

Healthy relationships nurture feelings of respect, love, safety, and honesty. They exist when each individual is able to take ownership of their own feelings as well as hold healthy boundaries. Unhealthy behaviors are often activated by fear, but everyone has a right to leave a relationship that makes them unhappy and where conflict can't be resolved.



WHAT ARE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS?

We all have different types of relationships with the many people in our lives. Whether they are with friends, family, significant others, partners, acquaintances or anyone else, it is important to know how to have and keep those relationships HEALTHY. Healthy relationships increase our self-esteem, improve mental and emotional health, and help us have fuller lives.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOURSELF

Learning to take responsibility for your own feelings and needs is one of the most important choices you can make to improve your relationships. Instead of trying to get your partner to make you feel happy and secure, you need to learn how to make yourself feel happy through your own thoughts and actions. When you learn how to take full responsibility for yourself, then you stop blaming your partner for your upsets. You can do this by learning to treat yourself with kindness, care, compassion, and acceptance, keeping in mind that taking care of yourself is vital to a good relationship.

FEAR

Most people have two major fears that become activated in relationships: the fear of abandonment (losing the other person) and the fear of engulfment (losing oneself). When these fears are activated, most people immediately protect themselves with controlling behavior: anger, blame, judgment, niceness, compliance, caretaking, resistance, withdrawal of love, explaining, teaching, defending, lying, denying, etc. By learning about and dealing with fears instead of attempting to control your partner, fears will eventually heal. This is how we grow emotionally and spiritually – by learning instead of controlling.

THE BOTTOM LINE

If you feel unhappy in your relationship and if you think that you might be experiencing abuse, get help. Talk to someone. You deserve to be happy!

RELATIONSHIP RIGHTS

Remember that you have the right to your own opinions, to live free from accusation and blame, to feel heard, and to be respected.

LIGHTEN UP!

Don't take everything too seriously. People aren't perfect. Learn to differentiate between long-term patterns and honest mistakes.

WHEN TO END IT

It may be time to end the relationship when unhappiness in the relationship persists, there is unresolved conflict, you are staying in the relationship to avoid hurting your partner, or it seems trust can't be rebuilt.

wsr.byu.edu

3326 Wilkinson
Student Center
(801) 422-4877
wsr@byu.edu



[@byuwsr](https://www.instagram.com/byuwsr)



[facebook.com/byu.wsr](https://www.facebook.com/byu.wsr)