**Building Healthy Relationships in College**

Everyone deserves to have healthy dating relationships. Relationships are not always easy, so understanding the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationship can help people be intentional and recognize when they may need support.

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| **Health Relationships** | | **Unhealthy Relationships** | |
| Fairness and Equality | Partners share decision and responsibilities. They discuss roles to make sure they are fair and equal. | Control | One partner makes all the decision and tells the other what to do, or tells the other person what to ware or who to spend time with. |
| Honesty | Partners share their dreams, fears, and concerns with each other. They tell each other how they feel and share important information | Dishonesty | One partner lies to or keeps information from the other. One partner steals from the other. |
| Physical Safety | Partners feel physically safe in the relationship and respect each other’s space | Physical Abuse | One partner uses force to get their way (for example, hitting, slapping, grabbing, shoving) |
| Mutual Respect | Partners treat each other like they want to be treated and accept each other’s opinions, friends, and interests. They listen to each other | Disrespect | One partner makes fun of the opinions and interests of the other partner. They may destroy something that belongs to the other partner |
| Comfort | Partners feel safe with each other and respect each other’s differences. They realize when they’re wrong and are not afraid to say, “I’m sorry.” Partners can “be themselves” with each other | Intimidation | One partner tries to control every aspect of the other’s life. One partner may attempt to keep their partner from friends and family or threaten violence or a breakup. |
| Sexual Respect | Partners never force sexual activity or insist on doing something the other is not comfortable with. | Sexual Abuse | One partner pressures or forces the other into sexual activity against their will or without their consent. |
| Independence | Neither partner is dependent upon the other for an identity. Partners maintain friendships outside of the relationship. Either partner has the right to end the relationship. | Dependence | One partner feels that he/she “can’t live without” the other. They may threaten to do something drastic if the relationship ends. |
| Humor | The relationship is enjoyable for both partners. Partners laugh and have fun. | Hostility | One partner may “walk on eggshells” to avoid upsetting the other. Teasing is mean-spirited. |

**Name:**

**800 Number:**

**Instructions:** Review the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships and answer the questions below.

1. As you review this listing of characteristics, which ones describe your relationship?
2. What are some strengths of your current relationship? What are some areas for improvement?
3. Do you feel you have the power to influence your relationship dynamic? If so, what are some strategies you can employ to develop or maintain the characteristics of a healthy relationship?
4. Is your current relationship one you want to continue? Why or why not?
5. What resources are available to you if you are struggling within a relationship?