

How to Build a Healthy Relationship with your Partner

Your relationship with your significant other has major influence on your health and happiness. For that reason, you want to make sure you find a partner you can build a healthy and fulfilling relationship that helps both of you become the best versions of yourselves.

While acknowledging the fact that every relationship is different, there are fundamental values that are common in all healthy relationships.



Before getting into them, it's important to note that these go both ways. It is unfair and counterproductive to expect your partner to live by these if you are not.

These you can use as assessment tools or for guidance in building a healthy, happy relationship.

1. Communication

Sounds cliché but there's a very good reason why this is reiterated every time relationships are the subject matter.

Open and honest communication is the corner stone of healthy relationships. If you cannot be honest with your partner or free enough to openly express yourself then you are leaving room to breed toxicity full of lies, deceit, manipulation and secrecy.

Nothing good comes from that and you'll both be unsatisfied in the relationship, you'll always feel like something is lacking.

So talk about everything with your partner, even if it seems trivial to you or it's a hard topic to raise.

Being able to be transparent with each other builds intimacy. Nothing is as satisfying as knowing you are loved for exactly who you are.



2. Expectations/relationship goals

Now that we've talked about communication, one of the most important conversations you should have with your partner are that of your expectations and goals for your relationship.

From the onset of the relationship you should communicate your intentions for wanting to be in a relationship, whether you are looking for a long term relationship, exclusive relationship you want to commit to or the opposite of that. If you haven't had that conversation yet, it's not too late to have it now.

Making each other's intentions clear from the very beginning avoids setting either of you for hurt and disappointment.

Side note: If someone says they're not looking for anything serious whilst you are, please believe them and don't go in thinking you can change their mind. They'll change it only if they want to and not because you told them to.



Other expectations to communicate are how you want the relationship to be, from the small things to the big ones. It's also important to realise that expectations can change, so make it a habit to talk about them throughout your relationship.

Some good questions to ask yourself and your partner are:

- How frequently you want to talk with and see each other?

- Your individual values that you want to bring into the relationship and aren't willing to compromise like your morals, faith/religion. Should your beliefs differ, how do you want your partner to tackle conversations and activities to do with your faith without being offensive to you while maintaining honesty?
- The role you want your partner to play in your life. Are you looking for support, someone to talk to, someone to have fun with, or even someone to do everything with?
- How you want your partner to interact with your friends and family. Do you expect them to get along with everyone in your life, do you want them to become friends with your friends or be close with your family, do you want them to interact at all?

Lay all your expectations down so both of you can have a clear vision of how the relationship will be and decide if it is what you want and how you want it to be.

3. Compromise

Now obviously, no one can live up to all the expectations of another person. It's uncalled for to even expect them to because that is the same as asking them to lose themselves.

This is where another fundamental trait of a healthy relationship comes in: compromise.

You have the right to decide what you are not willing to tolerate from your partner and also the right to decide what you are not willing to compromise about yourself.

Let's be clear, abuse in any form should not be tolerated by anyone, we're not talking about that here.

We're talking about what may be considered trivial things that annoy you, like the toilet seat being left up or your partner never being on time for anything.

It might even be not so trivial, like your partner growing out of activities you used to do together that you must now do alone or them wanting to try out something new with you that you don't particularly like. It might even be them converting to a different belief system that you don't believe in.

If you are looking to be with someone long term, it's important to realise that there'll be traits you don't like about them that they are not willing to or cannot change, and vice versa. For the sake of peace and the satisfaction of both of you in the relationship, you have to be willing to let these be and embrace them as part of who your partner is.

4. Creating boundaries

For those things you cannot compromise, you create boundaries around them.

Boundaries are necessary for all types of relationships, not just romantic ones. You teach people how to treat you by the boundaries you create.

These range from the tone and words you accept when people are talking with you, to the things they do to and around you.

Make your boundaries clear to your partner so you can protect that which is sacred to you.

An example of a boundary would be you being the only one who has access to your phone. This example in particular tends to cause conflict between couples, it's important that you and your partner agree to the boundaries set around access to each other's phones.

Once you know each other's boundaries, respect them and do not intentionally cross them.

5. Conflict resolution



Conflicts between human beings are inevitable, we are all different trying to express our individuality in the world, so frictions are bound to happen.

How you solve conflicts with your partner can determine how long the relationship lasts.

Number one rule of solving conflicts is that first cliché we talked about; yes its communication. That means silent treatments are a no-no.

If neither of you are psychic then you won't know what's bothering the other person unless they tell you. So speak up!

How you communicate also matters, especially when you're angry. Insulting your partner, using swear words and shouting at them only adds fuel to the fire.

Trying to solve conflicts by doing the same thing your partner did also doesn't help, instead it creates a toxic cycle of two people who continuously hurt each other.



Involving people outside of your relationship to resolve conflicts can also end up doing more harm than good, our friends and family tend to be biased towards one party when conflict is involved which can create even more indifference between you two.

Should you decide to involve anyone, make sure the person has the best interests at heart for the both of you.

Talk until you find common ground, be willing to forgive just as you want to be forgiven your mistakes.

Boundaries and compromise play key roles here.

Remember that you and your partner are in the same team. It's not you against them, it's both of you against the problem.

6. Assumptions

Speaking of conflicts, making assumptions is one big culprit of causing those.

Do not make assumptions. If you are unsure of something concerning your partner or your relationship, ask.

Once again it goes back to open and honest communication (now you see how really important it is huh?). Do not assume to know what your partner is feeling or thinking no matter how long you've been together.

Don't assume the worst either when something appears to be suspicious to you until you've communicated with your partner.

7. Insecurities

Another culprit that causes a lot of conflicts; your insecurities.

They might have been created by your upbringing or a previous relationship you were in. Whatever the cause, you cannot change the past and holding onto hurt will fill your heart with bitterness and anger that you'll take out on everyone you love.

It could be your lack of trust in other people and you're constantly paranoid and overreacting to things your partner does, or your inability to take compliments because you have a low self-esteem. Whatever it is, work on it.

Healing your hurts will benefit you way more than it will others.

Check out this great article for ways to [overcome your insecurities](#).



8. Accountability

Lack of accountability to one's actions can completely kill a relationship. Having a partner that will not take responsibility for their actions can drain all the peace and intimacy out of your relationship.

When you do something that hurts your partner—whether intentional or not, take ownership of it and do whatever is necessary to restore the peace and love in your relationship.

Also, allow your partner the time and space to heal from whatever has occurred and do not force them to forgive and forget.

9. Love languages

Most often we love others the way we want to be loved.

No matter how much you and your partner have in common, you don't always perceive love the same way.

Some people feel most loved when they're given gifts, for others it's being told they're loved and beautiful on a daily, or spending quality time with you.

Ask your partner what makes them feel loved and let them know what makes you feel loved as well. Learn each other's love languages so you can both feel fulfilled in the relationship.

10. Sex

This is a very personal topic and it's affected by a lot of things. The level of intimacy in sex differs and grows with the relationship.

For those starting out to date sex might not even be in the table yet. People decide when to have sex based on their personal reasons, it might be a religious reason or it might be wanting to know the other person better first. Whatever your reason, let your partner know where you stand.

For those who are sexually active, be willing to try new things and explore with your partner. You are not forced to do anything you're not comfortable with though, it should be a fun and pleasurable experience for both of you that brings you closer.

Do not use sex as a fighting tool to win arguments. That will only distract you from dealing with the real problem and cause further strain in your relationship.

Also recognise that sex is attached to a person's mental state and emotions, so don't expect it if neither of you isn't feeling well there.

How often you are sexually intimate with your partner must be something you decide and are both comfortable with. Don't have unrealistic expectations and also be willing to make compromises.

11. Finances



Financial issues have been known to end relationships, money is a big element of our lives and thus this topic cannot be avoided.

From who pays the bill on dates to who is responsible for the mortgage, you and your partner have to detail financial responsibilities in a fair and concise manner so no one feels burdened by it.

People's financial statuses aren't the same, so don't compare your relationship to another.

Do what works for you. This applies to all advice you receive (including this article) and everything you're exposed to. Take everything with a grain of salt and do what you know to be best for you and your relationship.

12. Other relationships



As much as your partner means everything to you, they cannot be everything to you.

So have a life outside of your relationship. Go out with friends, visit family, and practise your hobbies without your partner.

If you're together 24/7 it's easy to feel like you're suffocating each other and that can drain all the romance out of a relationship.

If you don't want to be apart from your partner even for a minute then you need to assess where that is coming from, being dependent on a person like that isn't healthy for either of you.

Do not lose your individuality, that's what attracted you to each other after all.

May your relationship be filled with the love and intimacy that you so deserve!

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