

# THE RELATIONSHIP SPECTRUM

Healthy relationships are based on communication, respect, trust, honesty, and equality

## COMMUNICATION

### HEALTHY + UNHEALTHY

Partners talk openly about problems without yelling. They listen to one another, respect each other's opinions, consider the other's feelings, and are willing to compromise.

Partners fight and use words to hurt and insult each other, or they stop talking at all.

## RESPECT

### HEALTHY + UNHEALTHY

Partners hold one another in high esteem, each valuing the other as they are. They honor one another's culture, beliefs, and customs.

Partners mistreat one another and show disregard for feelings and personal safety.

## TRUST & HONESTY

### HEALTHY + UNHEALTHY

Partners believe one another; each continually earns the other's trust. They may choose to keep some things private but are generally open and considerate in sharing information.

The relationship is characterized by suspicion, lying, and mistrust. Partners may falsely accuse one another of flirting or cheating.

## EQUALITY

### HEALTHY + UNHEALTHY

Decisions are discussed and made together. Each partner holds the other to the same standard of behavior.

One partner believes his/her choices and desires are more important than the other's. One partner makes the majority of decisions and controls use of resources and money.

## PERSONAL TIME

### HEALTHY + UNHEALTHY

Partners enjoy spending time together and also respect the need for time apart.

Partners spend so much time together that they ignore family and friends who used to be important. One partner may monopolize the other's time, isolates him/her from friends.

## SEXUAL CHOICES

### HEALTHY + UNHEALTHY

Partners talk openly about sex. They discuss needs—including use of condoms and birth control, they are clear about what is and is not OK, and they make decisions together.

Partners do not address the possible consequences of consensual sex. One partner may force the other to have sex, or disregard the other's needs or safety.

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## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

In healthy relationships, both partners communicate openly, even when things are difficult. They demonstrate trust and respect, apologize when their behavior is out of line, and treat one another as equals.

Healthy relationships are characterized by consensual relations and honesty. Partners enjoy time together but also are able to spend time alone. They set boundaries and encourage healthy behaviors in each other.

**ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS** are characterized by insults, name calling, manipulation, physical harm, and/or threatening behavior. One partner exercises control over the other, which may include isolating them from friends, family, and colleagues. Abusive behavior may or may not include physical violence. The abuser may deny abuse, blame or intimidate the other partner.

Abusive behavior often escalates in severity and may not stop without outside intervention or assistance.

## UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships become unhealthy when even just one partner stops talking, has uncontrolled behavior swings, lies to the other, or pressures the other to behave in a certain way.

Unhealthy relationships may be characterized by one partner or both partners being disrespectful, dishonest, or disloyal. Or, partners may spend so much time together that they ignore friends, family, and activities they used to enjoy. They may engage in unhealthy behaviors without considering the consequences.



## HOW TO GET HELP WITH YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Kindred Place is a counseling and education center for adults, children, and families in the Memphis metro area. Our therapists offer individual sessions, group programs, and coaching to help with parenting, intimate partner relationships, anger management, and trauma resolution.

Through generous support of local donors, our client assistance fund makes high quality family counseling available at all income levels.

To schedule an appointment, contribute to our client assistance fund, or for more information, call 901-276-2200 or visit [kindred-place.org](http://kindred-place.org).