



Building and Maintaining Healthy Relationships

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Relationships:

1. Romantic relationships: These are relationships between two people who are in love and/or have a romantic interest in each other. Examples include dating, marriage, and long-term partnerships.
2. Family relationships: These are relationships between family members, such as parents and children, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins.
3. Friendship relationships: These are relationships between people who are friends and enjoy each other's company.
4. Work relationships: These are relationships between people who work together, such as coworkers, managers, and subordinates.
5. Community relationships: These are relationships between people who are part of the same community, such as neighbors, members of a religious group, or volunteers.
6. Online relationships: These are relationships that are formed online, through social media, messaging apps, or other online platforms.
7. Relationships with pets: These are relationships between people and their pets, such as dogs, cats, and birds.
8. Relationships with inanimate objects: These are relationships between people and objects that they consider important, such as a car, a house, or a piece of art.
9. Relationships with oneself: These are relationships that people have with themselves, including self-love, self-acceptance, and self-improvement.

Myths

myth 1: the perfect partner/friend/family member...

myth 2: you complete me...I am not good enough without you

myth 3: love/caring should be easy

myth 4: everlasting love

myth 5: you shouldn't feel angry – hide your emotions

myth 6: they should meet all your needs and expectations

Myths in the Way of Objectives Effectiveness

1. I don't deserve to get what I want or need.
2. If I make a request, this will show that I am a very weak person.
3. I have to know whether a person is going to say yes before I make a request.
4. If I ask for something or say no, I can't stand it if someone gets upset with me.
5. If they say no, it will kill me.
6. Making requests is a really pushy (bad, self-centered, selfish, etc.) thing to do.
7. Saying no to a request is always a selfish thing to do.
8. I should be willing to sacrifice my own needs for others.
9. I must be really inadequate if I can't fix this myself.
10. Obviously, the problem is just in my head. If I would just think differently I wouldn't have to bother everybody else.
11. If I don't have what I want or need, it doesn't make any difference; I don't care really.
12. Skillfulness is a sign of weakness.

Basic Needs

1. **Respect and safety:** Each person in the relationship or friendship deserves to be treated with respect and dignity, feel safe to express themselves and not being judged.
2. **Communication:** Open and honest communication is essential for building and maintaining healthy relationships and friendships.
3. **Trust:** Trust is the foundation of any relationship or friendship. Without trust, it is difficult to maintain a connection with another person.
4. **Support:** Support is crucial in relationships and friendships. Each person needs to feel that they can rely on their partner or friend for emotional, physical, and practical support.
5. **Equality:** Relationships and friendships work best when both parties feel equal and valued.
6. **Shared interests:** Having shared interests and activities can help strengthen the bond between partners or friends.
7. **Recognition:** Each person in a relationship or friendship should feel recognized and appreciated for their contributions and efforts.
8. **Consistency:** Consistency in behavior and actions is important in building and maintaining healthy relationships and friendships.

Toxic relationship?

Short answer: No

Long answer: NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

While some people may use the term 'toxic' to describe a relationship, I believe that it's more accurate to describe it as unhealthy. Every relationship has its ups and downs, but when a relationship becomes consistently harmful or abusive, it's no longer healthy. Instead of labeling it as toxic, it's important to recognize the warning signs of an unhealthy relationship and take steps to address them.

What makes any relationship “unhealthy”

D – Disconnection

We need to pay attention with a particular attitude: one of openness, curiosity, and receptiveness.

R – Reactivity

In reactive mode, we are seemingly jerked around by our thoughts and feelings like a puppet on a string; we have little or no self-awareness, and little or no conscious control over our behavior. In the grip of reactivity, we act impulsively, mindlessly, or automatically: it's as if we are driven along blindly by our emotions, blinkered by our own beliefs and judgments.

A – Avoidance

Higher levels of *experiential avoidance*, the technical term for trying to avoid or get rid of unpleasant feelings, are directly linked to an increased risk of depression, anxiety, stress, addiction, and a wide variety of other health issues

I – Inside your mind

When you're inside-your-mind, you're disconnected and reactive simultaneously. You can't truly connect with your partner because you're too entangled in your own thoughts. And you can't respond to him effectively and flexibly because you're on automatic pilot: reacting impulsively to whatever story your mind tells you.

N – Neglecting values

If you're not careful, as soon as you get upset, your values go out the window—and instead of being the partner you want to be, you disconnect, go into reactive mode, and get trapped inside-your-mind.

Languages of Love (Chapman)

- **Words of affirmation** - Using words to build up the other person.
- **Gifts** - A gift says that your partner was thinking about you. Look what they got for you.
- **Acts of Service** - Doing something for your partner that you know they would like.
- **Quality Time** - Giving your partner your undivided attention. Taking a walk together or sitting on the couch with the TV off – talking and listening.
- **Physical Touch** - holding hands, hugging, kissing.

Problem Interactions (Burns, 1991)

- Truth
 - ▶ You insist you're right and the other person is wrong
- Blame
 - ▶ You imply the problem is the other person's fault
- Defensiveness
 - ▶ You argue and refuse to admit any imperfection
- Martyrdom
 - ▶ You imply that you are an innocent victim.
- Put down
 - ▶ You imply that the other person is a loser.
- Labeling
 - ▶ You call the other person a jerk, a loser, or worse.
- Sarcasm
 - ▶ Your tone of voice is belittling or patronizing
- Counterattack
 - ▶ You respond to criticism with criticism.
- Scapegoating
 - ▶ You imply the other person is defective or has a problem

Problem Interactions (Burns, 1991)

- Diversion
 - ▶ You change the subject or list past grievances.
- Self-blame
 - ▶ You imply that you are an awful and terrible person.
- Hopelessness
 - ▶ You claim that you've tried everything, and nothing works.
- Demandingness
 - ▶ You complain when people aren't as you expect.
- Denial
 - ▶ You insist you don't feel angry, sad, or upset when you do.
- Helping
 - ▶ Instead of listening, you give advice or "Help".
- Problem solving
 - ▶ You ignore feelings while trying to solve the problem.
- Mind reading
 - ▶ You expect others to know how you feel without telling them.
- Passive aggression
 - ▶ You pout, withdraw, storm out, or say nothing when angry.

Four Horsemen (Gottman)

- Criticism

- ▶ Rather than focusing on the behavior, you attack your partner's character or personality.

- Contempt

- ▶ You show blatant disrespect to your partner with sneers, rolling eyes, or insults.

- Defensiveness

- ▶ Rather than taking responsibility for your behavior, you tune out your partner, and make excuses.

- Stonewalling

- ▶ You become non-responsive. You shut down, tune out, or turn away,

Communication

- **Disarming Technique (Burns):** You find some truth in what your partner is saying, even if you feel convinced it is wrong

- **The Law of Opposites:** By agreeing with a false criticism, you disprove it; by disagreeing with a false criticism, you prove it true.

Empathy (Burns): You put yourself in the other person's shoes and try to see the world through their eyes.

- **Thought empathy:** You paraphrase their words.

- **Feeling empathy:** You acknowledge how they're feeling

Inquiry (Burns)

- You ask gentle probing questions to learn more about what they are thinking and feeling

Affirmation / Repair (Burns)

- You find something genuinely positive to say to the other person, after the heat of the battle.

- This indicates that you respect the other person, even though you may be angry with each other.

Problem solving/ Decision making

- State what the issue is
- Clarify why it is important.
- Discuss possible solutions
- Decide on a solution
- Decide on a trial period to implement it.

Assertiveness: DEAL

- **Describe** the Situation: Just the facts, as objectively as possible
- **Express** your feelings: Simply, without blaming the other person
- **Ask** for changes: What changes would you like to see in the relationship?
- **List** Benefits: What are the positive consequences of those changes?

LOVE

L – Letting go

O – Opening up

V – Valuing

E – Engaging

“It is not our purpose to become each other; it is to recognize each other, to learn to see the other and honor him for what he is.”

Hermann Hesse

Thank you

