

The Relationship Spectrum

A Healthy Relationship

A healthy relationship means that both you and your partner are...

Communicating

You talk openly about problems without shouting or yelling. You listen to one another, hear each other out, respect each other's opinions, and are willing to compromise.

Respectful

You value each other as you are. Culture, beliefs, opinions and boundaries are valued. You treat each other in a way that demonstrates the high esteem you hold for one another.

Trusting

You both trust each other, and the trust has been earned.

Honest

You are both honest with each other but can still choose to keep certain things private. For example, you both know that it is important to be honest about things that affect or involve the relationship and still know that it is also ok to keep certain things private.

Equal

You make decisions together and you hold each other to the same standards.

Enjoy Personal Space

You both enjoy spending time apart and respect when one of you voices a need for space.

Make consensual sexual decisions

You talk openly about sexual decisions together. You both consent to sexual activity and can talk about what is ok and what isn't. If you're having sex you talk about possible consequences together, such as pregnancy or STD's. You decide together how to address these things, such as through condoms and other birth control methods.

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An Unhealthy Relationship

An unhealthy relationship starts when even just one of you is...

Not communicating

Problems are discussed calmly, or not talked about at all. You don't listen to each other or try to compromise.

Disrespectful

One or both partners are inconsiderate toward the other. One or both partners don't treat each other in a way that shows they care.

Not trusting

There is suspicion that your partner is doing things behind your back, or your partner is suspicious of your loyalty without reason.

Dishonest

One or both partners are telling lies to each other.

Trying to take control

One or both partners sees their desires or decisions as more important. One or both partners is focused only on getting their own way.

Feeling smothered or forgetting to spend time with others

So much time is spent together that one partner is beginning to feel uncomfortable. Or sometimes both partners spend so much time together that they ignore friends, family or other things that used to be important to them.

Pressuring the other into sexual activity or ignoring consequences

One partner is trying to convince the other that the relationship should become more sexual. Or both partners are consensually sexually active with each other but aren't addressing the possible consequences.

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An Abusive Relationship

An abusive relationship starts when just one of you...

Communicates abusively

During disagreements there is screaming, cussing, or threatening, or these things happen even when there is no argument. A partner is demeaning or insulting toward the other.

Is disrespectful through abuse

A partner intentionally and continuously disregards your feelings and physical safety.

Falsely accuses the other of flirting or cheating

A partner suspects flirting or cheating without reason and accuses the other, often harming their partner verbally or physically as a result.

Doesn't take responsibility for the abuse

The violent or verbally abusive partner denies or minimizes their actions. They try to blame the other for the harm they're doing.

Controls the other partner

There is no equality in the relationship. What one partner says goes, and if the other partner tries to change this there is increased abuse.

Isolates the other partner

One partner controls where the other one goes, who the other partner sees and talks to. The other partner has no personal space and is often isolated from other people altogether.

Forces sexual activity

The how, when, and where of sexual activity is determined by only one partner. Threats and violence are used prior to or during sexual activity.