

7 signs of a toxic relationship

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Feel like you could be in a toxic relationship with a friend or significant other? A toxic relationship can start out perfectly healthy, but over time, unhealthy habits may start to surface, changing the dynamic of the relationship. For some couples, this can take months or even years, but for others, these signs can be evident in the early stages of dating and friendships. Even the strongest people can find themselves in toxic relationships and moving on is not always easy.

What is a toxic relationship?

A toxic relationship has the power to control your emotions and make you feel extreme highs and extreme lows. It often happens when one or both parties show signs of manipulative behaviour, which may stem from previous experiences, past relationships or trauma. It can be difficult to determine if your relationship is toxic, as [bad behaviour](#) can be rare—but identifying the signs can help you work out if something's not right and whether the problem can be fixed, or if it's time to leave. Staying for the sake of it can often cause more damage, so if any of the below signs resonate with you, it might be time to consider your options.

Here are some signs you might be in a toxic relationship:

1. Everything is about them

Feel like you never choose what movie to watch, or where to go for dinner? Toxic people have a way of making everything about them and like to be in control of every decision, no matter how small it is. They might pretend to care about your feelings and opinions but will always end up putting themselves first.

2. They are jealous or controlling

Does your partner constantly check your phone or get suspicious when you're out with other people? If you're starting to feel like they don't trust you, they probably don't. This behaviour is often a result of their own insecurities and compromises one of the most important foundations of any relationship—trust.

3. You feel exhausted or drained after spending time with them

Spending time with someone special in your life should make you feel energised, not drained. A toxic person can make you feel emotionally exhausted after spending time with them as you feel like you're the one constantly giving and making the effort, without getting anything in return.

4. They don't respect your boundaries

Feel like you're starting a fight every time you say 'no'? It's common for toxic personalities to constantly push and overstep boundaries, leaving you with an overwhelming sense of self-doubt and frustration. Due to this behaviour, you might find yourself questioning your strength, values and self-worth.

5. They isolate you from friends and family

In the initial stages of a relationship, you might find

it sweet or endearing that someone wants to spend so much time with you. Overtime, this can quickly escalate to possessiveness, causing you to spend less time with friends and family, and eventually feel isolated and lonely.

6. They are manipulative, expecting you to always do what they want

Manipulative behaviour can often be hard to pinpoint, as it's often carried out in subtle ways that make you feel like you're the person in the wrong. This behaviour plays with your emotions as it's usually brought upon by guilt-trips. A toxic person will dismiss your opinions and feelings to ultimately get you to do what they want, making you out to be the bad person.

7. You feel trapped in the relationship

Feel like there's no escape? Leaving is easier said than done and can often cause more grief and heartache than staying in a toxic relationship. Despite this, try to remember that there's always a way out, even in the most toxic relationships.

What to do if you're in a toxic relationship

If you can relate to any of the above signs, it could be time to acknowledge that your [relationship](#) may be toxic. Some people might not realise that their actions are hurting you, so if you can, try telling the other person how you are feeling and how their [behaviour](#) is affecting you by using 'I feel...' statements.

Provided by Murdoch University

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