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From Private Choice to Moral Responsibility: Education and Disclosure as Preconditions for Relationships and Procreation

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Annotation

This thesis examines whether intimate relationships and procreation should be understood not merely as private choices for individuals but as matters of a moral responsibility for society at large. Drawing on Aristotle's Virtue Ethics, W.D. Ross's Theory of Duties, and contemporary debates on procreative ethics, the thesis argues that education, ethical preparation, and mutual disclosure can reduce foreseeable relational and social harm whilst preserving individual freedom.

Abstract

This thesis explores if intimate relationships and procreation should continue to be understood as purely private matters or if they generate broader moral responsibilities due to their foreseeable consequences for partners, children, and society. Societies treat relationship formation as a domain of unrestricted personal freedom, despite the significant emotional, psychological, and social harms that may arise from unprepared relationships and unstable family environments. Based on Aristotle's Virtue Ethics and W.D. Ross's Theory of Prima Facie Duties and by engaging with the works of Hugh LaFollette and Christopher Freiman, this thesis argues that relational and procreative decisions possess ethical importance because they affect vulnerable and dependent individuals especially future children. This thesis further develops a risk-based moral framework supported by empirical research concerning adverse childhood experiences, relational instability, and social outcomes. In response, it proposes a non-coercive model consisting of Procreative Readiness Education (PRE) and a system of mutual disclosure intended to promote informed and responsible decision making while preserving individual freedom. This thesis concludes by arguing that ethical preparation and transparency should be understood as important conditions for responsible relationships and parenthood.

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Introduction

Nowadays in modern societies, intimate relationships are considered to be matters of personal choice and are driven by factors such as individual preference, emotional attraction and personal autonomy. Decisions about entering relationships, forming long-term partnerships and even having children are often treated as domains in which external guidance, preparation or regulation is considered unnecessary or even inappropriate. This assumption is embedded in modern liberal thought, where freedom of choice in one's personal life is considered to be a fundamental value.

The Problem

This individualist, personal freedom-based outlook on marriage and relationships raises one critical problem — While intimate relationships are treated as inherently private, their consequences are rarely confined to the individuals involved. Unprepared relationships commonly generate emotional instability, conflict and long-term dissatisfaction at the individual level. Furthermore, the externalities extend far beyond the individuals directly involved in said relationships, such as the significant influence on the development and well-being of the children raised in such relational environments. Children do not choose the conditions into which they are born, yet their psychological, emotional, and developmental outcomes are deeply shaped by the stability or instability of their parental relationships. Empirical research indicates that adverse relational environments are associated with increased risks of mental health difficulties, emotional dysregulation, and long-term developmental challenges (Felitti et al., 1998; Bellis et al., 2018; Bethell et al., 2019). These consequences may also extend to partners, families, and broader social systems. This thesis focuses primarily on the moral significance of the harm to future children by unstable family dynamics, as this represents the most direct and ethically compelling case for pre-relational responsibility. Therefore, what appears to be a private choice often produces unforeseen consequences for others.

While this thesis focuses mainly on the harm posed to dependent children as its primary concern, similar patterns of risk and responsibility can be observed in the effects of unstable relationships on partners, extended families, and broader social institutions (CDC, 2025).

Despite this, there is little expectation in contemporary societies that individuals should acquire the knowledge and/or skills necessary to sustain stable relationships before entering them. Unlike other fundamental domains of modern life such as medicine, business, education and operation of machinery, where preparation is an explicit requirement before taking on responsibilities that will drastically affect others (Aristotle, 1999), intimate relationships remain largely unstructured. Individuals are free to make decisions that may shape decades of their lives and potentially the lives of future dependent children without any formal preparation or an informed understanding of the consequences.

This gap between the privacy of relationships and their serious impact creates a tension that this thesis seeks to address. If relationships can generate predictable forms of harm when they are entered without preparation, then the assumption that they are purely private choices becomes

rather philosophically questionable. The central problem of this thesis therefore is whether the current model of unprepared relationship formation is ethically defensible.

For the purpose of philosophical clarity, this thesis focuses primarily on the moral significance of harm to future dependent children.

From Private Choice to Moral Responsibility

This thesis proposes a drastic shift in perspective — from viewing relationships as purely private choices to understanding them as forms of a moral responsibility to society as a whole, and the next generation. Relationship choices may create substantial harm, and therefore the choices which create dependent and vulnerable persons under foreseeable risk require adequate preparation. These externalities extend well beyond the individuals directly involved, most significantly influencing the development and well-being of the children who are raised within such relational environments. Unlike many other personal choices, decisions about intimate relationships and procreation have a distinctive moral structure (Ross, 2002). They do not merely affect the individual making the choice itself, but directly shape the quality of life for various others, particularly children who have no control over the circumstances into which they are born. This distinguishes relational decisions from many other private choices, such as career preferences or lifestyle consumption, which primarily affect the agent and largely only indirectly impact others. In contrast, relationships that lead to procreation create conditions of dependency, vulnerability, and a long-term developmental impact for another person. For this reason, the moral significance of relational decisions lies not in the fact that they are choices, but in the fact that the consequences they generate are direct, foreseeable, and affect vulnerable individuals.

An “intimate relationship” refers not solely to casual interaction or to early-stage dating, but to a relational context in which individuals develop emotional, psychological, or practical interdependence. Such relationships may vary in intensity, but moral responsibility becomes progressively stronger as the relationship moves toward long-term commitment, shared decision-making, and the possibility of procreation. To enter an intimate relationship is not just to pursue personal happiness and satisfaction — It is to participate in a shared social dynamic which shapes the emotional, psychological and often economic conditions of another person (Ross, 2002). When such relationships lead to procreation, the moral stakes increase (LaFollette, 2010). The well-being of future children who have no control over the circumstances of their birth becomes directly dependent on the preparedness of their parents. This thesis does not claim that individuals must meet strict moral requirements before engaging in initial social interactions such as dating. Rather, it argues that access to structured relational education equips individuals to navigate relationships more responsibly as they develop. Moral responsibility becomes progressively more significant as relationships deepen and begin to involve long-term commitments or the possibility of creating dependent individuals.

This unique perspective shows that relationships and procreation are best understood as practices with ethical dimensions which extend beyond individual preferences. They involve responsibilities toward partners, potential children and society at large. This does not necessarily mean that relationships should be externally controlled by state actors, but it does suggest that

entering them without preparation may constitute a form of moral negligence when predictable harms are involved.

The central point is not to deny freedom in relationships, but to recognize that responsibility increases as relational decisions begin to shape the lives of others. The idea of moral responsibility is in the recognition that certain choices, although personally initiated, have structured and predictable effects. If these effects therefore involve a foreseeable and avoidable risk of significant harm, particularly to vulnerable or dependent individuals, then the absence of reasonable preparation becomes ethically relevant. This claim does not rest on the elimination of all possible harm, but on the responsibility to reduce preventable and morally weighted risks where they can be reasonably anticipated. It is important to distinguish between different kinds of harm. This thesis places a primary moral weight on harms that actually affect others, particularly future children or dependent individuals, whose well-being is directly shaped by such relational conditions. Harms experienced within a relationship between consenting adults, such as emotional dissatisfaction or poor partner choice, are also relevant but carry a markedly different moral status. While such harms may affect individual well-being, they do not generate the same level of moral obligation as harms imposed on others who lack control over their circumstances (Ross, 2002). This thesis argues that the moral importance of relationships lies in this crucial intersection between private intentions and their consequences to others. Therefore, the moral concern is not that relationships have the possibility to involve harm, but that they may create avoidable and foreseeable conditions under which harm to others becomes far more likely.

Thesis Statement

This thesis argues that intimate relationships and procreation are not merely private acts, but morally important practices with far-reaching consequences. Entering relationships without adequate preparation such as emotional maturity, conflict resolution skills, financial awareness and honest disclosure of relevant personal information can generate harm at multiple levels which can create a ripple effect including individual, familial and societal. Therefore, individuals have a moral responsibility to undergo forms of education and mutual disclosure before entering relationships that may lead to long-term commitment or procreation.

This thesis defends a model in which education and disclosure function as necessary preconditions for responsible relationship formation. This model is intended to enhance informed decision making rather than restrict individual freedom. At the same time the thesis rejects controlling approaches such as strict parental licensing because it presents a potential violation of one's personal autonomy. Instead, it proposes the idea of responsible freedom.

Clarification of Scope

It is important to clarify what this thesis does not claim. Firstly, this thesis does not argue that individuals should be prohibited from entering relationships or having children. The aim is not to impose actual restrictions on personal life choices, but to examine the ethical and civic conditions under which such choices are made.

Secondly, this thesis does not claim that all social problems such as poverty, crime or mental health issues are caused by unprepared relationships and/or unprepared parenting. These issues are complex and often have multiple contributing factors. This thesis does argue that unprepared relationships can act as significant contributing factors which may amplify existing risks and vulnerabilities.

Thirdly, this thesis rejects coercive models such as parental licensing systems which grant the state authority to determine who may or may not become a parent. Such approaches raise serious concerns regarding autonomy, fairness, and abuse of power (LaFollette, 1980; Freiman, 2022). However, rejecting licensing does not imply the complete absence of institutional responsibility. The framework proposed in this thesis supports universal preparatory education and structured disclosure mechanisms as forms of civic and ethical responsibility rather than systems of reproductive control. Questions concerning participation, accountability, and implementation are addressed in later chapters. This framework therefore seeks to balance individual freedom with the state's legitimate interest in reducing foreseeable social harm associated with relational instability and unprepared parenthood.

The long-term aim of the framework is not behavioral control through coercion, but the gradual development of evidence-informed relational culture in which individuals voluntarily make more responsible choices through increased awareness and collective social knowledge.

Finally, the focus of this thesis is not just limited to parenting alone. While the well-being of children is an important concern, the argument begins at an earlier stage — at the formation of relationships themselves. It is in this initial stage that patterns of behavior, communication and responsibility are established (Schutte et al., 2014), and it is here that preparation can have the most significant impact.

Key Questions

- I. Under what conditions can pre-relationship and pre-parenthood preparation be understood as a moral and societal responsibility?
- II. What forms of education and disclosure may support healthier relationships and responsible parenthood?
- III. How can such a framework be implemented while preserving individual freedom and avoiding coercive control?

The argument of this thesis does not assume that all harmful outcomes arising from unstable relationships are solely the responsibility of the individuals involved. Social structures, economic conditions, and institutions also play important roles in shaping relational outcomes (CDC, 2025). However, the existence of broader structural responsibilities does not eliminate personal moral responsibility. This thesis argues that when individuals voluntarily enter relational practices that foreseeably affect the well-being of vulnerable others, especially future children, they acquire a *prima facie* responsibility to exercise reasonable preparation and informed judgment. The ethical significance of preparation therefore arises not merely from the

existence of harmful outcomes, but from the relationship between voluntary action, foreseeable risk, and the impact of those actions on dependent persons.

Philosophical Approach and Method

In this thesis, the core of the analysis is the Virtue Ethics of Aristotle. Mainly the concept of doctrine of the mean. Aristotle does not say virtue as a simple mathematical midpoint between two extremes, but as a form of practical wisdom that identifies an appropriate response relative to particular circumstances (Aristotle, 1999). Determining the mean therefore requires judgment, experience, and sensitivity to context. This framework is relevant to relationship formation because it helps avoid two ethically problematic extremes — On one side lies unreflective or unprepared relational freedom, where individuals enter relationships without sufficient awareness of foreseeable consequences. On the other side lies excessive external control, where institutions determine relational choices in ways that undermine personal autonomy. This thesis argues for a context-sensitive middle path in which individuals retain freedom while being guided by education, self-knowledge, and cultivating relational capacities.

The Moral Theory of W.D Ross is also used to analyze duties such as beneficence and non-maleficence (Ross, 2002). These duties are particularly relevant in the context of relationships and procreation where individuals have capacity to promote well-being or cause harm through their actions (Ross, 2002). The failure to prepare adequately for such responsibilities can be understood as ignoring these *prima facie* duties (Ross, 2002).

Furthermore, this thesis also engages with contemporary discussions about relationships and procreative ethics, including the work of LaFollette, and Christopher Freiman.

Roadmap of the Thesis

Chapter 1 develops the philosophical foundations of the argument, drawing on Aristotle's Virtue Ethics and Ross's Theory of Duties, as well as contemporary contributions to procreative ethics. It establishes the moral basis for the claim that preparation is required before entering relationships which may lead to procreation.

Chapter 2 examines empirical data related to the consequences of unprepared relationships, including impacts on mental health, domestic stability, economic conditions and broader social systems. This chapter demonstrates how theoretical concerns are reflected in observable patterns.

Chapter 3 introduces a constructive proposal consisting of two main components: A pre-relationship education framework and a system of mutual disclosure. This model is presented as a practical application of the philosophical principles developed earlier.

Chapter 4 analyses the already existing approaches to relationship preparation, highlighting their insights as well as their limitations.

Chapter 5 addresses potential objections, including concerns about freedom, privacy and the risk of excessive control. It argues that the framework of this thesis represents a balanced approach that avoids the extremes of both unregulated freedom and total control by the state.

The conclusion ties together the main arguments and reflects on the implications of understanding relationships and procreation as domains of moral responsibility.

Chapter 1 - Philosophical Foundations of Moral Responsibility in Relationships and Procreation

The Need for Moral Grounding

The introductory chapter explains the central idea of this thesis, which is that relationships and decisions about having children are usually treated as private choices, but they have far-reaching consequences. This creates an important philosophical tension. On one hand, modern western society values personal freedom and considers relationships as purely matters of individual preference. On the other hand, these relationships often affect not only the individuals involved but also romantic partners, family, dependent children and society as a whole. This raises a key question...

Can such decisions remain purely private, and do they generate moral responsibilities because of their predictable effects?

Even though harmful outcomes are not certain, relational and parental decisions often involve foreseeable risks that may significantly affect vulnerable individuals, particularly dependent children. In moral philosophy, foreseeability is ethically important because responsibility does not depend solely on intentional harm, but additionally on whether individuals knowingly engage in actions that carry avoidable and predictable risks for others (Ross, 2002). From a philosophical perspective, foreseeability is ethically important because responsibility may arise not only from intentional harm, but also from knowingly creating avoidable and predictable risks for others (Ross, 2002). Therefore, the concept of private choice may be too limited to fully explain the ethical nature of relationships and procreation.

This chapter aims to address whether existing philosophical frameworks can justify or challenge the assumption that relationships are purely private. It investigates whether traditional and contemporary theories support the idea of unrestricted personal freedom or whether they suggest that preparation, responsibility and ethical awareness are necessary before entering such important life decisions.

To address this crucial question, this chapter looks to five key philosophers. Aristotle provides the central framework through his Theory of Virtue (Aristotle, 1999) and his concept of mean between extremes (Aristotle, 1999). LaFollette presents a contrasting position which supports forms of governmental control (LaFollette, 1980; LaFollette, 2010) Christopher Freiman argues a critique of licensing models and highlights concerns about state power and fairness (Freiman, 2022). Additionally, W.D Ross contributes a theory of moral duties such as beneficence and non-maleficence, which helps to understand responsibility in situations where actions affect

others (Ross, 2002). These perspectives will all be used to evaluate the limits of both unrestricted personal freedom and excessive control, as well as to develop a philosophical foundation for a balanced approach to relationships and procreation.

Existing philosophical approaches tend to either overemphasize personal autonomy or impose excessive control. This thesis introduces a middle path, grounded in responsibility, preparation and ethical awareness.

Aristotle: Virtue, Responsibility and the Ethics of Relationships

Aristotle's moral philosophy provides the main foundation for this thesis because it explains how human beings become ethically responsible through the development of character. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* books such as books 2, 3 and 6, Aristotle argues that virtue is not something we are born with but something we develop through practice (Aristotle, 1999). According to Aristotle, we become good by repeatedly doing good actions (Aristotle, 1999). In this sense, virtue is a habitual disposition and a stable character formed over time through consistent behavior. A person does not develop virtuous character or practical judgment by chance. According to Aristotle, these capacities are formed gradually through habituation, education, self-discipline, and the repeated practice of good actions (Aristotle, 1999). Moral development therefore requires the cultivation of character and the rational regulation of desires and emotions over time. This concept is crucial for understanding relationships – if virtue requires habituation and the cultivation of practical judgment, then entering serious intimate relationships without adequate preparation may reflect insufficient character development for responsibilities that significantly affect others. Aristotle clearly shows that moral excellence depends on prior development (Aristotle, 1999). This framework supports the thesis's claim that ethical preparedness and practical judgment should be properly cultivated before entering into relationships that may significantly affect the lives of others.

Another foundational concept of Aristotle's philosophy is the Doctrine of the Mean. He argues that virtue lies between two extremes known as excess and deficiency (Aristotle, 1999). For example, courage lies between recklessness which is too much and cowardness which is too little (Aristotle, 1999). This idea can be applied to modern relationships. Today, one extreme is unregulated freedom, where individuals enter intimate relationships which may result in procreation based solely on emotion or desire, without actual preparation. The other extreme is total control, in which the state decides who can form relationships or become parents. Aristotle's framework helps us see that both extremes are problematic. What is needed is a balanced approach, a mean, which this thesis defines as responsible freedom. Freedom guided by knowledge, preparation and ethical awareness.

Aristotle also brings attention to practical wisdom, called *phronesis* (Aristotle, 1999). This is the ability to make good decisions in real-life situations (Aristotle, 1999). Knowing something and having practical wisdom require experiences, judgment and understanding context (CITATION NEEDED). Aristotle argues that good decisions require both correct reasoning and proper emotional development (Aristotle, 1999). A person must not only know what is right but must have their desires and emotions aligned with that knowledge. Without this balance, decision making becomes weak and misguided (CITATION NEEDED). This perspective is

relevant to relationships. Entering and maintaining a relationship requires emotional regulation, rational judgment and the ability to understand another person. These are not automatic skills that all individuals possess, they must be carefully and thoughtfully developed (CITATION NEEDED). Aristotle also notes that young or inexperienced individuals often lack practical wisdom because they have not yet developed the necessary judgment (Aristotle, 1999). This creates a serious ethical issue in modern society, where individuals often enter relationships without sufficient maturity or understanding.

Aristotle's account of practical wisdom helps explain why relational decisions cannot be treated as ethically insignificant. Serious intimate relationships involve emotional judgment, long-term decision-making, interpersonal responsibility, and, in some cases, the possibility of affecting future children. These are not purely impulsive or isolated choices but forms of action which shape both one's own life and the lives of others. Aristotle understood that good decision-making is dependent upon habituated virtue and practical wisdom, it follows that individuals require the development of certain ethical capacities before they can reliably navigate such responsibilities well (Aristotle, 1999).

Despite the strength of Aristotle's account, important limitations remain when applying his framework to contemporary relational life. Aristotle emphasizes the importance of virtue, habituation, and practical wisdom (Aristotle, 1999), but he does not provide detailed institutional or educational mechanisms through which such capacities might be cultivated in modern societies. In addition, his account focuses primarily on individual moral development rather than the complex relational and social structures that shape contemporary intimate relationships. Nevertheless, Aristotle's framework provides an important ethical foundation for this thesis because it emphasizes that good judgment and responsible action require prior character formation and cultivated practical wisdom.

Aristotle's framework therefore suggests that serious intimate relationships cannot be understood solely in terms of personal desire or emotional satisfaction, because they also involve forms of judgment, character, and responsibility that shape the lives of others. Building on these insights, this thesis argues that ethical preparation for serious intimate relationships may be strengthened through educational and socially supported forms of reflective development. In this sense, the thesis attempts to extend Aristotelian insights into a contemporary relational context while preserving the importance of freedom and individual moral agency.

W.D Ross's Point of View

W.D. Ross, particularly in *The Right and the Good*, develops a theory of morality based on what he calls *prima facie* duties (Ross, 2002). Unlike ethical theories which attempt to reduce morality to a single principle, Ross argues that human moral life involves multiple duties that may sometimes conflict with one another (Ross, 2002). These duties are "*prima facie*" because they are morally binding unless overridden by a stronger duty in a particular situation. Moral judgment therefore requires practical reflection rather than mechanical rule-following.

Among Ross's most important duties are beneficence and non-maleficence (Ross, 2002). Beneficence refers to the duty to promote the well-being of others and contribute positively to

their lives (Ross, 2002). Non-maleficence refers to the duty to avoid causing harm. Ross argues that although both duties are morally significant, the duty not to harm others generally carries greater moral weight than the duty to provide benefit (Ross, 2002). In other words, preventing avoidable harm is often ethically more urgent than actively improving another person's condition.

This aspect of Ross's theory is especially relevant to relationships and procreation because relational decisions frequently affect the well-being of vulnerable individuals, including partners and future dependent children. If individuals knowingly engage in forms of action that carry foreseeable risks of emotional, psychological, and/or developmental harm, then questions of moral responsibility naturally arise (Ross, 2002). Ross's framework, therefore helps explain why intimate relationships cannot always be treated as ethically neutral private choices when their consequences significantly shape the lives of others.

Simultaneously, Ross's account remains primarily focused on duties within moral situations themselves rather than on the prior development of ethical preparedness. His theory explains why individuals have obligations not to harm others, but it says less about how individuals cultivate the judgment and capacities necessary to fulfill such responsibilities adequately. Nevertheless, Ross provides an important foundation for this thesis because his emphasis on non-maleficence supports the broader claim that foreseeable and avoidable harm within relationships creates morally relevant responsibilities prior to action.

LaFollette: Control, Licensing and the Limits of State Intervention

LaFollette presents one of the most influential and controversial positions in discussions about parenting and moral responsibility. In both his 1980 and 2010 writings, he challenges the assumption that having children is an unconditional personal right (LaFollette, 1980). Instead, he argues that parenting is a morally serious activity because it directly affects vulnerable individuals, especially children, who are unable to protect their own interests (LaFollette, 1980). From this starting point, he develops the claim that when an activity carries a significant risk of harm to others, society may be justified in regulating it (LaFollette, 1980). This leads him to defend the idea of parental licensing (LaFollette, 1980).

The crux of LaFollette's argument is his comparison of parenting and other socially regulated activities such as driving or practicing medicine (LaFollette, 1980). Society does not treat these activities as unrestricted rights because incompetence in such domains can seriously harm others. Individuals are therefore required to demonstrate adequate competence before being permitted to engage in them. LaFollette argues that parenting should be understood similarly because unprepared, irresponsible, or incapable parenting may produce significant harm to children (LaFollette, 1980). The strength of this argument lies in its shift away from parental rights and towards the protection of vulnerable children. In this way, LaFollette challenges the idea that parenting is merely a private matter and instead frames it as an activity with broader moral and social consequences (LaFollette, 1980).

In his later writings, LaFollette develops a more systematic defense of parental licensing by responding more directly to objections concerning individual rights, state authority, and child

welfare (LaFollette, 2010). Rather than relying primarily on analogies, he attempts to provide a broader philosophical justification for why society may intervene when parental incompetence creates foreseeable risks for vulnerable children (LaFollette, 2010). Nevertheless, licensing remains his central proposed solution (LaFollette, 2010).

Despite the strength of LaFollette's concern for child welfare, his framework raises several important philosophical problems. Even if parenting involves morally significant public consequences, granting the state the authority to determine parental competence creates serious concerns regarding autonomy, fairness, and the possibility of institutional abuse. In practice, licensing systems may reflect existing social inequalities related to class, race, disability, or economic status.

A further limitation is that LaFollette's framework focuses primarily on identifying and restricting potentially harmful parents rather than examining how individuals might develop the capacities necessary for responsible relationships and parenthood. Competence is treated mainly as something to be evaluated externally rather than cultivated through ethical development, education, and preparation. In this respect, his account identifies an important moral problem but approaches it through a highly coercive form of regulation.

Nevertheless, LaFollette's work remains philosophically significant for this thesis because it strongly supports the claim that relationships and procreative decisions are not ethically neutral private choices. His emphasis on the vulnerability of children and the foreseeable consequences of parenting helps establish why relational and parental decisions generate moral responsibilities toward others. However, while LaFollette responds to this problem through licensing and state intervention, this thesis will later argue for a non-coercive alternative grounded in ethical preparation, responsible freedom, and informed relational responsibility.

Christopher Freiman: Liberty, Non-Interference but the need for Preventive Responsibility

Christopher Freiman offers an important defense of individual liberty in discussions concerning relationships, parenting, and state intervention. His work raises significant concerns about attempts to regulate procreation through coercive institutional mechanisms. Rather than focusing primarily on how society should control parenting, Freiman questions whether such interventions can be morally justified at all (Freiman, 2022).

A central part of Freiman's position relies on the nonidentity problem. He argues that when a child is brought into existence under imperfect or difficult conditions, it is not always clear that the child has been harmed by being born (Freiman, 2022). This is because the alternative for that particular child was nonexistence rather than existence under better conditions (Freiman, 2022). If the child's life remains worth living overall, Freiman argues that it becomes difficult to claim that the child was wronged simply by being brought into existence (Freiman, 2022). On this basis, he challenges the claim that the state is morally justified in preventing certain individuals from becoming parents through licensing systems (Freiman, 2022).

Freiman also raises important practical concerns regarding coercive intervention. Systems designed to determine parental competence may produce discrimination, abuse of power, and

false judgments about who is fit to parent (Freiman, 2022). Such approaches risk granting excessive authority to institutions in deeply personal and socially sensitive areas of human life (Freiman, 2022)). In this respect, Freiman's critique serves as an important warning against solutions that attempt to eliminate relational harm through extensive state control.

Nevertheless, Freiman's framework also faces limitations. Although he successfully critiques coercive intervention, his account places far less emphasis on the moral significance of foreseeable and preventable relational risks themselves. His position tends to frame the debate primarily in terms of liberty versus interference, leaving less room to examine whether individuals may still possess ethical responsibilities prior to entering relationships or parenthood.

This thesis therefore accepts Freiman's warning against coercive state control, while questioning whether liberty alone is sufficient for addressing foreseeable relational harms. Moral responsibility does not arise only when a clearly identifiable person has already been harmed. It may also arise when individuals knowingly engage in actions that create avoidable and foreseeable risks for vulnerable others, especially in contexts involving long-term dependency and child welfare. In this sense, Freiman's work helps clarify an important tension within the debate: How can we preserve individual freedom while still recognizing morally significant responsibilities toward others?

From Conflict to Responsible Freedom

After engaging with the works of Aristotle, W. D. Ross, Hugh LaFollette, and Christopher Freiman, an important philosophical pattern begins to emerge. Although these thinkers differ significantly in their approaches to morality, freedom, and social responsibility, each identifies an ethically important dimension of relationships and procreation.

Aristotle emphasizes the importance of character formation, habituation, and practical wisdom in guiding human action (Aristotle, 1999). Ross develops the idea that individuals possess moral duties toward others, especially duties to avoid foreseeable harm and promote well-being (Ross, 2002). LaFollette highlights the moral seriousness of parenting by emphasizing the vulnerability of children and the potential social consequences of parental incompetence (LaFollette, 1980; LaFollette, 2010). Freiman, in contrast, warns against coercive forms of state intervention and defends the importance of individual liberty and non-interference in personal life (Freiman, 2022).

Taken as a whole, these perspectives reveal a central philosophical tension between freedom, responsibility, and social protection. On one hand, unrestricted personal freedom risks ignoring the foreseeable consequences that intimate relationships and parenting may have for vulnerable others, particularly dependent children. On the other side, excessive state control risks undermining autonomy and legitimizing coercive forms of social regulation. The philosophical challenge is therefore not simply whether responsibility exists, but how responsibility can be recognized without collapsing into authoritarian control.

This thesis argues that these competing concerns need not be understood as mutually exclusive. Instead of choosing between unrestricted freedom and coercive regulation, the thesis develops the idea of responsible freedom. Within this framework, individuals remain free to make personal relational choices, but those choices are understood as carrying ethically significant responsibilities when they foreseeably affect the well-being of others.

The philosophical consensus emerging from these discussions is not that relationships should be controlled by the state, nor that all personal choices are morally neutral. Rather, the shared insight is that intimate relationships and procreative decisions often involve foreseeable consequences for dependent and vulnerable individuals. Because of this, ethical preparation, practical judgment, and informed responsibility become morally relevant prior to action rather than only after harm occurs.

In this sense, the argument developed in this thesis shifts the discussion from reactive intervention toward preventive ethical responsibility. The goal is not to eliminate freedom, but to understand freedom as ethically meaningful only when combined with awareness, judgment, and responsibility toward others. This provides the philosophical foundation for later chapters, which will examine how forms of ethical preparation may help address relational harms while preserving individual liberty.

Chapter 2 – A Posteriori Risk-Based Argument for Moral Responsibility

From Empirical Observation to Moral Responsibility

This chapter gives a posteriori argument for the moral responsibility of prospective parents by showing empirical research related to child well-being, mental health, domestic stability and broader social outcomes. The purpose to explore the empirical material is not to make casual laws between unprepared relationships and harmful results but it is to identify patterns of risk that are philosophically important when evaluating permissibility of procreation under conditions of insufficient preparation.

A key clarification is required at this point that empirical research in psychology, sociology and public health emphasizes that negative effects such as mental illness, behavioral problems and social instability are multifaceted (CDC, 2025). According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) arise from interacting influences at the individual, relational, and societal levels (CDC, 2025) and risk factors may or may not be direct causes (CDC, 2025) This means that no single factor, such as parental unpreparedness, can be singled out as a sufficient cause of substantial harm at the societal level. However, moral responsibility does not necessitate this being the sole or complete cause of an outcome. In many areas of ethical and legal reasoning, individuals are considered responsible when they knowingly contribute to avoidable and foreseeable risks affecting others, even when those risks arise from multiple interacting causes (Ross, 2002) For example, negligence, unsafe driving, or exposing others to preventable dangers remain morally relevant

despite the existence of additional contributing factors. In the same way, the fact that childhood outcomes are multifactorial does not eliminate the moral significance of relational and parental conditions when those conditions are known to influence the well-being of vulnerable individuals. Most important is the absence of strict causation does not eliminate moral relevance. In everyday moral reasoning, individuals are held responsible not only for results they directly cause but also for foreseeable risks they impose on others (Ross, 2002) If it is known that certain conditions increase the likelihood of harm, then knowingly creating or entering those conditions without preparation may be morally questionable. The core argument of this chapter is therefore grounded in a risk-based conception of moral responsibility. Individuals entering relationships have moral reasons to avoid conditions associated with risk of their well-being and future persons.

Child Well-Being, Mental Health and Adverse Childhood Experiences

One of the more examined frameworks for understanding childhood adversity is that of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). ACEs include various forms of abuse, neglect and household dysfunction (Felitti et al., 1998) Research shows that ACEs are both common and cumulative with many individuals experiencing multiple forms of adversity during childhood (Felitti et al., 1998). Individuals with higher ACE Scores show significantly increased risks of depression, anxiety, substance abuse and suicidal behavior (Bellis et al., 2018; Bethell et al., 2019). These externalities are linked to the effects of early childhood stress on neurological and psychological systems (Karatekin, 2018) Childhood adversity can furthermore cause adverse effects to brain development, stress regulation and emotional processing (Karatekin, 2018).

The philosophical significance lies in the foreseeability. Prospective parents may not control all results, but they can influence whether a child is brought into conditions associated with risk. The CDC identifies factors such as parental stress, poor communication and unstable environments as increasing the likelihood of adverse experiences (CDC, 2025) ACEs do not operate as isolated causes of specific results, but they work as multipliers (Bellis et al., 2018). When the number of ACEs increase, the negative outcomes across a wide range of domains such as mental health and physical health increase (Felitti et al., 1998) which creates a ripple effect in individuals' lives, families, their community and their society . These associations are linked to the effect of early stress on neurological and psychological systems It's important to mention not all children exposed to adversity experience negative results and protective factors such as supportive environments, emotional support, and access to resources may reduce these risks (Bethell et al., 2019).

The philosophical importance of this research is in its implications for foreseeability. Prepared relationships and parenting are not expected to guarantee perfect outcomes for their children, but they are in a position to influence outcomes if a child is brought into conditions that are more or less likely to produce harm). For example, The CDC found that unprepared parenting, high parental stress, lack of balanced communication and unstable family environments increase the likelihood of adverse experiences If individuals knowingly enter into relationships and parenthood without addressing these major factors when they are genuinely capable of learning the necessary skills, they are contributing to the exposure of a future person to considerable and avoidable risk. This does not mean that parents are solely responsible for all negative outcomes,

but it does raise a moral question “*Is it morally just to be in a relationship which may lead to the creation of a life which increases the probability of suffering when those conditions could be improved through adequate preparation?*” Thus, the decision to be in a relationship which leads to procreation is not morally neutral when it involves predictable and preventable risk to the future child’s well-being.

Crime, Violence and the Social Extension of Childhood Adversity

It is necessary to discuss the next layer of the ripple effect created by unprepared relationships and parenthood. The effect of childhood adversity goes further than simply individual well-being, it furthermore it affects broader social domains including crime and violence. Research by Graf indicates that exposure to multiple ACEs is associated with an increased likelihood of later involvement with the criminal justice system (Graf et al., 2021).

Empirical research also shows the relationship between economic conditions and child outcomes. Children of single-parent households are far more likely to experience poverty and to have limited access to essential resources (Burciu, 2026) It is philosophically important to note that moral structure is not family structure itself but whether the environment provides enough conditions for development. Financial instability and lack of preparation increases the likelihood that these conditions will not be met and thus leads to risks such as lower educational attainment and long-term disadvantages. So, from a moral perspective, it underscores a principle that individuals should consider whether they are entering parenthood under conditions that constrain their ability to support a child. Research by The Death Penalty Information Center highlights that a large proportion of individuals on Death Row have documented histories of childhood trauma (Death Penalty Information Center, 2016). These findings must be interpreted with caution. Many individuals who experience ACEs do not engage in crime. This reasoning aligns with precautionary ethical framework. For example, societies impose safety regulations such as seat belt laws not because harm is certain but because it is probable and preventable.

From a philosophical perspective, if certain conditions of upbringing increase the likelihood of harmful behaviour, then those conditions are not morally neutral They represent environments in which future persons face risks not only to their own well-being but also to the well-being of others. This suggests that personal freedom may carry corresponding moral responsibilities when relational decisions foreseeably affect the well-being of others.

The argument of this thesis is not that unprepared relationships and parenthood cause crime nor that children from unstable environments are destined to be offenders. The claim of this thesis is that knowingly creating conditions associated with elevated risks of harm generates moral reasons for caution, preparation, and ethical reflection. Therefore, personal well-being and social well-being generates moral reasons for caution and preparation. When actions have foreseeable consequences that extend beyond the individual, the moral weight of those actions increases accordingly.

Economic Conditions, Education and Family Stability

This thesis also highlights the relationship between family conditions, economic factors and childhood outcomes. A U.S Census Bureau dataset tables report shows that the poverty rate among single parent families is 30% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024) compared to families with married parents which is 5-7 % (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024) This is important for philosophical analysis. The key moral concern is not whether a child is raised in a single-parent or two-parent household, but that the environment should provide stable, supportive and adequately resourced conditions of development. It affects children when they have lack of consistent care, emotional support and opportunities for growth and those conditions can exist in a variety of family dynamics. Unprepared parenthood increases the likelihood that such conditions will not be met. Karatekin report espouses that financial instability, lack of education and high levels of stress can create environments in which children are more vulnerable to negative outcomes such as lower educational attainment, behavioral difficulties and long-term economic disadvantages

From a moral perspective, the key issue is again one of predictable risk. Prospective parents may not be able to guarantee ideal conditions, but they may still reasonably reflect on whether they are capable of providing stable and supportive conditions before entering parenthood. If such situations can be reducible through preparation such as education, financial planning or relational stability then failing to address them raises ethical concerns.

It is important to emphasize that this argument does not espouse that individuals in difficult circumstances are necessarily morally prohibited from having children, but it suggests they should be educated about moral responsibility, so that they may consider if conditions are adequately met, so as to provide a happy childhood with adequate resources.

Procreation and Moral Responsibility

The argument developed in this chapter does not necessarily imply that individuals are morally obligated to have children, nor that difficult circumstances automatically make parenthood morally impermissible. Rather, the central claim is that procreative decisions carry ethical significance because they involve foreseeable effects on future persons who cannot consent to the conditions into which they are born.

For this reason, procreation may be understood as a morally conditional choice rather than an automatic entitlement or obligation. Individuals may therefore have moral reasons to consider whether they are capable of providing conditions reasonably supportive of a child's well-being before choosing to enter parenthood. Choosing not to have children under conditions perceived as seriously unstable or harmful may itself represent a responsible exercise of moral judgment rather than a moral failure.

This responsibility does not require perfect conditions or the elimination of all possible risks, instead, it requires a good-faith effort to avoid creating circumstances known to increase the likelihood of avoidable harm when such risks may be reasonably reduced through preparation, stability, and informed decision-making.

Chapter 3 – A Constructive Framework for Prepared Relationships and Procreation

The previous two chapters have established two central claims. Firstly, Chapter One explained that entering relationships capable of leading to procreation is a moral act requiring preparation based on Aristotle's virtue ethics and W.D. Ross's duties (Aristotle, 2009: Ross2009). The Second Chapter explained that unprepared relationships are associated with increased risks of harm at multiple levels, including individual well-being, family stability and social outcomes. But a philosophical argument remains incomplete if it only identifies a problem and justifies a moral requirement. It should address a further question such as how this moral responsibility can be practiced without undermining individual freedom?

This chapter develops an answer to that question: It introduces a two-part framework designed to present an idea of preparation paired with freedom.

The purpose of this chapter is not to provide a complete institutional or legislative blueprint for regulating relationships and procreation. Rather, the framework presented here functions as a philosophical and illustrative model intended to demonstrate how the ethical principles developed in earlier chapters might be translated into non-coercive forms of preparation and informed responsibility. The specific institutional details discussed should therefore be understood as examples of possible implementation rather than fixed or exhaustive policy prescriptions. The primary philosophical aim is to show that responsibility and freedom need not be treated as opposing values.

- I. Procreative Readiness Education (PRE Program)
- II. Mutual Disclosure System before Procreation

The aim of this framework is to build a model of freedom with responsibility which is present between two extremes.

The First extreme is - Deficiency - Unregulated freedom in which individuals enter relationships without preparation.

The Second extreme is - Excess - Total control in which the state determines who may form relationships or have children.

Based on Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, the framework guides a middle path in which individuals are free but skilled with knowledge and necessary structures to make informed and responsible decisions (Aristotle 2009).

Preparedness-Based Framework

In many areas of life people recognize that activities involving risk to others require preparation. For example, people do not send their kids to kindergartens where the teachers do not have formal qualifications, individuals cannot legally perform surgery without training, nor can they fly an aircraft without the proper training or certification. As such, when actions affect others, training matters.

Yet, in the matter of starting intimate relationships which can lead to procreation, the most important aspect, the decisions which may shape decades of life and bring new individuals into existence, no comparable expectation of preparation exists. Individuals are free to enter relationships and procreate based on emotions, attractions, or simply because they are interpersonally advantageous, without any structured understanding of emotional responsibility, conflict resolution or knowing long term consequences.

The core question posed by this thesis is: If short-term activities such as a fifteen-minute surgery, a fifteen-minute flight, or even kindergarten education requires formal training, how can one justify long-term commitments or promises such as relationships or parenting which may extend over decades requiring none.

The central argument of this chapter is not that relationships should be controlled in the same way as professions but it is that the moral logic underlying preparation applies equally even if the institutional form must differ. Modern society already recognizes that activities affecting others often require forms of education, preparation, or public awareness. The proposal developed here extends this preventative logic into the ethical domain of intimate relationships and procreative responsibility while attempting to preserve individual freedom. Simultaneously, this framework rejects coercive approaches such as licensing. Such models risk state control and raise concerns about autonomy, fairness and implementation. The challenge therefore is to develop a system that encourages preparation, enables informed decision-making, and avoids coercive restriction.

Core Purpose of the Proposed Solution

The suggested framework's design shows a set of interrelated objectives that together support the central thesis of this work. Objectives are not merely practical outcomes but are based on already established principles. This framework aims to reduce harm, reshape cultural attitudes towards relationships, and promote long term knowledge. This framework aims to achieve the following five elements...

Reduction of Avoidable Harm

The first objective is to reduce avoidable harm by imparting necessary knowledge unto individuals before entering into relationships that may lead to procreation. It will help reduce emotional instability, relationship breakdown, and adverse childhood environments. This aligns with Ross's duty of non-maleficence which indicates avoiding harm where reasonably possible (Ross, 2002).

Reframing Relationships as Positive and Sustainable

This objective is cultural in nature. In many societies, younger generations increasingly view long-term relationships and parenthood as burdensome, stressful, or undesirable. This perception is reflected in declining birth rates across many developed countries, including Japan, where births reached another record low in 2023 (Associated Press, 2024). The framework aims to help reverse this perception by encouraging relationships that are more understandable, manageable, and fulfilling. Through preparation, relationships may be experienced not merely as sources of stress, but also as spaces of stability, cooperation, and shared meaning.

Creation of Data and Long-term Social Knowledge

The third objective of this framework is the systemic generation of data through the grading component of the PRE Program (which is later explained in this chapter). By generating data that can improve relational education and inform future policies, so that the framework will be thoroughly structured and evidence based.

Reduction of Economic and Institutional Burden

The Fourth objective is about the economic and institutional impact of unprepared relationships. When relationships break down under conditions of unpreparedness, the consequences extend further. From a broader social and ethical perspective, reducing avoidable relational harm may contribute to both individual well-being and greater social stability by decreasing preventable emotional, institutional, and economic burdens.

Achieving Balance Between Overpopulation and Underpopulation

In this objective the framework encourages decisions that are neither driven by ignorance nor by fear. In this sense, both overpopulation and underpopulation can be understood as deviations from a balanced condition, a homeostasis. A society that promotes informed and responsible procreative decisions is therefore better positioned to maintain demographic stability.

Section I: Procreative Readiness Education (PRE Program)

Concept and Structure

The Procreative Readiness Education (PRE) Program is the first component of the framework. It is a universal educational initiative designed to introduce individuals to the ethical, emotional, and practical dimensions of intimate relationships and potential parenthood before adulthood, while also allowing opportunities for later reassessment and continued learning as individuals enter different stages of relational life.

The program would begin around the age at which individuals become capable of forming intimate relationships at seventeen years of age. And would be delivered through schools, community institutions, or accredited online platforms.

It would be conducted by trained professionals including Psychologists, Sociologists, and Family Counsellors.

The framework proposed in this thesis does not assume that all individuals possess equal social, educational, or economic circumstances. For this reason, any preparatory system would need to remain flexible and broadly accessible rather than rigidly institutionalized. Educational participation could occur through multiple pathways including schools, community centers, online programs, counseling services, or other socially supported formats. The purpose of the framework is not to punish individuals who face economic hardship, religious differences, or unequal access to formal education, but to expand opportunities for ethical and relational preparation as widely as possible. In this sense, the model aims to function as an inclusive form of preventive social support rather than a coercive mechanism of exclusion.

Content of the PRE Program

The purpose of the PRE Program is not to prescribe a rigid or exhaustive curriculum, but to illustrate the kinds of ethical, emotional, and practical capacities that may support more responsible relational and proactive decision-making. The components outlined below are therefore presented as philosophical examples connected to the broader objectives established earlier in this chapter, particularly the reduction of foreseeable harm, the promotion of relational stability, and the development of informed responsibility.

1. Emotional and Relational Capacities

Social and Ethical Awareness

This includes examining how individual decisions contribute to patterns of stability or instability within society. This component brings the idea that proactive relationships carry responsibilities that extend beyond the self. It reflects a transition from individual preferences to moral accountability, aligning with the thesis's central claim that such decisions must be informed and ethically grounded.

Emotional and Psychological Readiness

In the second component, individuals are guided to understand their own emotional patterns, triggers and limitations and their capacity to sustain long term commitments. It includes developing the ability to manage stress, respond to conflicts without escalation and maintain stability under changing circumstances. It enables individuals to act with reason instead of impulse. Emotional readiness is therefore not treated as an inherent trait but as a developed capacity and important to maintain healthy relationships over time.

Communication and Conflict Resolution

This component emphasizes communication as a foundational skill in relationships. Participants are trained in constructive dialogue, active listening and methods of resolving disagreements without causing harm. It is assumed that conflict is an inevitable feature of human relationships, and the goal is not to ignore disagreement but to transform the way it is managed. By giving the

skill to individuals with structured approaches to conflict resolution the program reduces likelihood of escalation into hostility, withdrawal and breakdown.

2. Practical and Social Responsibilities

Financial Planning and Shared Responsibility

This component shows that financial stress is a significant contributor to relational conflict and instability, and the practical dimension of relationships through financial literacy and shared responsibility is important. Participants are introduced to the economic realities of joint living, including budgeting, debt management, housing decisions and long-term financial planning.

Addiction Awareness and relationship health

Participants will be educated about how addiction can affect trust, communication, financial stability and emotional well-being within a relationship. This component is important because such issues are often concealed or underestimated at the early stages of relationships leading to severe consequences later.

3. Ethical and Developmental Awareness

Child Development and Parenting Foundations

A central component of the PRE Program explains the fundamental requirements of raising a child in a stable and supportive environment with adequate resources. Participants are encouraged to understand that procreation and parenting is not just a biological outcome but a sustained ethical responsibility that requires preparation and commitment.

Time, Attention and Family Ethics

In many cases, relationship breakdown is not caused by major conflicts but by a disconnect due to neglect and imbalance. By framing time as an ethical resource rather than a personal choice. The program encourages individuals to recognize their responsibility toward maintaining presence and engagement within relationships.

How to Provide Sex Education at Home to The Next Generation

Participants are not only informed about their own sexual health but also prepared to engage in responsible dialogue and to educate future generations. This component addresses a significant gap in many existing systems, where individuals may receive fragmented or informal information, and the first point of contact should be with parents regarding any question about sexual health instead of available media or friends.

Infidelity and Crisis Response

Understanding that crises such as infidelity can occur even in prepared relationships, the program provides structured guidance on how to respond to such situations. Participants are encouraged to develop mature and reflective approaches to infidelity by focusing on minimizing harm and avoiding impulsive reactions that may worsen the situation. This component does not assume that all relationships can or should be preserved but it emphasizes the importance of responding to crises in a way that maintains dignity, clarity and responsibility.

Ethics of Exit from the Relationship

This component relates to an important but usually neglected aspect of relational ethics — the ability to exit a relationship with responsibility. It explains how to recognize when a relationship is no longer sustainable and how to disengage in a manner that minimizes harm to all parties involved. This includes emotional closure, mutual respect and avoidance of unnecessary conflict by considering exit as a positive and meaningful ethical process rather than failure.

Post-Separation Parenting

Last but not the least, this final component addresses the responsibilities that continue after a relationship ends for oneself and their dependent children. In this way it extends the ethical framework of the program into situations where relationships have already broken down ensuring continuity of responsibility.

Grading System

The innovative part of the Procreative Readiness Education (PRE) Program is its non-coercive grading system. Its purpose is to promote responsibility without restricting individual freedom. Unlike traditional systems of evaluation, this framework avoids the notion of passing or failing. The absence of failure is not accidental but philosophically grounded. If this program has a pass/fail structure it would transform the program into a form of indirect licensing. Here this thesis is different from Hugh LaFollette's model suggested in 1980. This thesis rejects this licensing idea.

The assessment component of the PRE Program is designed as a reflective and developmental tool rather than a mechanism of coercive evaluation. Its purpose is not to classify individuals as fit or unfit for relationships or parenthood, but to encourage self-awareness regarding emotional, ethical, and practical preparedness. The framework therefore treats preparedness as a developing capacity rather than a fixed measure of personal worth. Assessments are intended to support reflection, continued learning, and responsible decision-making rather than impose restrictions on individual freedom.

- I. It allows individuals to recognize their own level of readiness in several key areas rather than assuming competence. Individuals are provided with structured reflection of their strengths and limitations.
- II. It enables transparency in a voluntary and non-intrusive manner. Individuals may choose to share their grading or preparedness levels for example on social media like Facebook or dating apps like Tinder, Hinge, etc. It will facilitate alignment between partners who

have similar expectations and level of understanding. This transparency is not imposed but emerges as a social practice grounded in mutual interest.

- III. The third important function of the grading system is the generation of long-term empirical data. As individuals with different levels of grading form relationships over time, patterns begin to emerge regarding combinations of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are associated with stable and fulfilling relationships and which are correlated with conflict or breakdown. This model produces measurable data that can be analysed and used to refine the educational program and monitor society's happiness level. Nowadays country happiness is checked by money and the jobs people have, but people with money and jobs are still unhappy. Unlike traditional cultural or religious approaches which often prescribe norms without systematic evolution. This data can help people to decide their action just like the seat belt analogy.

Psychologists and researchers can identify trends and show to people the harm of matching different grades or even unprepared relationships and prepared relationships, they can additionally improve curriculum design and adapt the program to different cultural contexts and ensure that the system remains dynamic and responsive rather than static.

Retake mechanism: It will promote the non-coercive nature of the grading system. Allowing individuals to reassess and improve their evaluations at any point in time. This feature shows that preparedness is not a fixed state but a developing capacity. By enabling continuous reassessment, the system encourages growth, reflection and lifelong learning. Individuals are not defined by a single evaluation but are given the opportunity to evolve so it is beyond restrictions. In this sense the grading system functions not as a barrier but as a guiding structure that supports individuals in exercising freedom responsibly and with increasing competence over time.

Social and Institutional Benefits

By providing the knowledge and skills to individuals for stable relationships before problems arise, the program has the potential to reduce the demand for crisis-based interventions such as reliance on social welfare systems for child support. Funds used to prevent crime are the root cause of adverse childhood experiences, unemployment due to stress and depression due to a suboptimal family environment. Court proceedings due to lack of conflict resolutions and communications skills, need for reactive psychological support or de-addiction support. Instead of addressing harm after it has occurred. The framework shifts the focus toward prevention, therefore reducing the frequency and intensity of situations that require state intervention. Individuals who are prepared for relationships are more likely to experience emotional stability and satisfaction which can positively influence their productivity in a professional environment and their ability to contribute to society.

This program would create new professional opportunities particularly in the field of psychology. Where experts would play a proactive role in guiding individuals before relational breakdown occurs rather than intervening only after harm has been done. Nowadays psychologists come into the picture primarily when harm is already done, or courts need them to evaluate how much punishment needs to be reduced if harm has been done due to misalignment of psychological state. Therefore, the PRE Program reflects a broader

transformation in the social system. From a reactive system that manages consequences to a preventive system that reduces the likelihood of harm and supports a more sustainable and ethically grounded model of social development.

Section II: Mutual Disclosure System

Purpose and Justification

The second section of this framework highlights an important feature of contemporary relationships — The lack of transparency. The lack of transparency between individuals before entering a relationship that may lead to procreation can create relational failure, incompatibility, and emotional breakdown. A greater number of these conflicts rise not from harmful intentions but from the absence of critical information. Partners enter intimate relationships without full knowledge of factors like existing health conditions, financial obligations, past relational histories, previous marriage and reasons for separation. Decisions are made based on incomplete or inaccurate understanding. As a result, relationships that begin with assumptions rather than clarity are more vulnerable to conflict, distrust and breakdown. The mutual disclosure system is justified as a mechanism to ensure that decisions, especially those with potential to affect future children are based on transparency, awareness and shared understanding rather than uncertainty.

The framework proposed here does not assume that all individuals require identical forms of disclosure or that every aspect of a person's past possesses equal moral relevance within relationships. Different individuals and cultures may reasonably value different forms of information depending on their own ethical commitments, expectations, and relational priorities. The purpose of the disclosure framework is therefore not to impose a universal standard of personal transparency or permanent moral judgment based on past actions. Rather, it aims to encourage informed and mutually relevant communication concerning issues that may significantly affect long-term relational trust, shared responsibilities, or the well-being of future children.

Core Structure

The core structure of the mutual disclosure system enables decisions leading to procreation to be made with full awareness, mutual understanding and social accountability. As individuals progress through the PRE Program. They gain the knowledge necessary for responsible relationships and informed decision making. At the same time, they retain complete freedom in their personal lives. They may choose to remain single, enter relationships or avoid procreation altogether. When they decide at any point in their lives to procreate, an additional requirement becomes ethically and institutionally relevant. Before the birth of a child both partners are required to complete and submit a formal disclosure form to the state. This process ensures that key personal relational and practical information has been shared between partners.

If such a disclosure form is not submitted before the birth of the child, the act is considered a case of unprepared procreation even in situations where individuals have completed the PRE Program. This will prove that the preparation is not merely theoretical but must be expressed through responsible action at the point of the decision. The requirement does not function as a

restriction on relationships or reproductive freedom, but it establishes a minimal ethical condition for informed consent in decisions that have long-term consequences for both individuals and society. Therefore, when individual decisions have foreseeable implications for vulnerable others, public resources, and long-term social stability, the state may possess a limited interest in supporting conditions that encourage informed and reflective decision-making. Such measures cannot guarantee truthful disclosure, careful interpretation, or ethically responsible choices, since individuals remain free agents capable of deception, misunderstanding, or negligence. Nevertheless, the framework aims to improve the conditions under which important relational and procreative decisions are made rather than guarantee perfect outcomes. Therefore, the disclosure doesn't undermine personal autonomy but introduces a model of accountable freedom in which private choices that carry public consequences are accompanied by a basic level of transparency and responsibility.

Key Disclosure Elements

The key elements ensuring the decisions leading to procreation are made on the basis of knowledge rather than assumption. The intention is not to restrict relationships but designed to establish a minimum standard of transparency which supports informed consent and long-term stability. Each component addresses a specific area where a lack of information has historically contributed to relational conflict, misunderstanding or harm.

Global Digital Portal

This framework does not require intrusive systems of surveillance or unrestricted public access to personal relational histories. Rather, it emphasizes the ethical importance of honest and mutually relevant disclosure between partners regarding issues that may significantly affect long-term commitments, shared responsibilities, or future children. In some limited legal contexts, existing institutional mechanisms already allow verification of certain formally relevant information, such as marital status or legal guardianship, without requiring extensive personal monitoring. The central aim is therefore not comprehensive state oversight of intimate life, but the encouragement of informed trust, transparency, and responsible communication within relationships themselves.

Disclosure of Relevant Health Conditions

The ethical purpose of health-related disclosure within this framework is not to classify individuals as desirable or undesirable partners, nor to exclude persons with medical conditions from relationships or parenthood. Rather, the aim is to support mutual awareness and shared preparedness regarding circumstances that may significantly affect long-term relational responsibilities, caregiving, or future family life. Serious health conditions may create emotional, financial, or practical challenges within relationships, and transparent communication may help partners navigate such challenges more responsibly and cooperatively. At the same time, the framework recognizes that a person's medical condition does not determine their moral worth, relational value, or capacity for meaningful human relationships. Ethical responsibility therefore lies not in avoiding vulnerable individuals, but in encouraging honest communication and informed mutual support where relevant.

Addiction Disclosure

This requirement does not deny individuals with addictions the freedom to enter relationships or to procreate. Rather, it ensures that such decisions are made with transparency and mutual awareness. This is comparable to practices in insurance systems where individuals are required to provide accurate self-declarations regarding health or risk factors. Individuals are required to disclose any substance dependencies or behavioral addictions that may affect relationship dynamics, especially in cases where relationships later result in deployment of state resources such as child support if a partner dies because of substance abuse, or in the case of social assistance. The state is justified in expecting that the original decision was made with full disclosure. Thus, addiction disclosure supports both interpersonal honesty and institutional accountability.

Collective Financial Planning and Expectations

Partners are required to outline their intentions regarding shared financial responsibilities such as joint housing, loans or childcare. Many relationship conflicts arise not from emotional incompatibility but from financial misunderstanding or misaligned expectations. The system reduces the likelihood of future disputes. This process does not impose financial obligations but supports informed agreement and responsible planning.

Time Commitment Disclosure

Partners are encouraged to develop a rough plan for time allocation, including work commitments, family time and shared activities such as vacations. Empirical observations indicate that lack of time spent together is an important factor in relationship breakdown. This transforms time from an implicit assumption into an explicit ethical consideration.

Agreed Response to Potential Crises

In situations such as infidelity or major relational conflict. Rather than leaving such scenarios completely to emotional reaction, partners are encouraged to reflect in advance on how they would respond in the event of a crisis. The purpose of this element is not to eliminate conflict but to reduce impulsive responses such as acting in revenge and relationship abandonment. This system promotes maturity and responsibility in moments of difficulty.

Exit Arrangements

Partners are required to consider and document a plan for how responsibilities would be managed in the event of separation. This includes such as child custody, care of pets and division of shared assets and joint loans. This element reflects the reality that not all relationships endure. By addressing exit conditions in advance, the system reduces uncertainty, prevents conflicts, and prevents undue burden on local courts. It transforms separation from a chaotic process into a structured and ethically guided transition.

This framework recognizes that children are not purely private concerns because their well-being has broader social consequences. The system aligns individuals' freedom with social

responsibility, ensuring that decisions affecting future generations are made with the seriousness they require.

The Role of the State

The role of state remains limited yet significant, focusing on support rather than control. The state is responsible for maintaining secure data systems that protect sensitive information, ensuring legal clarity in cases of dispute and promoting transparency in situations where public resources are involved. When individuals later seek state assistance such as child support or legal mediation, the prior disclosures provide a reliable foundation for fair and informed decision-making. In this way the state does not interfere in personal choices but acts as a stabilizing institution that facilitates accountability and reduces uncertainty when private decisions produce public consequences.

In conclusion, this chapter presents a constructive and non-coercive framework for addressing the ethical problem of unprepared relationships and procreation. By introducing a structured educational model with a system of mutual disclosure it provides an approach that reduces foreseeable harm, supports informed autonomy and remains consistent with the philosophical principles developed in earlier chapters. Instead of replacing freedom with control, the framework redefines freedom as informed and responsible choice.

A distinctive and innovative feature of this model is its capacity to generate long-term empirical data which is missing in developed countries' education systems such as Estonia, The United States, etc. Through the grading system and disclosure mechanisms, patterns of relationships begin to emerge over time, allowing research and development teams, particularly psychologists and other social scientists to study the conditions under which long-term relationships succeed or fail. This includes identifying correlations between levels of preparedness, compatibility between individuals of different grades and the likelihood of stable, long-term relationships without conflict. Such data can be analysed across different cultural and social contexts, enabling continued refinement of the educational program and disclosure practices. In this sense the framework doesn't remain static but evolves through evidence becoming continuously more effective in guiding individuals toward better outcomes.

The public availability of such statistical data further strengthens individual autonomy. When individuals are able to see patterns for example which combinations of preparedness levels are associated with stable relationships, and which are linked to higher risks of conflict. They are better skilled to make informed decisions about their own lives. This transforms personal choice into evidence-informed choices in which individuals voluntarily align their decisions with conditions that are more likely to lead to well-being. The process can be understood as a form of "collective social learning" where collective experience becomes a resource for individual decision making.

This dynamic is comparable to the historical development of safety practices such as seatbelt use. Initially such measures were criticised as unnecessary restrictions on personal freedom. But once empirical data clearly demonstrated that individuals wearing seatbelts had higher survival rates in accidents, people's attitudes shifted. People began to adopt these practices voluntarily not because of coercion alone but because evidence made the benefits clear. Similarly, the

framework introduced data to influence behavior, encouraging individuals to choose preparation and responsibility based on observable results rather than abstract obligation.

The model can be understood as “engineering social well-being” in which knowledge, data and ethical reflection improve the quality of relationships and the conditions under which future generations are raised. It doesn’t claim to eliminate all relational failure. Just as safety measures of seatbelts do not eliminate all accidents. But it provides a structured means of reducing avoidable harm. By aligning individual freedom with collective knowledge and responsibility, the framework offers a sustainable path for more stable relationships, happy and healthier families and a more balanced society.

Chapter4 - The Question Remains: Why is this proposed framework better than existing approaches?

If systems of relationship education, premarital counselling and cultural guidance already exist, what justifies the need of this new model?

This chapter answers that question through an analysis of existing approaches across education systems, public policy, religious frameworks and cultural practices. It argues that although these systems contain valuable points, they remain fragmented, reactive and incomplete. They fail to provide a unified structure that integrates ethical preparation, intergenerational responsibility, disclosure and long-term data generation. The suggested model is therefore justified not as a replacement of existing systems but as their philosophical and practical completion, situated between the extremes of unregulated freedom and total control.

School-Based Education: Knowledge Without continuity

Many developed countries have introduced structured programs in sex education, relationship skills and family life education. These programs represent an important aspect that relationships require knowledge and guidance.

For example, the Dutch program ‘*Lang leve de Liefde*’ provides education on consent, emotional awareness and sexual health. Similarly, Sweden and Denmark have long-standing national curricula that integrate education with life skills, communication, equality and emotional intelligence. Finland’s well-being based educational model incorporates mental health, social responsibility and interpersonal awareness into its curriculum. These systems demonstrate a significant shift from biological sex education to approaches that include emotional and relational dimensions. They reflect an understanding that relationships are not merely instinctive but require cultivated skills.

However, these systems remain limited in two important ways. Firstly, they focus on individual-level knowledge without addressing the ethical dimension of responsibility towards others, particularly future children. The emphasis is on personal well-being rather than moral obligation. Secondly, these systems lack integration with disclosure and long-term decision-

making structures. They provide information but do not create conditions for informed, transparent relational directions. Thus, while education systems contribute valuable components, they do not constitute a complete model of ethical preparation.

Premarital Counselling: Moral Guidance Without Ethical Framing

Premarital counselling programs, particularly in religious and semi-regulated contexts represent another attempt to prepare individuals for long-term relations.

Malaysia provides one of the most structured examples through its mandatory Islamic premarital course '*Kursus Pra-Perkahwinan Islam*' which includes training in communication, conflict resolution, sexual responsibility and parenting. Similar programs exist in countries such as Singapore and the Philippines, often supported by state or religious institutions. These programs recognize that relationships involve responsibility, and that preparation can improve stability. They move beyond mere information and attempt to cultivate practical relational skills.

However, they face two key limitations. First, they rely on normative guidance without systematic evolution. They do not generate data or feedback mechanisms that would allow refinement of their teachings based on outcomes. Their teachings are normative but not evidence based in a contemporary sense. Second, they do not address the full range of modern relational challenges, such as disclosure of relevant personal information. How to manage post separation responsibilities in a structured manner. As a result, although these systems provide important moral insights, they remain static and incomplete in addressing the complexity of contemporary relational life.

Public Policy: Regulation Without Integration

Public Policy approaches to relationships and family life typically focus on specific issues such as reproductive health, parenting support and child welfare. Countries such as Canada and Australia provide family life education and public health programs addressing substance abuse, domestic violence and parenting responsibilities. Singapore's '*Marriage Preparation Programme*' promotes family and shared responsibility among couples. These initiatives demonstrate that governments recognize the broader social impact of relationships and family structures. They attempt to reduce harm through targeted support systems.

A significant limitation is the absence of a global or, in some countries, a national system of relational disclosure. While some countries maintain digital records of marriage or health data, there is no universal system that allows individuals to verify critical information about potential partners such as marital history, existing children or relevant health conditions. This lack of transparency creates conditions in which relationships are formed based on incomplete information, increasing the likelihood of conflict and breakdown. This Public Policy contributes important elements but fails to provide a preventive framework.

Religious and Cultural Systems

Religious traditions have historically played a central role in shaping attitudes towards relationships and family life. Christianity, Islam and other traditions provide some of the most structured teachings on relationships and family life, commitment, fidelity, parenting and moral responsibility and part of financial planning. These systems already contain forms of preparation.

For example, In Christianity, adultery is explicitly condemned as a moral wrong, not merely a personal failure. Marriage is framed as commitment grounded in fidelity, responsibility and mutual care. Premarital counselling in many Christian traditions emphasizes communication, long- term commitment and ethical conduct within a relationship.

Similarly, Islamic traditions, particularly in countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia, provide detailed guidance on marriage, including rights and responsibilities of partners, financial obligations and structured provisions for separation. For example, Islamic Law includes mechanisms such as '*mahr*' known as financial security for the wife, and clearly defined processes for divorce. These demonstrate an awareness of the need for planning not only for relationship formation but also for its potential breakdown.

These systems also address responses to infidelity and conflict, emphasizing restraint, moral reflection and responsibility rather than impulsive or destructive reactions. In this respect, they already contain elements of what might be called ethical crisis management.

However, despite their strengths, these systems face significant limitations when evaluated in contemporary contexts.

First, they lack quantitative and systematic feedback mechanisms. While they provide norms and guidance, they do not generate data on outcomes. There is no structured way to assess whether adherence to these teachings results in greater individual well-being, stable families or long-term relational success because nonadherence doesn't affect only individuals. It affects children, families and society as a whole.

Second, many systems do not address procreative proportionality. That is, how many children individuals should responsibly bring into existence relative to their financial, emotional and social capacity.

Third, even where guidance exists, there is no tracking or accountability system to determine whether individuals follow these teachings or to study the consequences when they do or do not. As a result, these systems remain normatively but not empirically tested.

Also, they are often static. Their teachings do not systematically evolve in response to changing social conditions, because they lack mechanisms for continuous data collection and analysis. Thus, religious systems provide a strong moral foundation but lack the structural features required for evolution, adaptation and large-scale applicability in a global context.

The Global Gap: Fragmentation and the Absence of a Unified System

This analysis shows a clear consistent pattern that although elements of relational preparation that may lead to procreation exist across education, counselling, public policy and religion but they remain fragmented, isolated and incomplete. No existing system offers a unified framework for preparation prior to entering relationships, nor do they provide intergenerational education that equips individuals to guide future children in matters such as sex education within the home. Also, there is an absence of ethical disclosure requirements and systematic global data generation. Therefore, preparation is largely optional, inconsistent and reactive rather than structured and proactive. Individuals are left to navigate complex relational decisions themselves, so few of them dare to even take them. Those who proceed without a comprehensive or coherent system of guidance. This fragmentation becomes even more significant in a globalized world, where migration across cultural and national boundaries exposes individuals to different norms, expectations and institutional frameworks.

The Seatbelt Analogy – From Reaction to Prevention

A useful way to understand this limitation is through the analogy of modern safety practices. Modern societies do not introduce safety measures after harm has occurred, they implement them in advance to reduce risk. Requiring preparation after relational breakdown is like wearing a seatbelt after an accident. Although some contemporary counselling systems already function preventively, many existing interventions still operate primarily after serious relational difficulties have emerged through legal conflict, emotional breakdown, or family instability. The proposed framework therefore attempts to extend preventative preparation earlier into the relational process itself rather than relying predominantly on reactive forms of support after harm has intensified. The proposed model shifts the focus from reaction to prevention, recognizing that many relational harms are foreseeable and reducible through preparation.

Aristotle's Mean: Between Freedom and Control

This analysis can be understood through Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean. Contemporary Society exhibits two extremes — On one side is unregulated freedom in which individuals enter relationships without preparation guided largely by desire and attraction. On the other side total control exemplified by proposals such as parental licensing which seek to regulate relationships through external authority.

Both extremes are ethically problematic. Unregulated freedom ignores responsibility and foreseeable harm, while total control undermines autonomy and risks injustice. This proposed framework represents a middle path, combining freedom with preparation. It does not restrict relationships but enhances them through knowledge, transparency and ethical awareness. In this sense it implements Aristotle's Concept of Virtue as a balance between excess and deficiency.

The proposed model integrates the strengths of existing systems while addressing their limitations. From liberal models, it retains freedom and autonomy. From religious systems, it incorporates moral responsibility. From Public Policy, it adopts concern for social impact, from educational systems, it includes structured learning.

However, it goes beyond all of them by introducing:

- I. A system with ethical disclosure.
- II. Long-term data generation and feedback.
- III. A preventative rather than reactive approach.
- IV. Intergenerational responsibility by teaching how to give sex education to the next generation at home.
- V. A comprehensive educational framework – The PRE Program
- VI. A global portal to know the history of Marital status of Individuals and the reason for previous divorces.
- VII. New job opportunities in the field of psychology.

Although the framework still involves forms of institutional guidance and social expectation, it differs significantly from coercive models such as parental licensing because it does not grant the state authority to prohibit relationships or reproduction. Instead, it attempts to encourage informed and reflective decision-making through education, preparation, and voluntary participation while preserving a substantial sphere of individual autonomy.

The framework also raises legitimate concerns regarding indirect forms of social pressure or normative conformity. Even systems that avoid direct legal coercion may still influence behavior through cultural expectations, reputational incentives, or institutional norms. For this reason, the model proposed here should not be understood as eliminating all forms of social influence, but rather as attempting to reduce avoidable harm while preserving substantially greater autonomy than coercive systems such as licensing or reproductive restriction.

Chapter Four shows that existing approaches to relationship preparation, while valuable, remain fragmented and insufficient. They fail to provide a coherent framework that integrates ethical responsibility, conditional obligation and practical preparation. The proposed model does not replace existing systems but provides a structure with which they can be understood and integrated. In doing so, it shows that preparation for relationships is not an external but necessary condition for responsible freedom.

Chapter 5 - Objections and Rebuttals

Chapter Five addresses potential objections to the proposed framework. The objections presented in this chapter challenge necessity, scope, basis and practical effectiveness of this thesis. By responding to them, this chapter aims to explain that the framework remains ethical not by eliminating all harm, but by reducing foreseeable risks and enabling informed responsible decision making with conditions of freedom.

Objection 1: Redundancy of Mandatory Education and Disclosure

An objection to the proposed framework is that mandatory participation in the Procreative Readiness Education (PRE) Program and the disclosure system may be unnecessary in cases where individuals already possess sufficient knowledge and voluntarily share relevant information with each other. If two individuals are already informed, emotionally prepared and transparent in their relationship, it may seem that requiring them to undergo formal education or submit disclosures imposes an unnecessary burden and duplicates what has already been achieved through personal efforts.

This objection is based on the assumption that individual self-assessment and informal disclosure are sufficient in situations where decisions may lead to procreation. But this assumption fails to recognize the importance of standardization, verification and collective knowledge generation in contexts where decisions have consequences not only for individuals but also for future children and society.

An analogy drawn from activities such as driving, or aviation can explain it in a better way. An individual may already know how to drive a car or operate an aircraft through informal learning or personal experience, but when these activities take place in a shared environment, the safety of others is at risk and society requires individuals to undergo formal training and provide standardized assessments. This requirement does not imply that individuals lack ability, but rather that when actions affect others, competence must be verified, not merely assumed.

The same principle applies to relationships that may lead to procreation. While individuals may believe they are prepared and may even disclose important information to one another, as mentioned in earlier chapters, the consequences of unprepared or unstable relationships often extend beyond the couple, it also affects public resources such as child support systems, legal institutions, mental health services and crime prevention mechanisms. This system is to be funded by society as a whole, therefore, when private decisions have predictable public consequences, the state has a legitimate interest in ensuring that those decisions are informed, transparent and responsibly made.

The next most important aspect is that even in cases where individuals are already capable and transparent, their participation in a formal system contributes to the collective building of knowledge. For example, when individuals with a certain level of preparedness as reflected through grading and a certain level of honest disclosure from stable, long-term relationships, this creates measurable patterns. Over time, such data allows psychologists and researchers to identify which combination of skills, awareness and transparency are most strongly associated with successful and harmonious relationships. This data serves a critical function. It enables society to move beyond assumptions and cultural norms towards an evidence-based understanding of relational success and failure. As these patterns become visible, individuals can make informed decisions by observing real outcomes rather than relying on trial and error. Therefore, even those who are already prepared contribute to a system that benefits others and fulfill the duty of beneficence by creating a form of collective social learning.

This framework has long-term potential. As more individuals participate and generate data over decades, patterns of successful relationships may become widely understood and socially internalized. It is possible that in the future, when such data is understood by people, and they

voluntarily adopt just practices to follow patterns shown in data, the need for formal structures may diminish. However, at the present stage where such systematic knowledge is largely absent. These mechanisms remain necessary to guide behavior, reduce harm and launch reliable standards of preparedness.

Therefore, the requirement of education and disclosure is not redundant, even for those who are already informed. It ensures verification, accountability and participation in a broader system of knowledge generation by allowing individual freedom with social responsibility, rather than restricting personal autonomy.

Objection 2: Intrusion Into Private Life

Another objection states that not every relationship leads to procreation and therefore requiring educational intervention or disclosure will be an intrusion into individuals' private lives. If individuals choose to remain childless, it is unnecessary to impose any structured preparation on their personal relationships.

This objection presumes that the value of the proposed framework lies only in its connection to procreation. But this thesis argues that education and disclosure are not limited to child-related outcomes but are equally important for the formation of stable, healthy and long-term relationships. The skills developed by The PRE Program such as communication, conflict resolution, emotional regulation and financial awareness contribute directly to individual Well-being and relational harmony regardless of whether procreation occurs or not. Also, individuals who do not procreate are still active members of society and may become policymakers, leaders or decision makers whose judgments affect families and future generations. Having standardized knowledge and ethical awareness strengthens the quality of social institutions as a whole. Furthermore, their contribution helps in the generation of social data which help identify patterns of successful relationships. Therefore, the framework does not represent an intrusion into private life, but rather a supportive and non-coercive system that increases both personal well-being and collective understanding with full freedom to choose in relation to relationships and procreation.

Objection 3: An Unclear Picture of Unpreparedness and Harm

This objection challenges the empirical foundation of the thesis by mentioning that negative outcomes are not directly caused by lack of preparation or disclosure, but these outcomes are multi-factorial; it is a question whether there is a link that shows unprepared relationships are morally problematic.

In response to this, the harm discussed in Chapter 2 is not the result of a single cause, but it does not undermine their moral relevance. The thesis does not claim strict causation. But it relies on a risk based and probabilistic understanding of moral responsibility. Empirical research shows that factors, for example poor communication, emotional instability, financial stress and lack of awareness about parenting increase the likelihood of bad outcomes, even if they do not guarantee them (CDC, 2025). These factors function as risk multipliers, not deterministic

causes. In moral reasoning, individuals are not only responsible for direct outcomes but also for knowingly creating conditions that increase foreseeable risk to others, especially when those risks affect the next generation. The absence of a missing direct link doesn't remove responsibility. But it strengthens the need for precaution. Societies already practice these principles for example, through safety regulations like seatbelt laws. It is not because harm is certain but, because it is predictable and preventable to some extent.

Objection 4: Relationships Are Not Comparable to Professions

This objection argues that relationships and family life are different from professions such as medicine, aviation or law. In professions, clients are vulnerable because they lack technical knowledge, and professionals are not emotionally attached to them. Therefore, formal training is necessary to prevent harm. In contrast, parents are emotionally connected to their children and are naturally motivated to act in their best interests. For this reason, it may be argued that training is appropriate in professional domains but unnecessary in the context of intimate relationships and family life.

The objection underestimates the moral importance of vulnerability and overestimates the sufficiency of emotional attachment as a safeguard against harm. It is true that professional relationships differ from family relationships in terms of emotional involvement. The main similarity lies in the presence of vulnerability and harm, not in the absence of emotional connection. In fact, children are more vulnerable than clients as they lack both the knowledge and the capacity to exit harmful situations. For example, a patient can seek a second opinion or discontinue treatment, but a child cannot withdraw from bad parenting. This makes the moral stakes of parenting at least as important if not far greater. From the perspective of W.D Ross's Duty of Non-Maleficence, individuals have an obligation to avoid causing harm through their actions. It can be intentional or unintentional (Ross, 2002). Lack of knowledge in areas such as emotional regulation, communication or child development can lead to harm even when parents have good intentions. Emotional attachment alone does not guarantee ethical competence.

Similarly, Aristotle emphasizes that virtue requires habituation, practical wisdom, and the cultivation of good judgment rather than merely possessing good intentions (Aristotle, 2009). Therefore, moral competence in relationships, like competence in other socially significant activities, may require learning and development rather than reliance upon instinct alone. This thesis does not advocate for licensing or controlling procreation. It proposes a non-coercive model of education and disclosure that empowers individuals with the skills to apply their freedom responsibly. In this sense, gaining knowledge in relationships is not about control but increasing the capacity to create stable, harmonious environments.

Objection 5: The Framework is Ineffective and Creates Additional Burdens

This final objection claims that the framework is ineffective because it does not eliminate unprepared relationships or procreation. Individuals may still ignore education and disclosure, leading to continued harm. The system may create additional burden, data management costs and strain on public resources. It is argued that it is preferable to maintain the current model of

complete personal freedom rather than introduce a system that is neither fully enforceable nor fully effective.

The objection assumes that a system must eliminate all instances of harm to be justified. But this sets an unrealistic approach that no ethical framework can meet. This model is not made to eliminate all unprepared relationships but to function as a precautionary system. That reduces foreseeable harm and improves decision-making over time. It can be compared to accepted safety measures for example seatbelt regulations. When seatbelts were introduced, they were met with resistance based on personal freedom, bodily concerns and skepticism about their effectiveness. Critics argued that individuals still died in accidents even while wearing seat belts, therefore such measures were unnecessary. Over time, empirical data demonstrated that seat belt use significantly reduced the risk of fatal injury (NHTSA, n.d.) leading to widespread acceptance and behavioral change. The importance of this analogy lies in the distinction between eliminating harm and reducing risk. The fact that seatbelts do not prevent all deaths does not make them ineffective; rather, their value lies in their ability to significantly reduce the probability of harm.

The framework also introduces additional benefits that the current system lacks such as systematic data generation. By tracking the patterns of preparedness, disclosure and relational outcomes. The model enables society to identify which combinations of knowledge, skills and transparency lead to more stable and fulfilling relationships. Over time, this data can influence behavior voluntarily. Just as statistical evidence changed public attitudes towards seat belt use, evidence-based insights into relationship success can guide individuals towards more reasonable decisions without coercion.

The concern regarding additional burdens on the state can also be sufficiently answered. While the system may require initial investment in data infrastructure. It has the potential to reduce long term costs associated with child welfare systems, legal disputes, crime prevention and mental health services, costs that arise from unstable and unprepared relational environments. Therefore, the framework represents not an added burden but a re-allocation from reactive to preventive expenditure.

Therefore, this objection fails to address that imperfection does not invalidate regulation. Even in highly regulated professions such as medicine, aviation, law and engineering, errors and accidents still occur. This doesn't lead society to abandon training. But it reinforces the importance of preparation as a means of minimizing risk. The same principle applies to relationships and procreation. The presence of failure does not justify the absence of preparation, instead it highlights the need for systems that reduce the likelihood and impact of such failures.

The framework proposed in this thesis does not claim to eliminate relational harm, guarantee ethical conduct, or fully resolve tensions between freedom and social responsibility. Rather, it attempts to provide a philosophical model through which individuals may be better prepared to navigate relational and procreative responsibilities under conditions of uncertainty, vulnerability, and imperfect human judgment.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored a largely unaddressed assumption in societies, that individuals can enter intimate relationships without effective prior preparation, structured disclosure and data collection for further research, despite the consequences such relationships may generate. Relationships are often treated as private matters based on personal freedom, the analysis of the research shows that their effects are beyond the individual, shaping families, influencing the development of children and generating broader social and institutional impacts.

The central claim expresses throughout the thesis that the absence of preparation and disclosure in relationships is a structural gap, not just a neutral condition. Ethical frameworks of existing systems such as education and public policy are markedly flawed. It can be plainly seen that in many areas of life where outcomes affect other people's lives, societies have developed mechanisms of preparation, evolution and transparency. But in the root domain of relationships, in which consequences are the same, no such systematic framework exists. Individuals often enter relationships without sufficient awareness of compatibility, expectations or long-term implications which may result in relational instability, psychological stress, family conflict and institutional burdens ranging from legal systems to healthcare are not just accidental but partly rooted in a lack of structured preparation. Despite this, there is no mechanism to measure these patterns and insufficiently analyse them, unlike other domains such as economic systems where data-driven evolution through stock market charts and patterns are essential.

In response to this gap, this thesis introduces a non-coercive framework based on Procreative Readiness Education (PRE), Mutual Disclosure and data collection. This model doesn't restrict individual freedom or impose uniform choices. But it enhances the quality of freedom by enabling informed decision-making. A big contribution of this proposal is in the data and pattern recognition. If implemented over time, such a framework would allow societies to identify trends in relational well-being, compatibility and outcomes. It would be a shift from reactive responses to relational breakdown toward proactive understanding and prevention. Just as statistical evidence has influenced behaviour in areas such as public health and economic planning, the same approach in the domain of relationships could slowly shape individual choices and social expectations.

The aim of this thesis is not to eliminate uncertainty or guarantee relational success. Human relationships are complex and cannot be fully predicted. But the absence of certainty does not justify the absence of preparation. Ethical responsibility has been discussed throughout the thesis and is present in reducing avoidable harm when and where possible. From a bigger perspective, this thesis invites a reconsideration of how progress is understood. Current measures of development often prioritize economic growth and collect data from companies run by different people with different temperaments, technological advancements and institutional efficiency. Yet they overlook a basic dimension of human life which is the root of every stage of growth and advancement. The quality of relationships and the environments in which individuals live. A society in which individuals experience instability, stress and unresolved conflict with their most immediate social structures cannot be considered fully developed regardless of its material achievements. The framework proposed in this thesis should therefore be understood as an initial step toward a longer process of social evolution. Its effects may not

be immediately visible, but over time, the accumulation of data, awareness and behavioral adaptation has the potential to change how relationships are approached. In this sense, the thesis does not offer a final solution but establishes a foundation for future research and policy development.

The framework proposed in this thesis does not claim to eliminate relational failure or provide a complete solution to the complexity of human relationships. Rather, it argues that the foreseeable consequences of intimate and procreative decisions create moral reasons for greater preparation, reflection, and informed responsibility.

Finally, this thesis argues that relationships should not remain an unstructured domain based only on assumption and intuition. Instead, they should be approached with the same level of seriousness, preparation and responsibility that societies apply to other ethically important areas of life. By doing so, it becomes possible to move toward a model in which individual well-being, family stability and social harmony are not left to chance or mercy but are consciously supported and continuously improved.

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