

CHARACTERISTICS OF HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- ❖ Each partner feels whole without the other. “I am whole. You are whole. We enjoy being together. We work well together.”
- ❖ Each partner feels responsible for his or her own well-being and happiness and doesn’t depend on the other partner to provide it.
- ❖ Each partner feels responsible for his or her own self-esteem. “I feel good about myself no matter what anyone else thinks.”
- ❖ A balance between togetherness (we) and separateness (I). “I understand and appreciate the difference between ‘you’, ‘me’, and ‘we’. The world is large and you are a part of it.
- ❖ An ability to establish and appreciate relationships with other people. “I enjoy other friendships.”
- ❖ A trust and understanding that other people and other friendships do not take away from the relationship.
- ❖ An ability to communicate effectively. Being open, honest, assertive, accurate, and clear. Being willing to listen.
- ❖ An opportunity for support and growth for each person and for the couple. “Our growth as individuals and as a couple enriches our relationship.”
- ❖ Commitment: “I will stay with you. I am willing to put my time, effort, and energy into this relationship.”
- ❖ A willingness to be honest. “I think we have a problem.”
- ❖ The ability to accept the other as he/she is. “I am curious to discover who you are.”
- ❖ A willingness to negotiate differences and fight fairly.
- ❖ Each partner has established healthy boundaries. “I know what is mine, what is yours, and what I am willing to share.”
- ❖ A willingness to recognize when the relationship is changing.

CHARACTERISTICS OF UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- ❖ One or both partners feel incomplete without the other. “With you, I am complete. You are my other half. At last, I found you.”
- ❖ One or both partners rely on the other for their happiness and well-being.
- ❖ One or both partners rely on the other for self-esteem. The way I feel about me is directly related to the way you feel about me.
- ❖ Levels of togetherness (we) and separateness (I) are out of balance. “We must do everything together. My world revolves around you and I feel lonely if you’re not near.”
- ❖ An inability to establish and appreciate relationships with other people. “I only want to be with you.”
- ❖ A lack of trust for other relationships the other person has. Fear that other relationships threaten the relationship between the partners.
- ❖ An inability to communicate effectively. Game-playing, beating around the bush, being unwilling to listen.
- ❖ Lack of opportunity for individual and relationship growth. “Let’s always stay the same.”
- ❖ Controlling the other person through decisions, threats, or manipulation. “If you leave me, I’ll hurt myself.”
- ❖ Attachment or addiction. “I am stuck with you. I need to be with you. I can’t make it without you.”
- ❖ Denial. “What problem? I don’t notice anything wrong.”
- ❖ Expectations that one partner can change the other to meet his or her wants or needs.
- ❖ An inability or lack of interest in negotiating differences and fighting fairly.
- ❖ Limits and boundaries are poorly established and defined. “I’ll deny my own needs in order to meet your needs.”
- ❖ The illusion the relationship will stay the same forever.