

Realth

The Manifesto

Health is the physical you.

Wealth is the financial you.

Realth is the relational you.

Realth lives in you, shows up in your relationships,
and shapes the world you leave behind.

Debbie Johnson · myrealth.com

We have words for two important versions of ourselves.

There is the physical you. We call its condition health. There is the financial you. We call its condition wealth.

But there is another you. The you who walks into a marriage. The you who raises a child. The you who makes a friend, joins a team, sets a boundary, handles rejection, keeps a promise, starts an argument, repairs one, leaves, stays, trusts, withdraws, forgives, avoids, reaches out, or shuts down. The you who has to live among other people. What do we call the condition of that person?

We have many words for pieces of it. Emotional intelligence. Attachment. Communication. Boundaries. Self-awareness. Social skills. Values. Confidence. Empathy. Belonging. But we do not have a simple everyday word for the condition of the relational you. That is the space Realth names.

Health is the physical you.
Wealth is the financial you.
Realth is the relational you.

You already have Realth

Realth is not something you need to believe in. You already have it. Just as you have health whether you are healthy or sick, and wealth whether your bank account is full or empty, you have a relational condition whether you have thought about it or not.

It is present when you are alone. It is present when you meet someone. It is present when you fall in love. It is present when you disagree. It is present when you are ignored, praised, criticized, chosen, rejected, needed, or disappointed.

Realth is not a relationship. It is what you bring into relationships. That distinction matters. A relationship exists between people. Realth exists within the person. A relationship can end. Your Realth comes with you.

You can leave one marriage and carry the same patterns into another. You can change jobs and find yourself having the same conflict with a different manager. You can make new friends and still feel unseen. You can promise yourself that next time will be different, yet discover that when pressure comes, the same version of you appears. The people changed. The setting changed. The pattern did not. That pattern is telling you something.

Relationships reveal us

We spend a great deal of time talking about the relationships we want. We want honesty. We want closeness. We want respect. We want communication. We want trust. We want people who understand us. But what we want from relationships and how we function inside them are not always the same thing.

A person may want intimacy and pull away whenever someone gets too close. A person may value honesty and avoid difficult conversations. A person may want peace and become controlling whenever they feel uncertain. A person may describe family as their highest value while giving the people closest to them very little time or attention. A person may believe they are self-aware while everyone around them can see a pattern they cannot. This does not make them bad. It makes them human.

There is often a difference between who we believe we are, who we intend to be, who we present ourselves as, and who actually shows up. Relationships expose that difference. They are mirrors. Not perfect mirrors. Relationships are affected by the other person, the environment, power, history, timing, and circumstance. But over time, patterns appear.

How do you respond when you feel misunderstood? Can you recognize what you are feeling before it controls what you do? Can you hear another person’s experience without immediately defending your own? Can you disagree without turning difference into danger? Can you tell the truth when the truth might cost you approval? Do your choices match the values you say matter? Do you move toward people and experiences that matter to you, or spend your life waiting to feel ready? These are questions about Realth.

Realth is not how good your relationships look

A long marriage does not automatically mean strong Realth. A divorce does not automatically mean poor Realth. Having many friends does not mean strong Realth. Being introverted does not mean poor Realth. Being charming, warm, popular, agreeable, spiritual, educated, married, emotionally expressive, or good at giving advice does not tell us enough. All of those things can be seen. Realth is harder to see.

In that way, it has something important in common with health and wealth. You can meet someone who looks physically healthy and know nothing about the illness developing inside their body. You can meet someone who looks wealthy and know nothing about their debt. You can meet someone who appears confident, caring, emotionally mature, and deeply interested in you and still know very little about how they function in relationships over time.

A first date is an interesting example. Two people sit across from each other carrying enormous amounts of invisible information. You cannot see blood pressure. You cannot see allergies. You cannot see debt. You cannot see a credit score. And you cannot see someone's full relational condition.

You can see signals. You can observe behavior. You can listen. You can notice patterns. But some things only become clearer through time and measurement. Realth belongs among those things.

How do I function relationally?

At its simplest, Realth asks one question: How do I function relationally?

Not: Am I a good person? Am I lovable? Do people like me? Am I good at relationships? Those questions quickly become judgments.

Realth is interested in functioning. The same way health asks what is happening in the body, Realth asks what is happening in the relational self. That functioning can be examined through five connected dimensions.

Self-awareness

Can I see myself with reasonable accuracy? Can I recognize my patterns, needs, defenses, motives, strengths, limits, and impact? If I cannot see myself, everything that follows becomes harder.

Emotional literacy

Can I recognize, understand, name, and respond to what I feel? Emotion is part of almost every important relationship. When we cannot understand what is happening inside us, we often make other people responsible for feelings we have not learned to work with ourselves.

Relational intelligence

Can I understand what happens between people? Can I recognize boundaries, power, reciprocity, trust, repair, difference, conflict, closeness, and distance? Can I understand another person's experience without losing my own?

Living your values

Does the way I live agree with what I say matters? Values are easy to claim. Relationships make them visible. Patience matters until someone tests our patience. Honesty matters until honesty becomes uncomfortable. Family matters until attention must be taken from something else. Realth looks at the distance between stated values and lived values.

Expanded engagement

Can I participate in relational life? Not merely think about it. Not study it. Not wait until I feel completely safe, confident, healed, certain, or ready. Can I move toward people, experiences, communities, opportunities, and the life I say I want? This matters because it is possible to understand yourself deeply and still remain hidden from life.

The five work together

None of these dimensions stands alone. Self-awareness without values can become endless self-examination. Emotional literacy without relational intelligence can leave us fluent in our own feelings but unable to understand another person. Relational intelligence without values can become manipulation. Values without engagement can remain ideals. Engagement without self-awareness can repeat the same patterns in more places with more people.

Realth is not one skill. It is a condition created by how these parts work together. And because they work together, they can change together. That may be one of the most important things about Realth.

It is not a personality type. It is not a verdict. It is not a permanent score stamped onto a person. It is a condition. Conditions can be measured. Conditions can change.

What is true about how I relate?

The word Realth contains the word real. That matters more than it first appears. There is a story buried in the language here, and it is worth telling.

In Old English there was a word, treowð. It did not mean what its descendant means today. It meant faithfulness. Loyalty. Keeping your word to the people you gave it to. It described a person's reliability toward others, not whether a statement was factually correct. Somewhere between the 1300s and the 1500s, the meaning moved. It came to mean accuracy. Facts. Whether a thing matches reality. The word is truth.

You can still hear the old meaning in the few places it got stuck. A true friend. Be true to me. We do not mean factually accurate. We mean something much older, and much harder. So English did once have a word for the condition of being real with people. Then it spent a few hundred years using that word for something else.

Which brings us back to that difference. There is often a difference between what we say about ourselves and what is true in practice. We say we value connection, but avoid being known. We say we want honesty, but punish people when they tell us something difficult. We say we want healthy relationships, but keep choosing familiar patterns that hurt us. We say we have boundaries when we actually have walls. We say we are giving when we are secretly keeping score. We say we do not need anyone when what we mean is that needing people has become frightening.

Human beings can perform. Sometimes we perform for other people. Sometimes we perform for ourselves.

Now, I am not saying being real means you say every thought out loud and show every feeling. Healthy people adjust. We read the room, we pick our timing, we are kind when we are tired. Holding your tongue at a funeral is not pretending. That is performing, and most of us perform a little every day. You did the kind thing even when you did not feel like it.

Pretending is different. Pretending is making believe. You act out something that is not there. "I'm fine" when you are not fine. "I don't care" when you care so much it hurts. "That's my boundary" when what you mean is "I don't want to be uncomfortable." None of those is automatically a problem, and sometimes they are just words. But sometimes the words we use about ourselves are there so we never have to look at what is hiding under them, and what hides under there is very hard to face.

Which is why Realth cannot simply ask, “Who do you think you are?” It must eventually ask a harder question: What does the way you function reveal?

Not because an assessment can discover some perfect hidden truth about a human being. It cannot. But because patterns contain information. Choices contain information. Contradictions contain information. Behavior over time contains information.

The goal is not to shame the difference between the person we imagine ourselves to be and the person who shows up. The goal is to see it. Because what can be seen can be worked with.

Realth begins before relationship

It would be easy to hear the word Realth and assume it is simply another way of talking about relationships. It is not. Realth begins with the self.

You have a relationship with your own experience before another person enters the room. You notice or fail to notice yourself. You understand or misunderstand your emotions. You carry values, beliefs, expectations, fears, habits, and learned patterns.

Then another person enters. Now the internal becomes relational. Your self-awareness affects what you notice. Your emotional literacy affects how you respond. Your relational intelligence affects how you interpret what is happening between you. Your values affect the choices you make. Your willingness to engage determines whether you step toward life or retreat from it.

This is why Realth can exist when you are alone. But it becomes visible through participation. The relational you is built inside and revealed outside.

Why this matters

We have spent generations learning to take health seriously. We measure it. We track it. We screen for problems before they become crises. We increasingly do the same with wealth. We check balances. We review credit. We calculate debt. We plan for the future.

Yet many of the experiences that most shape a human life depend on a condition we rarely examine until something breaks. A marriage ends. A friendship disappears. A family becomes divided. A person feels lonely despite being surrounded by people. The same conflict keeps happening. Someone succeeds professionally and cannot understand why

closeness feels so difficult. Someone knows exactly what healthy relationships are supposed to look like and still cannot seem to create one.

Then we look at the relationship. Sometimes we need to look at the person inside it. Not to assign blame. To find leverage.

If my relational functioning contributes to the patterns in my life, then I am not completely powerless inside those patterns. There is something I can learn. Something I can practice. Something I can strengthen. Something I can change.

A real measure can change

There is one more thing worth saying about measurement, and it is the part people usually skip. Your health can get better. It can also get worse. Your wealth can get better. It can also get worse.

A number that can only go up is not a measurement. It is a compliment.

That is not a flaw in those measures. It is the whole reason they work. Realth moves the same way. Most of us have had a year where we were better with people than the year before, and a year where we were worse. We simply never had a way to know which one we were in until something broke.

This is also why one reading is not enough. You can change what is true about you. You can also pretend. The difference is that pretending does not hold up across time. Patterns catch up. A single score is a snapshot. A condition needs checking again.

A third condition worth knowing

Health is the physical you. Wealth is the financial you. Realth is the relational you. Three conditions. Three parts of a life that matter.

How am I functioning physically? How am I functioning financially? How am I functioning relationally?

We already understand that looking healthy is not the same as being healthy. We understand that looking wealthy is not the same as being wealthy. Perhaps it is time to understand that looking good in relationships is not the same as functioning well in them. And perhaps the first step is simply having a word that lets us ask the question.

What is the condition of my Realth?

Take the free Realth Assessment at myrealth.com/assessment