

Forming Relationships



What do you expect from a 'romantic' relationship?

The answer to this question will vary from person to person.

- ▶ What's important is that both partners in a relationship understand what the other expects.
- ▶ This doesn't have to be a big list or a contract, but both individuals should **try** to understand their partner and take steps to understand them better.
- ▶ It's a two-way process.

Values and Attitudes

- ▶ What do you think a ‘healthy’ relationship is?
- ▶ Discuss the following questions and note down your thoughts.
 - ▶ What are the right reasons to start a relationship?
 - ▶ What would you expect from your partner?: how do you think they should act to show you their affection?
 - ▶ What do you think can be expected of you?
 - ▶ What do you think would be unreasonable to expect?

1. Communication

Communication is the foundation of a healthy relationship.

We're going to read a script of a conversation between two people. You are then going to try and identify where it goes wrong. Then we will try to come up with suggestions as to how this exchange could be improved.

Choose 3 - 5 key moments in this story that you think are a problem. Be prepared to explain why.

A: Have you brought the map?

B: Oh! I've left it on the table. I'm sorry. It 's just you were getting so tense about being late.

A: You never remember anything, you're so annoying!

B: Well, if you hadn't been hassling me...

A: For taking forever, as usual!

B: Well you didn't tell me when we were going. You just marched in and said we had ten minutes.

A: I told you last week!

B: A lot happens in a week. You're being unfair. You could just take the time to remind me. But that would mean talking to me, I suppose.

A: What's that supposed to mean?

B: What do you think?!

A: I'm getting sick of this. Wait here. I'm going to buy a map.

B: Don't order me about! Who do you think you are?

A: Oh I don't care what you do.

Now, re-write the lines you have chosen, so that the conversation could be less damaging, and more constructive. **There's only one rule: you can't solve the problem - the map is still missing.**

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B: Don't order me about! Who do you think you are?

A: Oh I don't care what you do.

So how can we improve communication in a relationship?

- ▶ Treat each other with respect
- ▶ Speak openly to one another about thoughts and feelings
- ▶ Make sure each partner feels heard when expressing feelings
- ▶ Listen to each other and compromise
- ▶ Do not criticize each other (You're stupid), instead explain what has upset you (It upsets me when...)
- ▶ Each partner should feel supported to do the things they like
- ▶ Celebrate each other's accomplishments and successes

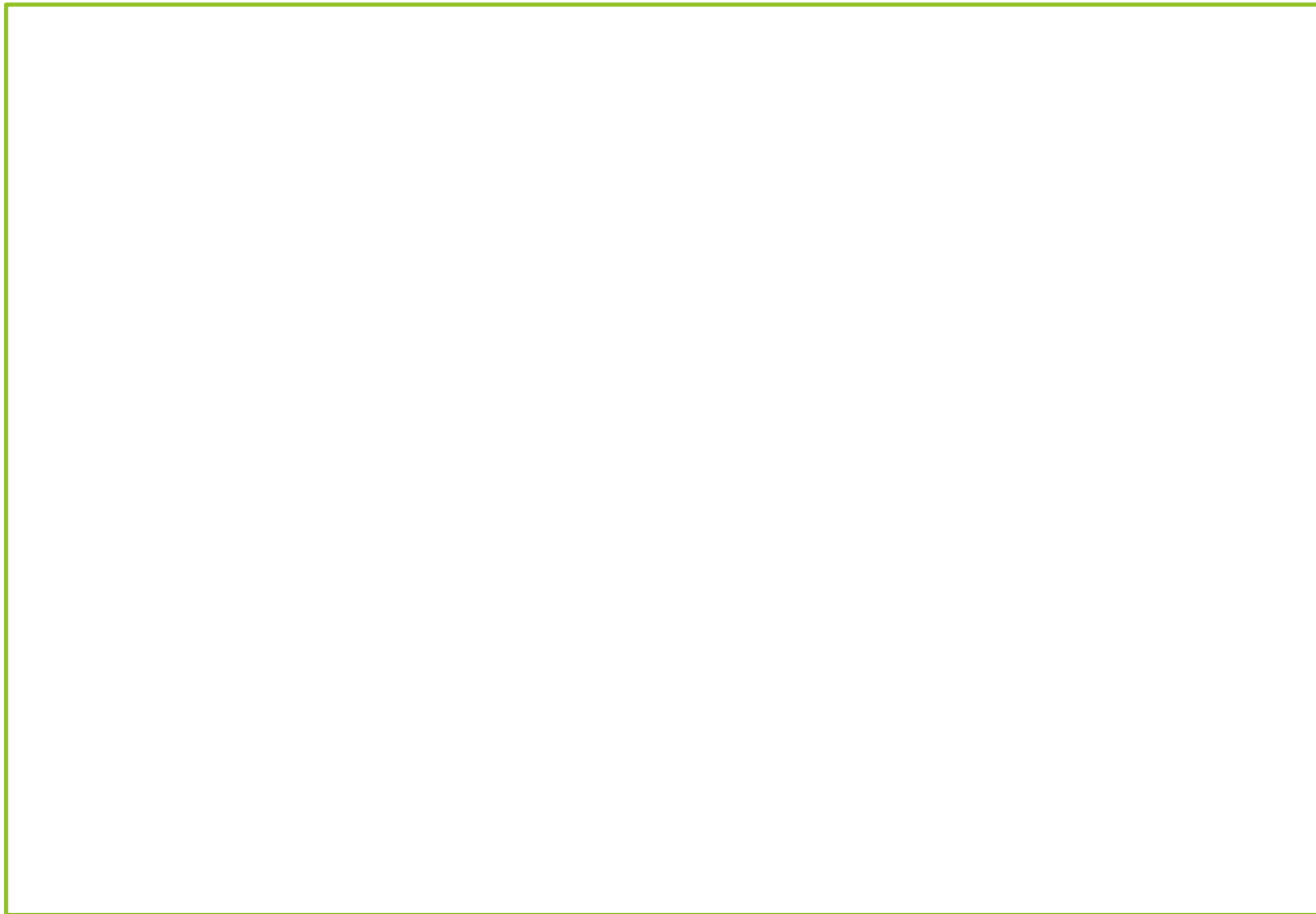
2. Boundaries

People want to trust the person who you've chosen to form a relationship with.

Everyone is human and will have their own views on what should and shouldn't happen in a relationship.

The important thing is that people compromise so that nothing happens against anyone's wishes.

What can we do to respect
each others boundaries?



What can we do to respect each others boundaries?

- ▶ Allow each other to spend time with friends and family
- ▶ Respect your partner's privacy. This includes using technology in a responsible way.
- ▶ Each partner should be in control of their own body, possessions and finances.
- ▶ Trust each other and don't require the other partner to "check in" or 'report' to you.
- ▶ Respect your partner's wishes and don't pressure them to do things that they don't want to do
- ▶ Trust your partner and avoid making accusations.

Which brings us to the idea of

3. Consent

How would you define this word?

Consent

- ▶ Watch the consent video
- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7Nii5w2Fal>

Compare your definition to this one:

Valid, legal, sexual consent is freely, mindfully, and actively granted in full knowledge of what the person is agreeing to. It uses mutually understandable words or actions and indicates a willingness to engage in mutually agreed upon sexual activity.

In other words, two people agree to do the same thing, at the same time, in the same way, with each other.

Is a person ever unable to provide consent?

To determine if someone is giving consent, you must be able to answer two questions:

- ▶ Does the person want to give consent?
- ▶ Is the person capable of giving consent?

Above all, if a partner ever says no during a sexual act or sex, asks you to stop, or is acting in a way that makes you believe they want to stop, you must stop immediately. Saying no should never be treated as a game or as a signal that someone is "playing hard to get." Simply put, **"no" means "no" in any sexual encounter.**

Is a person ever unable to provide consent?

Certain circumstances make it impossible for a person to legally give consent. These circumstances usually involve cases in which a person is **not mentally or physically capable of choosing** whether to engage in sexual behaviour.

For instance, if someone is drunk or under the influence of drugs, then that person cannot give consent.

Age can also determine whether a person can legally consent to certain sexual behaviours, such as intercourse or oral sex. The age at which a person can give consent is 16. Having sex with someone under the age of consent is a crime even if the person under the age of consent says that she or he wanted the sexual behaviour to take place.

As an individual, what are your responsibilities in a relationship?

Write yourself 5 rules.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)