

# Examining Our Relationships

What a Healthy and Unhealthy Relationship Looks Like,  
and How to Get Rid of the Unhealthy Ones!

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## PORTRAIT OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

Relationships are intended to enrich our lives. A healthy relationship, whether family, friendship or romance, should increase your feelings of self-worth, offer enjoyment and the opportunity for individual growth. In a healthy relationship, both parties perceive that they are individually receiving a fair exchange. Their relationship offers both joint and individual benefits and rewards. To establish a healthy relationship, you need to recognize what one looks like.

1. The parties protect and nourish the relationship.
2. They treat each other with respect.
3. They show kindness and care toward each other, and live in harmony.
4. They feel secure and comfortable around each other and communicate and share wants, needs, and feelings without shame or fear.
5. There is NO abuse. There is no physical abuse to body or property. There is no verbal abuse of yelling, cursing, or degrading the other. There is no emotional abuse such as ignoring, manipulation or emotional blackmail.
6. They resolve conflicts peacefully and satisfactorily.
7. They enjoy spending time together, and laugh and play freely.
8. They are responsible for their own needs, and care for and support their partners needs.
9. They are individually responsible for their behavior and accountable to themselves and to the relationship.
10. They keep the promises they've made to themselves and each other.
11. They have individual boundaries that are respected.
12. They take interest in each others health, family, and career.
13. They sincerely listen to each other.
14. They enjoy mutual trust and honesty.
15. They encourage and support other friendships, without jealousy.
16. They encourage and support individual and mutual goals and dreams.
17. They enjoy individual privacy as well as privacy in the relationship.
18. They have more good times than bad times.
19. In a romantic relationship, sex is mutually satisfying.
20. They are committed to the relationship.

## PORTRAIT OF AN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

All relationships have disagreements, times of frustration, small and temporary imbalances, and periods where there is a need for sacrifice and compromise. This is normal and healthy when it is brief, non-traumatic, and acknowledged and dealt with by both parties. It can be difficult to recognize, acknowledge and accept that you are in an unhealthy relationship. Any one or more of the following traits may mean your relationship is unhealthy: ("They" means.... one of you or both of you....)

1. They do not make time for the relationship or give priority to the relationship.
2. They have no respect for the other person or their property.
3. One party feels like they have to agree with the other in order to keep peace. There is no freedom for opinions, desires, etc.
4. There is no trust and no honesty.
5. They ignore the other when they're speaking.
6. The relationship is severely imbalanced, forcing one party to constantly sacrifice greater than the other.
7. They may try to control or manipulate the other.
8. One person is unable to work, attend to their children or other aspects of their life, without threatening the relationship.
9. They make the other feel bad about her/himself by ridiculing or name calling.
10. They may dictate how the other dresses, wears their hair, what they read, who they speak with, where they go, etc.
11. They live in fear of the others temper or violent actions against body or property.
12. They discourage or make the other feel guilty for having relationships with children, parents, family or friends.
13. They are overly possessive or get jealous of ordinary behavior.
14. They criticize the others gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or other personal attribute, like hair color or weight.
15. They control the others money or other resources.
16. They harm or threaten to harm children, family, pets or objects which are dear to you, as a way of control or manipulation.
17. They are abusive in any way, including physical, mental, verbal or emotional.
18. They bully, push, grab, hit, punch or throw objects at you or in your direction.
19. They use physical force or threaten to prevent the other from leaving.
20. There are more bad times than good.