

# HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

A healthy relationship is one where both partners feel respected, loved, valued and supported. In a long-term relationship, partners understand one another's values and life goals, and work together to help one another achieve them. It is a connection that is built on trust, communication, acceptance and love. In a healthy relationship both partners have the freedom to be themselves, pursue their individual goals and interests, while still prioritising the wellbeing of their partner and the relationship itself.



## YOUR EAP PROVIDER

Ask yourself:

- Does my partner encourage me to grow?
- Do we share goals for the future?
- Do we want the same kind of relationship?
- Can I be myself with them?
- Do I accept them for who they are?
- Do we meet each other's needs most of the time?
- Is my life better with them in it?
- Does our time together have meaning?

If you mostly answered yes, your relationship is probably a strong one.

## WHAT SUSTAINS A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

### Communication

Aim to communicate openly and honestly with your partner. Be an active listener and avoid judgment or criticism. Focus on understanding your partner's perspective.

### Boundaries

Boundaries define what is and is not acceptable behaviour. Partners communicate their boundaries clearly and stand by them. Boundaries help to build trust and respect.

### Quality Time

Schedule quality time to spend together to maintain a strong emotional connection. This could be anything from watching movies to trying new activities.

### Curiosity

One key characteristic of healthy, long-term love is curiosity. This means being interested in your partner's thoughts, goals, and daily life. You want to watch them grow into their best self. You're not stuck on who they used to be or who you think they should be.

### Physical Intimacy

Physical intimacy strengthens the bond between two people and fosters closeness. Examples of physical intimacy are sharing someone's personal space, holding hands, hugging, kissing, caressing and sexual activity.

### Balance

Make sure to maintain a balance between time with your partner and your individual needs. Pursuing your personal goals should not come at the expense of your relationship.

### Conflict Resolution

No relationship is perfect, so it's important to have effective conflict resolution techniques. Practice active listening, compromise, and empathy to overcome conflicts that arise.

### Trust

Build trust by being honest, dependable, and reliable. Keep your promises and avoid breaking trust by keeping secrets or lying.

**Building and maintaining healthy relationships can be challenging. Focus on the positives, on communicating effectively, setting healthy boundaries, being intimate, being curious, practising empathy, making time for each other and seek help when needed. By prioritizing these values in your relationship, you are more likely to build a lasting and fulfilling relationship with your partner.**

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## For More Information

- 12 elements of healthy relationships - Johns Hopkins University Student Well-Being (jhu.edu)
- Healthy Relationships: 32 Signs, Tips, Red Flags, and More (healthline.com)
- 10 Signs That You're In a Healthy Relationship | Psychology Today

## RELATIONSHIP SUPPORT AT POSITIVE SOLUTIONS

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### Relationship Counselling

Couples or marriage counselling can assist you and your partner to work through issues which may be having a negative impact on your relationship. Working with our professional counsellors allows couples to be able to identify their goals and develop strategies that can support healthy communication. Counselling can enhance couples ability to relate to each other and manage conflict and can increase the bond between couples.

### Individual Counselling

Talking with a counsellor can have many benefits. Counsellors can provide practical tools and strategies when coping with complex issues. Individual counselling can support you with personal 'worries' through to issues related to your relationship.

## HALLMARKS OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

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### Communication

Effective communication is an essential part of any healthy relationship. Both partners feel safe to express their thoughts and feelings, knowing that they will be heard and respected. They maintain open and honest communication, even if it means discussing difficult topics or facing conflict.

### Trust

Each partner trusts that the other will remain loyal, honest, and committed to the relationship. There are no secrets or hidden agendas.

### Shared Responsibility

Healthy relationships involve sharing roles and responsibilities. Each partner contributes in a way that feels fair and balanced. They recognize the importance of compromise and work collectively to resolve conflicts.

### Mutual Respect

Partners in healthy relationships respect each other's right to boundaries, privacy, and personal space. They value each other's individuality, opinions and strive to understand each other's emotions. Healthy couples honour each other's family relationships and friendships.

### Emotional Support

In a healthy relationship, partners provide emotional support when one of them is going through a difficult time. They listen and offer support in a way that feels meaningful to the other person.

**Don't forget that Employee Assistance Program is a good way to access confidential and professional support.**



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