

Healthy Relationships

College students have many opportunities to meet new friends and develop relationships. Such relationships can make the difference between a positive and negative college experience. It is important to know the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, and to know how to make choices to preserve the former and improve the latter.

Some trademarks of a Healthy Relationship

- Mutual respect and civility
- A sense of reciprocity, or "give and take"
- Feeling supported and supporting the other
- A significant degree of trust and honesty
- Fairness and equality as adults
- Comfort with emotional intimacy or "closeness"
- Comfort with distance and "separateness", or being able to have your own life apart from the other
- Open, direct communication without fear of reprisal, or manipulation
- Good "boundaries", or being able to set personal limits with self and others

While no relationship is perfect and we all have bad days, it is important to evaluate relationships and feel, on the whole, that they are positive and healthy. If they are less than healthy, steps should be taken to improve them. Such steps involve assertiveness and listening.

*Adapted from information provided by the
The University of Alabama Counseling Center*

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