



## Relationships

We wish our relationships at all levels are filled with fulfillment, happiness and joy and most importantly love! The quality of our relationships affects our lives in many ways, including our self-esteem, our ability to handle stress, and our academic and work-related productivity.

For some, our experiences in life have left us confused and we may not be able to recognize if we are in a healthy relationship.

**In a healthy relationship** partners involved are independent yet respect and value their relationship. Opinions are shared openly and honestly. In this relationship no one tries to change or fix the other partner and each partner is responsible for their own happiness and wellbeing. They address conflicts and disagreement when they arise, compromise when needed, and truly forgive and accept the other.



### Tips to improve your relationships

- ✓ Give a compliment and boost your partner's self-confidence.
- ✓ Treat your partner the way you want to be treated.
- ✓ Compromise but do let your partner know it was a compromise to avoid resentment later.
- ✓ Discuss things that bother you. Letting things build up leads to resentment.
- ✓ Smile, laugh, play, dance and hug
- ✓ See the Divine in each other – trust your partner's innate perfection. In happy relationships we enjoy our own pleasure and want our partner to enjoy theirs. We see life as good, and we want to expand on that goodness through coming together in a partnership.



## A Self Assessment

### HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR FRIENDSHIP?

#### Answer with a simple Yes or No

1. My friend and I have clear communication
2. We have trust in one another
3. There is mutual respect between us
4. We have common interest
5. We are able to perceive things differently without expecting each other to see things the other's way
6. I feel he/she values me intellectually, emotionally, if intimate, physically
7. I am able to grow independently, and I support my partner's growth
8. We have activities and friends outside of the relationship
9. We accept each other and do not try to change each other
10. Our relationship adds joy to my life

If you answered No to any of the questions above you may want to explore the health of your relationship.





## Unhealthy Relationships

**In an unhealthy relationship** partners involved are dependent and do not respect nor value their relationship. They are afraid to share their opinion openly and honestly. This may be a relationship where each tries to change or fix the other. Conflict and differences are not addressed creating hardship, resentment and even hatred. They may even be abusive.

### Physical Abuse

- ✓ Slapping, hitting, kicking
- ✓ Pushing, shoving
- ✓ shaking
- ✓ Pinching
- ✓ Squeezing hands, arms with the intent of hurting

### Emotional abuse

- ✓ Teasing
- ✓ Bullying
- ✓ Humiliating
- ✓ Threats
- ✓ Intimidation
- ✓ Putdowns, but tells you he/she loves you
- ✓ Betrayal

### Sexual Abuse

- ✓ Forced intimacy

### When should you worry?

- ✓ Harms you physically
- ✓ Tries to control aspects of your life such as how you dress, who you hang out with and what you say
- ✓ Frequently humiliates you or makes you feel unworthy
- ✓ Coerces or threatens to harm you or self-harm if you leave the relationship
- ✓ Twists the truth to make you feel you are to blame for your partner's actions
- ✓ Demands to know where you are at all times
- ✓ Constantly becomes jealous or angry when you want to spend time with your friends
- ✓ Unwanted sexual advances that make you feel uncomfortable

### Getting out of an abusive relationship

- ✓ Make sure you are safe
- ✓ Don't isolate yourself from friends and family even though you may feel embarrassed or responsible
- ✓ Asking for help shows you have a lot of courage



## Know the Facts

## Mind & Spirit



## Words for the Wise

### No Relationship is Perfect

It is normal to feel angry, hurt, or upset at times but never humiliated, pressured, controlled or scared. One needs to feel loved, respected, and free to be yourself whether you are dating, married, living together as a couple, or are just friends.

### Friends For Ever

Our friends choose us, accept us and support us and they play a powerful role in shaping our attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors towards the good and the bad in life including sexual violence, abuse or even rape. Friends should speak up when they know of or see abuse or improper behavior, they should not accept excuses for violent acts committed by people they love or to people they love. Friends give and receive respect.

### Communicate with Each Other

Talking, expressing your feelings freely, voicing your opinion are essential tools in any healthy relationships. If you disagree, speak clearly and directly, without intentionally hurting or disrespecting each other.

### It Always Starts With the Family

Our families are important to us, help shape beliefs and provide support. However sometimes families can reinforce violent behavior. Actions with intent to abuse, humiliate, harass, or degrade is unhealthy. Our children learn what they see and hear. Without healthy relationships from which to learn, children can grow up to act out. Simple changes in the way you act in front of your children can prevent unhealthy relationships in the future. For instance, speak up when you see your son or daughter mistreat others physically or emotionally. Talk to your children about what it means to be in a healthy relationship where couples do not hurt each other physically, sexually, or emotionally.

### Honesty Trust & Respect

Honesty and respect are key ingredients to the success of any relationship whether it is between friends, family, couples and others. Treat your partners, friends, and family with the same trust, honesty, and respect that you would want.

### Abuse is Never Okay

Intentional harm is not acceptable whether it is physical, sexual, or emotional. Don't ever try to justify or excuse the behavior. Seek help.

### Campus Resources:

- ext.1080 ACG Counseling Center
- ext.1500 ACG Health & Wellness Center

### Community Resources:

- 197 EKKA hotline, 24/7 National Center for Social Solidarity
- 15900, 24/7 hotline, General Secretariat of Gender Equality
- 210 970 0814, SOS Line, European Network of Women

### Sources & Further Reading:

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**Sources & further reading:** [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org), [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org), [www.lifeoptimizer.org](http://www.lifeoptimizer.org), [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com),