

Healthy Relationships: The Relationship Spectrum

Healthy	Unhealthy	Abusive
respect good communication trust honesty equality	communication breaks pressure dishonesty struggles for control inconsiderate behavior	accusations blame shifting isolation pressure minipulation
Health relationships are based on equality and respect.	Unhealthy relationships are based on attempts to control the other person.	Abusive relationships are based on power and control.

Boundary Setting

Personal boundaries are the limits and rules we set for ourselves within relationships. Boundaries should be based on your values or things that are important to you.

- **Know Your Limits:** Before becoming involved in a situation, know what is acceptable to you and what is not. It is best to be as specific as possible.
- **Listen to Your Emotions:** Strive to listen and understand what your feelings are telling you. Let that be a guide to your boundaries.
- **Have Self-Respect:** If you always give in to others, ask if you are showing as much respect to yourself. It is essential we consider ourselves and our wants/needs.
- **Have Respect for Others:** Be sure your actions are not self-serving at the expense of others. Instead, consider what is fair to everyone, given the setting and relationship.
- **Be Assertive:** Don't be shy; say "no" respectfully but without ambiguity. Be clear and concise, and plan out what you want to say and how you will say it.
 - Steady tone of voice, appropriate speaking volume and confident body language
 - Example: "I'm not comfortable with this." or "Please don't do that."

Communication Skills

- **Reflective Listening:** This involves paying respectful attention to the content and feelings expressed in another person's communication. It is about hearing and understanding, and then letting the other person know by reflecting back.
 - "I hear you saying that..." or "It sounds like you feel..."
- **Using "I" Statements:** Speaking from your own voice, with this sentence format we show that we are taking responsibilities for our own emotions rather than blaming others.
- **Verbal and Nonverbal:** Body language and short verbal cues that match the speaker's affect show interest and empathy.
 - Verbal: "mm-hmm," "That makes sense"
 - Non-verbal: nodding, eye contact, emotional reaction
- **The 7 C's:** Control, conversational, confident, competent, calm, clear and concise.

Healthy Relationship Quiz

1. Can you say what you like or admire about your partner?
2. Is your partner glad that you have other friends?
3. Is your partner happy about your accomplishments and ambitions?
4. Does your partner ask for and respect your opinions?
5. Does s/he talk about her/his feelings?
6. Does s/he really listen to you?
7. Does your partner have a good relationship with his/her family and friends?
8. Does s/he have interests besides you?
9. Does s/he take responsibility for her/his actions and not blame others for his/her failures?
10. Are you and your partner friends? Best friends?

If you answered YES to any of questions 1 – 10, you probably are not in a relationship that's likely to become abusive.

11. When your partner gets angry, does s/he break or throw things?
12. Does your partner lose his/her temper easily?
13. Is your partner jealous of your friends or family?
14. Does your partner expect to be told where you have been when you're not with him/her?
15. Does your partner drink or take drugs almost every day, or go on binges?
16. Does s/he ridicule, make fun of you or put you down?
17. Does your partner think there are some situations in which it is ok for a man to hit a woman/woman to hit a man?
18. Do you like yourself less than usual when you've been with your partner?
19. Do you find yourself ever afraid of your partner?

If you answered yes to any of the questions 11 – 19, you may want to be careful and think about your safety in the relationship and may want to consult a counselor.

Resources Available: titleix.osu.edu/navigation/get-help/confidential-support



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF NURSING

Counseling Services
Shelby Woith, MA, LPCC
Woith.3@osu.edu
614-292-6952
nursing.osu.edu/counseling