

## **Your Relationship: Healthy or Unhealthy?**

When you think about your current relationship, how do you feel? Do you remember good times together and dream about your future? Or do you wonder if this person is really right for you? Unlike what we see in the movies, relationships are about more than love and romance. So how do you know if your relationship is one for the ages?

### **Is Your Relationship Healthy?**

A healthy relationship is characterized by a sense of commitment, contentment, and safety. Ask yourself if your relationship has the following traits:

#### **Good Communication**

Good communication is the key to all relationships. When you can communicate your feelings, wants, and goals, you share who you are now and where you hope to be in the future. You also learn the same from your partner. Creating an open and honest atmosphere for communication allows you to grow closer and equip yourselves to build a future together.

#### **Commitment**

Commitment is essential to a healthy relationship. It means you can count on one another and plan for a future together. A strong, committed relationship lets you enjoy the good times and gets you through the bad times.

#### **Trust**

Being at ease in a relationship is a by-product of trust. When you trust your partner to treat you well and to speak the truth, feelings of jealousy are tossed aside in favor of love and honesty. You have the confidence of knowing your partner is mindful of your best interest. Trust is an element of friendship, an important aspect of a healthy relationship.

#### **Fairness and Respect**

Give-and-take in relationships is also important. Do you both have a say in what movies to go to, what friends to hang out with, how much time to spend with your families, and what to spend money on? Your relationship should not feel like a power struggle but rather involve mutual respect and healthy compromise.

Sound like your relationship? Good! A healthy bond is meant to enrich the lives of the people involved, making them happier and more fulfilled.

## **Is Your Relationship Unhealthy?**

A relationship is unhealthy if it involves disrespectful, mean, abusive, controlling, or violent behavior. No one goes looking for a bad relationship, but they do happen, and it's not your fault. Maybe you don't trust your partner, you can't tell him/her how you honestly feel, or you're afraid of your partner. If this rings true for you, you should consider getting help or even ending the relationship.

Here are some signs that your relationship may be doing more harm than good:

### **Disrespect**

Someone who loves you will not insult or belittle you, even if they claim to be doing it "for your own good." When you respect someone, you appreciate them for who they are. A respectful relationship allows partners to have different opinions.

### **Jealousy**

Like an ice pick, jealousy chips away at a relationship until little else remains. While it's normal to feel a bit of envy now and then, your partner should not make you feel guilty about a new job, spending time with friends, or your success.

### **Abuse and Violence**

Nearly all couples argue, and you may get quite angry with each another, but healthy relationships do not include abuse or violence as part of these arguments. Important warning signs of verbal, emotional, and physical abuse include:

- Insults, demeaning language, and constant put-downs
- Physical abuse (hitting, shoving, or slapping)
- Forced sexual activity

If disrespect, jealousy, abuse, or violence are a part of your life as a couple, you should ask yourself if your current relationship is really right for you. No one deserves to be abused or made to do something that makes them uncomfortable. If you are experiencing any of these things in your relationship, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE) for help.

## **Conclusion**

Being in a healthy relationship is a great part of life! Relationships give people the chance to share their experiences and complement their lives. But healthy relationships take work. Both partners need to remain committed and make an effort to keep the love and respect alive.

## **National Healthy Marriage Resource Center**

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## **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

- [Administration for Children and Families](#)
- [Office of Family Assistance](#)

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