

Healthy Relationship Indicators



Boundaries

In healthy relationships, partners should be able to express what they are and are not comfortable with and can expect their partners to be respectful of these choices. Types of boundaries can include physical, emotional, financial, sexual, and spiritual boundaries. Boundaries are not rules we establish to control others, but are used to take care of ourselves. For example, partners in healthy relationships can expect to:

- Spend time with friends and family without their partner
- Have alone time and space when requested
- Feel safe in sharing sexual preferences and feel safe in both giving and withdrawing consent
- Have their privacy respected, including choosing whether or not to share passwords to personal accounts
- Not have to “check-in”
- Choose whether or not to share personal thoughts and ideas

Healthy relationship indicators can also apply to relationships with friends, co-workers, and family members

Equality

Equality refers to the balance of power in relationships. Disagreements may occur in all relationships, however, in healthy relationships, each partner has equal input in decision making and feels safe and supported in sharing their thoughts. In unhealthy or abusive relationships, one partner may have complete control over certain aspects. Equality in a healthy relationship may look like:

- Compromising less and collaborating more
- Both partners have a say in financial choices, parenting choices, etc.
- Deferring when it is agreed by both partners that one person is more knowledgeable in a particular situation
- Both partners feel they have had the chance to present their opinion

Communication

In healthy relationships, partners feel safe and supported in discussing their feelings and thoughts. During conflicts, good communication requires that each person speak up for themselves in a way that expresses their thoughts in an appropriate and non-threatening way. In healthy relationships partners will:

- Not only listen, but pay attention to each other’s verbal and non-verbal cues
- Feel safe expressing disagreement
- Choose an appropriate space and time to discuss disagreements
- Allow each other to speak without interruption, jumping to conclusions, or becoming immediately defensive and/or critical
- Respect, support, trust, and celebrate each other

Self-Esteem

Positive self-esteem indicates that a person feels worthwhile and valuable. In a healthy relationship, your self-esteem remains intact and can be strengthened through the relationship. If you are in a relationship and find yourself doing things that make you feel bad, uncomfortable, guilty, or ashamed this may be an indicator that something is wrong.