

In a healthy relationship, you:

- ◆ Treat each other with respect
- ◆ Feel secure and comfortable
- ◆ Are not violent with each other
- ◆ Can resolve conflicts satisfactorily
- ◆ Enjoy the time you spend together
- ◆ Support one another
- ◆ Take interest in one another's lives: health, family, work, etc.
- ◆ Have privacy in the relationship
- ◆ Can trust each other
- ◆ Are each sexual by choice
- ◆ Communicate clearly and openly
- ◆ Have letters, phone calls, and e-mail that are your own
- ◆ Make healthy decisions about alcohol or other drugs
- ◆ Encourage other friendships
- ◆ Are honest about your past and present sexual activity if the relationship is intimate
- ◆ Know that most people in your life are happy about the relationship
- ◆ Have more good times in the relationship than bad

In an unhealthy relationship, one or both of you:

- ◆ Try to control or manipulate the other
- ◆ Make the other feel bad about her/himself
- ◆ Ridicule or call names
- ◆ Dictate how the other dresses
- ◆ Do not make time for each other
- ◆ Criticize the other's friends
- ◆ Are afraid of the other's temper
- ◆ Discourage the other from being close with anyone else
- ◆ Ignore each other when one is speaking
- ◆ Are overly possessive or get jealous about ordinary behaviour
- ◆ Criticize or support others in criticizing people with your gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or other personal attribute
- ◆ Control the other's money or other resources (e.g. car)
- ◆ Harm or threaten to harm children, family, pets, or objects of personal value
- ◆ Push, grab, hit, punch, or throw objects
- ◆ Use physical force or threats to prevent the other from leaving

Sometimes it's not easy to decide if a troublesome relationship should be kept the way it is, worked on, or ended before it goes any further. One thing to consider is if the relationship was ever different than it is now. Is there something stressful happening that could be impacting the way you interact? Maybe money is tight, you've moved, are looking for work, are dealing with a difficult family circumstance, or are going through some other kind of transition. Or maybe there are problems from a while back that were never resolved, and are now resurfacing. What in particular is bothering you, and what would you like to see change? Talk over these questions with each other, or with someone you trust, like a friend, teacher, or counsellor. Think about what, if anything, you can each do to make the other feel more comfortable in the relationship.

If a partner, friend, or colleague is harming you or your loved ones physically, emotionally, or sexually, it's time to seek help. If he is encouraging other harmful behaviours, like abuse of alcohol or other drugs, unsafe sexual activity, or other activities that make you feel uncomfortable, you should talk to someone you trust about it. Perhaps the most important thing to do is to trust your instincts and the people close to you whose opinions you trust and value. Each and every one of us deserves to feel safe, valued, and cared for.

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