

Top 10 Ways to Maintain a Healthy Relationship

10. Role Modeling

Display positive behaviors and choices for yourself, speak up against harmful language or actions, verbalize the importance of behaving in a respectful way.

9. Equality

Be aware of your own rights and those of others, establish a balance of decision making, value other's opinions.

8. Trust

Be honest, follow through with agreements, discuss concerns, and be reliable.

7. Accountability

Admit when wrong, accept responsibility for own behaviors/choices, acknowledge past abuse or violent behaviors.

6. Maintain Outside Friendships

Schedule time to spend with other people, including friends and family members. Maintain contact with people who are encouraging and respectful.

5. Personal Growth

Be confident in yourself, encourage your own and other's goals and growth, support the confidence of others.

4. Establish Boundaries

Know how you want to be treated physically, emotionally and verbally. Avoid harmful behaviors. Declare your right to be in a safe, nonviolent relationship.

3. Negotiate

Be willing to compromise. Discuss opinions, accept change, use positive language.

2. Practice Empathy

Consider the other's perspective, imagine what the other person is feeling and experiencing. Put yourself in the other person's shoes.

1. Communication

Act and speak in ways that will allow you to feel comfortable and safe expressing opinions, plans, and how you want to be treated. Practice open listening, use open dialogue, and avoid critical judgment.

Adapted from materials created by Lessons from Literature (Respect Wheel) and Family Violence Prevention Fund, 2009.

For more information about healthy relationships, refer to the "Warning Signs of an Unhealthy Relationship" Crossword Puzzle, your school counselor or the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence at 1-800-799-SAFE or www.ncadv.org.