



RELATIONSHIPS THAT WORK!!

In a healthy relationship, two people should be able to enjoy each other's company and the activities they choose to participate in. Relationships can be even more enjoyable if certain ingredients are present.

✓ **MUTUAL RESPECT**

- Means respecting each other's decisions and choices
- Means revealing who and what we are and accepting the other person for who they are

✓ **MUTUAL TRUST**

- There are no lies, secrets or manipulation
- Means jealousy does not get out of control and there is room for other friends
- Is knowing that trust takes time to build
- Means faith that both partners are acting in each other's best interests
- Means believing in the honesty and reliability of one's partner or friend



✓ **MUTUAL SUPPORT**

- Means comfort and understanding for one another
- Means that you are there for the other person in good times and bad times
- Means that self-esteem is affirmed by feelings of self-worth

✓ **FLEXIBILITY**

- Means allowing for and expecting change within the relationship
- Changes may include roles and feelings for one another

✓ **COMMUNICATION AND FAIR-FIGHTING**

- Means communicating thoughts and feelings in an open and honest manner
- Is being able to deal with situations as they arise and not allowing them to build
- Is accepting that arguments and disagreements are normal in every relationship
- Means there is no threat or use of physical power.



RELATIONSHIPS THAT DON'T WORK!!

It's wonderful to be in love but sometimes love hurts. But knowing that love hurts doesn't mean YOU should expect to get hurt - it's unhealthy and sometimes even abusive. There are **red flags** that can help you decide if you are in an unhealthy or abusive relationship.

A combination of factors trap couples in unhealthy and abusive relationships:

- The seriousness of the relationship & time invested
- Dependency on each other
- Differences in power
- No acceptance of responsibility of abuse by the abusing partner
- Belief of the victim that they can change the abuser's behaviour



✘ UNHEALTHY DESTRUCTIVE ELEMENTS:

- Finding fault with each other
- One partner attempts to change the other ...you can no longer be yourself
- Jealousy that becomes controlling e.g. suspicion of possible rivals, fear of someone's attention
- Lies, manipulation and secrets
- Afraid to express your feelings because of possible negative consequences
- Relationship makes you feel inadequate, diminishes your self-esteem

✘ CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR:

- Tells you how to dress, what to say, how to feel, dictates who you can associate with
- Insists on knowing your whereabouts and who you have been with
- One person makes the decisions.

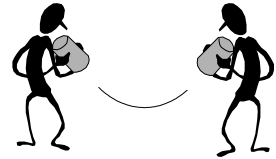
✘ ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR:

- Verbal - putdowns, snide remarks, insults, swearing, threats, humiliation in public, excessive teasing, false accusations
- Emotional - silent treatment, ignoring, promises not kept, withholding attention, affection or friendship, isolating partner from friends and family
- Physical - slapping, hitting, punching, pushing, hair pulling, biting, choking, etc
- Sexual - any sexual contact that is unwanted, from kissing to intercourse; behaviour occurring because of coercion (force/guilt), threats, trickery or pressure
- Economic - stealing, damaging or destroying a partner's money or property

PASSIVE COMMUNICATION - behaviors that do not express thoughts & feelings directly. You may give in and when you don't want to. You may not speak up when you want something. **Result:** You don't get what you want and you feel used.

AGGRESSIVE COMMUNICATION: Behaviors that express thoughts & feelings in a threatening way. You may try to get your own way by using putdowns, threats or violating the other person's rights by using "loaded words" (always, never), being tense/loud/harsh/cold/quiet.

DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION STYLES



ASSERTIVE Communication

Behaviors that express thoughts and feelings in an open, direct way. You ask for things you want, without putting anyone down. You give an honest "no" to things you don't want. You can accept "no" for an answer.

- Speech is honest, direct, to the point and you use "I" statements.
- Voice is clear, firm, pleasant and relaxed
- You make direct eye contact without staring
- You have an upright confident posture when you sit or stand

Result: You may not get what you want, but you keep your self-respect.

PASSIVE Communication

Behaviors that do not express thoughts and feelings. You may give in and say yes when you don't really want to. You may not speak up when you want something.

- You may respond by saying nothing at all or with lots of apologies
- Voice is soft and whining
- Your eyes may be downcast or looking away
- You may have a slumped posture with shoulder and head down and with movements.

Result: You usually do not get what you want and you feel like you've been used.

MANIPULATIVE Communication

Behaviors that do not express thoughts and feelings. You ignore the problem or apologize, but then makes plans to get even.

- Speech and voice are a normal conversational volume and tone
- You avoid eye contact
- You express anger through body language or actions (i.e. facial expressions, tone of voice, slamming the door) instead of expressing it through words.

Result: You usually do not get what you want and there may be an argument later. You are resentful of the other person.

AGGRESSIVE Communication

Behaviors that express thoughts and feelings in a threatening way. You may attempt to get your own way by using putdowns, threats or violating the other person's rights.

- You use "loaded words" (such as "always" or "never"), putdowns, insults
- Voice may be tense, loud, harsh, or cold and quiet
- Your eyes may be cold, staring, narrowed and angry
- You may have a stiff, rigid posture
- You may be physically threatening (standing up suddenly, pushing, hitting)

Result: You may seem to get what you want but in fact, you stand to lose friends and special relationships.



You have reason to be worried if someone has been:



- Repeatedly following you, your friends or your family
- Repeatedly communicating, either directly or indirectly, with you, your friends or your family
- Waiting and watching your home, school or workplace or those of your friends and family.
- Threatening you, your friends or family
- Threatening your pets or damaging your property
- Calling or emailing you repeatedly when it is clear you don't want him to.
- Sending you things you don't want

If you are feeling threatened, trust your instincts. Call the police and get some emotional support. Remember that your safety and peace of mind are most important.

RESOURCES THAT CAN HELP

- Kids Help Phone - 1-800-668-6868
- 24 Hour Health Link - 1-866-408-5465
- RCMP & Victims Services
- Mental Health Services - Call toll free through the Rite Line - Dial 310-0000 then
 - Peace River - (780) 624-6151
 - Fairview - (780) 835-6149
 - High Prairie - (780) 523-6490

(Adapted from Free From Fear: Sexual Assault Prevention for Teens. Government of Yukon Women's Directorate, January 2002, pg. 12-13)