Chemistry, Compatibility and Capacity in Dating

In short:

Chemistry is the feeling of attraction or ease around someone. It's usually something you feel, and it usually shows up fairly quickly.

Compatibility is the deeper sense of alignment over things like your relationship goals, values and personalities. It's usually more noticed or identified than felt, and it often reveals itself over time.

Capacity, or **relationship capacity**, is someone's ability to show up in relationships in a consistent and emotionally mature way. Someone's relationship capacity (or lack of it) sometimes shows up quickly, but it can take some time to identify it.

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Signs of Chemistry in Dating

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1. Physical Attraction

- You feel physically attracted or drawn to him
- You noticed him or felt interested in him before you'd even spoken to each other

2. Ease or Flow

- It mostly feels easy to be around him
- You often feel like you just "click" with each other, without having to explain lots of things in detail

3. Warmth / Longing

- When you're apart, you look forward to seeing him again
- You get a little endorphin rush when you get a notification and it's from him

Signs of Compatibility in Dating

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1. Shared Relationship Goals

- Long-term vs. short-term
- Wanting/already having kids vs. not wanting kids
- Strict monogamy vs. non-monogamy vs. flexible
- Desired level of independence vs. togetherness

2. Shared Values

- The balance between career, friends, family, partner etc.
- Religious or political views
- Values around money, health and fitness, personal growth

3. Sexual Compatibility

- Sexual preferences, including (but not only) sexual roles
- Sexual needs, like having compatible sex drives, or needs for emotional connection vs. sexual connection

4. Compatible Lifestyles

- Compatible schedules
- Geographical location and willingness to do long-distance

5. Compatible Personalities

- Introversion vs. extraversion
- Communication styles
- Some shared hobbies or interests

Signs of Relationship Capacity in Dating

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1. Clear Communication	▪ Communicates clearly and directly ▪ You're not left guessing what he thinks and feels most of the time
2. Consistency	▪ Ready to "show up" and build a connection, is mostly consistent in how he treats you ▪ If there's a sudden change in his behavior he is able to talk about it
3. Integrity	▪ His words and actions align ▪ He's not regularly telling you one thing then acting in a way that seems completely contradictory
4. Emotional Availability	▪ Can talk about his emotions and expectations directly ▪ Can manage his emotions, doesn't regularly have strong emotional reactions he later regrets
5. Consideration / Mutuality	▪ Can consider your opinions and desires alongside his own ▪ There's a sense of mutual connection and space — it's "we're in this together," not just "it's me vs. you"