

What Makes a Healthy Relationship?



Healthy Relationship Defined

A healthy relationship is a relationship that is based on love, trust, open communication and mutual respect. It is when both parties in the relationship are comfortable being themselves and feel safe, secure and loved for exactly who they are. In a healthy relationship both partners are willing to compromise, admit when they are wrong and be humble enough to apologize when they are. Both partners in the relationship should be free to spend time with friends, family and participate in activities that are important to them.

In a healthy relationship each person is allowed to be an individual within the relationship. They are allowed to grow independently of each other and as a couple. A healthy relationship involves freedom, encouragement and support of each other's goals and efforts. It also involves cooperation, setting boundaries, and being considerate of each others feelings.

Relationships are not always easy. They often require a lot of hard work, and energy. Having a healthy foundation will help you to live a happy and healthy life.

The Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria, 1998

Components of a Healthy Relationship

Mutual respect

Each person values who the other is and understands the other person's boundaries.

Trust

Without trust, it is not possible to have a healthy relationship. Choose to trust in each other and give each other the benefit of the doubt.

Honesty

Lying breaks trust and takes time to rebuild. Always be honest. It strengthens the relationship.

Compromise

You won't always get your way. Acknowledge different points of view and be willing to give and take. It's a bad sign when the relationship becomes a power struggle.

Individuality

You shouldn't compromise who you are, and your identity should not be based on the other person. Continue seeing your friends, family, co-workers or doing the things that you love. Be supportive if your partner wants to pursue new hobbies or make new friends.

Good communication

Speak honestly and openly to avoid miscommunication. If you need to sort out your feelings first, your partner should respect your wishes and wait until you're ready to talk.

Anger control

We all get angry, but how we express it can affect our relationships with others. Anger can be handled in healthy ways such as taking a deep breath, counting to 10, or talking it out.

Problem solving

You can learn to solve problems and identify new solutions by breaking a problem into small parts or by talking through the situation.

Fighting fair

Everyone will argue at some point, but those who are fair, stick to the subject, and avoid insults are more likely to come up with a possible solution. Take a short break if the discussion gets too heated.

Understanding

Take a minute to understand what others might be feeling - put yourself in their shoes. It can improve your communication skills, too.

Self-confidence

Having confidence in yourself can help your relationships with others. It shows that you are calm and comfortable enough to allow others to express their opinions without forcing your opinions on others to win an argument.

Being a role model

By modeling what respect means, you will inspire your partner, friends, and family to model respect, too. Take every opportunity to give respect.

Adapted from No Means Know, Idaho Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Project

How Will I Feel in a Healthy Relationship?

Love Shouldn't Hurt

Wondering if your relationship is healthy or unhealthy?

Call us to speak with a Domestic Violence Advocate at : 1-800-636-6738

Advocates are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- Happier
- Less stressed
- Secure and safe
- Unique and significant
- Inspired
- Supported
- Free to express myself



What Will I Do to Build the Relationship?

- I will care about my partner's well-being .
- I will make and keep agreements.
- I will care about their happiness.
- I will make time to spend with partner free of distractions.
- I will strive to not hurt my partner-emotionally or physically.
- I will desire to change negative behaviors that harm the relationship.

How Will My Partner Feel in a Healthy Relationship?

- They will know how much you care about them.
- They will know they can go to you for help or comfort and they will want to do that for you.
- They will know that you will always give them their freedom and the respect they deserve.
- They will know that you will respect their boundaries and they will respect yours.
- They know that you have their best interest in mind.
- They know that you are a person who can be trusted and who trusts them.
- They will feel safe and want you to feel safe, too.