

7: Healthy Relationships - Part 1



What are we going to do today?

Today we will look at what makes a healthy and an unhealthy relationship.

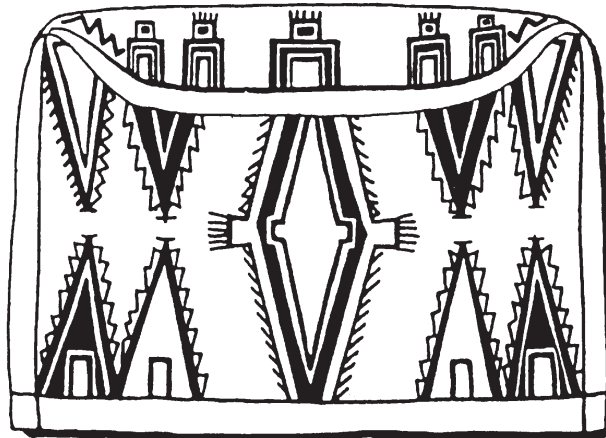
What am I going to learn today?

By the end of today, you will be able to:

1. Describe at least four types of love.
2. Describe characteristics of a healthy relationship.
3. Objectively judge the quality of a romantic relationship against a written checklist.

Love one another
and do not strive for
another's undoing.

Seneca



Phases of Love



Lust

Passion, sexual desire

“Feel good” chemicals released in body

Lasts a few weeks or months



Attraction

Romantic desire for a specific person

Commitment to an individual

Lasts 1 ½ to 3 years



Attachment

Intense bonding with another person

Mutual commitments, such as marriage, children

Can last many years, even decades

What's Love Got to Do With It?

Group 1

- Do people go through phases of romantic love (e.g., lust, attraction, attachment) only once in their lives?
- Does everyone who feels lust for someone go on to form an attraction with that person?
- Does everyone who feels an attraction for someone go on to form an attachment with that person?
- Does everyone who forms an attachment with someone keep that attachment forever?

Group 2

- Do certain phases of romantic love correspond with specific times in a person's life? For example:
 - Do only older people experience attachment? Or can a teenager be romantically attached to another person for several years?
 - Do only young people feel lust? Or can an older person fall in love and feel lust and attraction?

Group 3

- Does romantic love always involve sex?
- Is it possible to experience romantic love without having sex?
- Does sex mean different things at different points in a romantic relationship? (For example, in the LUST stage vs. the attachment stage.)

What Is a Healthy Relationship?

You Demonstrate Mutual Affection

- Tell each other things that you like and appreciate about the other person
- Each person can decide if, how, and when they want to be touched, and checks in with the other to make sure the affection is mutual
- Respect each other's values, property, bodies, pace, and limits; stop if either one says "No"

You Share Activities

- Hang out together
- Do things each person enjoys
- Encourage each other's enjoyment and success
- Learn from each other

You Are Honest and Accountable With Each Other

- Accept responsibility for your actions
- Acknowledge things you have done wrong; work to change the behavior
- Admit when you have made a mistake or when you are wrong
- Communicate openly and truthfully; discuss problems
- Use "I" messages to share feelings
- Give genuine compliments
- Ask for what you want; don't expect others to read your mind
- Ask (don't accuse) each other about gossip

You Trust and Support Each Other

- Support your partner's goals in life
- Respect your partner's right to his or her own feelings, friends, activities, opinions, space, and dreams
- Express fears and share your feelings—instead of claiming ownership—when jealous

You Treat Each Other With Non-Threatening Behavior

- Talk and act so that your partner feels safe and comfortable doing and saying things

You Respect Each Other

- Ask what is important to your partner
- Ask what they think and how they feel
- Be emotionally affirming and understanding
- Listen to your partner non-judgmentally
- Value their opinions
- Disagree without name-calling, put-downs, or threats
- Respect their right to be safe and to control their own body and decisions
- Try to understand their feelings, even if you disagree with their ideas
- Care enough to find out their point of view

You Treat Each Other With Kindness

- Help each other (while respecting your own limits)
- Give gifts sincerely, not to try and get something from your partner
- Show you care through your respect for your partner

You Make Decisions Together

- Decide things together
- Negotiate differences
- Split costs fairly
- Search for win-win solutions
- No matter who pays, no one owes anyone kisses, touching, or anything else

Are You in a Healthy Relationship?

Can you speak up about anything to your partner and experience mutual understanding and kindness?

YES NO SOMETIMES

Do you bring out the best qualities in each other?

YES NO SOMETIMES

Do you feel like you can honestly ask for what you want and need in this relationship?

YES NO SOMETIMES

Are you both comfortable with how physical the relationship is (or isn't)?

YES NO SOMETIMES

Do you both feel close to each other (not just physically) and are willing to trust each other with personal stuff?

YES NO SOMETIMES

Do you make decisions jointly, with input from each partner?

YES NO SOMETIMES

Does she or he take responsibility for their own actions and not blame others for their failures?

YES NO SOMETIMES

Can the two of you admit when you are wrong and apologize to each other when needed?

YES NO SOMETIMES

Do you feel less like yourself when you have been with your partner?

YES NO SOMETIMES

NOTES



How do you define a healthy relationship?