



Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships

No relationship is perfect, but healthy intimate partner relationships make both people feel respected, supported, and safe. Healthy relationships are characterized by mutual respect, trust, equality and honesty. Look below to see some of the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Healthy relationships

Respect: Each person values who the other person is, understands the other person's boundaries, and values their beliefs and opinions.

Trust: Partners trust in each other and are comfortable doing things separately and respecting each other's privacy online.

Honesty: Being truthful and open with your partner and being able to talk together about what you both want without fearing the response or if you'll be judged.

Individuality: Neither partner compromises who they are, and each has their own identity, with space and freedom in the relationship.

Unhealthy relationships

Disrespect: Your partner makes fun of your opinions and interests, or purposely destroys something that is important to you.

Jealousy: Everyone can experience jealousy, though it becomes unhealthy when someone tries to control you because of it.

Betrayal: When your partner is deceitful, hides important things from you or threatens to make your private matters public to control you.

Control: When your partner makes all the decisions and tells you what to do, what to wear, and who to spend time with. They may also be 'in charge' of all the finances and insist that you account for all the money you have spent, or force you to hand over any money you have to them. He or she may also try to isolate you from your friends and family.

Healthy relationships

Equality: You and your partner put equal effort into the relationship and make decisions together as opposed to one person calling all the shots.

Taking responsibility: You and your partner are both responsible for your own actions and words. You both avoid putting blame on each other and own up when you do something wrong. You both avoid taking things out on each other when you're upset and both try to make positive changes to better your relationship.

Healthy sexual relationship: A sexual relationship that both are comfortable with, and neither partner feels pressured or forced to engage in sexual activity that is outside his or her comfort zone or without consent.

Non-Violent relationship: No physical violence used by either partner and feeling a sense of care and concern from your partner, knowing that they will be there to support you.

Inclusion: Both partners encourage each other to socialize and keep in touch with friends and family.

Unhealthy relationships

Manipulation: One partner influences the other without them realizing it. This can include ignoring you until they get their own way, making you feel guilty or responsible for their actions, making you feel like everything is your fault and threatening to hurt themselves or others if you don't do as they say or stay with them. They may also use gifts and apologies to influence your decisions or to 'apologize' for their behaviour.

Deflecting responsibility: Your partner makes excuses for their behavior, blaming you, other people or past experiences for their actions. They may use alcohol or drugs as an excuse, or use any mental health issues or past experiences (like a cheating ex or divorced parents) as a reason for unhealthy behavior.

Sexual violence: One partner pressures or forces the other into sexual activity against his or her will or without consent.

Physical violence: When one partner intentionally uses physical force against the other, as a means of controlling the other partner. This includes shaking, slapping, pushing, biting, punching, scratching, trying to choke or strangle, hitting with household objects, using weapons and physical restraint (e.g. pinning you against a wall).

Isolation: Keeping you away from friends, family, or other people by insisting you choose your partner over them. Spending all your time with your partner and making you feel dependent on them for money, love or acceptance.

Healthy relationships

Protection and Loyalty: When your partner is reliable and you feel confident that they have your back, and are respectful and faithful, sticking up for you and keeping your secrets safe.

Encouragement: Your partner supports you to do things that you want to do, and backs your decisions.

Self-confidence: When partners have confidence in themselves, they are calm and comfortable enough to allow others to express their opinions without forcing their own opinions on them.

Unhealthy relationships

Sabotage: Purposely ruining your reputation, achievements or success by making you miss work, talking about you behind your back or starting rumors, and threatening to share private information about you.

Belittling: Making you feel bad about yourself - calling you names, making rude remarks about your friends and family or what you look like, and making fun of you – even if it's played off as 'just a joke'.

Intimidation: When a partner tries to control aspects of your life by making you feel fearful or timid. This may include threatened or actual violence.

For further information on relationships:

<https://www.joinonelove.org/signs-unhealthy-relationship/>

<https://www.loveisrespect.org/>

Help is available

If you are experiencing abuse, know that it's not your fault and you are not alone. Help is available:

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)

TTY 1-800-787-3224

The National Dating Abuse Helpline

1-866-331-9474

TTY 1-866-331-8453

Text "loveis" to 22522

Live chat at www.loveisrespect.org

UK National Domestic Violence Helpline

0808 2000 247

Australia - 1800RESPECT

1800 737 732