticizing the other person
Recently I decided on a rule for myself and my life, "no mean girl energy ever." This applies to me more than anyone else. When I hear my mean-girl energy come out, that is a huge red flag. Sometimes I need to re-center in myself, and sometimes it means the relationship isn't a fit. I want to relate exclusively to people I respect and admire, and it isn't fair to others to invite them into a relationship where they will be silently criticized or judged.
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🚩When I notice I have a fear of how they will react or respond to something I say or do
I am not available for relationships that inspire fear or contain punishment or consequences. This one is a sign that trust is missing, that I don't trust them to continually respect me. If I continue to relate to them at a certain level, I am at risk for feeling shame, guilt, and self-doubt.
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Here's the super important thing about looking for red flags in yourself--none of this is about condemning the other person. That's what makes it so easy and free to apply.
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Nobody is wrong for how they're feeling. Nobody is wrong for how they're behaving. No experience is wrong or unreal or incorrect or unreasonable. Some people are a resonant fit for me and some are not. There is no justification necessary.
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You'll also notice that I laid a distinction between a red flag and a dealbreaker. These red flags are sometimes signs that I need to tune myself up in order to relate to the person--get more on my center, have more nourishing conditions, feel safer or more authentic, and they're sometimes signs that I can have only limited interaction with a person.
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Dealbreakers mean they are not allowed in my life, full stop.
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I don't have to explain my red flags or dealbreakers to anyone, I simply use them to inform my relationships and what I show up for.