



## Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship

- You communicate openly and honestly without fear of being judged, used, made fun of or abused in any way.
- There are exchanges of affection that are not demanded, pressured or forced.
- Expressions of affection are ALWAYS met with kindness, caring, privacy, understanding and respect.
- Each partner feels secure in the relationship, so there is no need for jealousy or possessiveness.
- When there are problems or conflicts, both partners discuss the issue openly and with supportive commentary.
- You feel safe to share your innermost feelings, dreams, thoughts and failures without fear and anxiety.
- You are free to be who you are and never feel pressured to change your values, morals, interests or support systems.
- You are able to discuss priorities, goals and interests without fear or ridicule.
- You value each other's opinion and listen without judgment.
- Each partner has strong feelings of self-worth and self-esteem.
- You acknowledge and discuss each other's mistakes and take responsibility for your actions.
- You enjoy each other's company. You feel safe and comfortable with each other.
- There is a balance of giving and receiving in your relationship. Equality is both affirmed and celebrated.
- Each person can enjoy being alone and requests for privacy are respected.
- Both individuals recognize that ANY form of violence, intimidation or manipulation is unacceptable.
- Your lives outside of the relationship make your relationship stronger. Other meaningful relationships and interests exist for both partners.
- You are able to be a couple without losing your sense of self.
- Rules and boundaries are clear and defined, yet they allow for flexibility if you desire to change or assess them. Both of you feel free to express your needs.
- Your partner does not try to change or control you when you disagree.
- You can say "no" without feeling guilty about it.

**For free, confidential support contact The Shelter for Abused Women & Children:**

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