Self-Worth – Healthy Relationships

Healthy relationships are often the foundation of a happy life. In fact, the health of a relationship can often mirror the condition a person's self-worth. If a person enters a relationship with low self-worth, they can be more susceptible to being taken advantage of or manipulated. It's even likely that a person with low self-worth will attract the wrong sort of person to start with. If a person doesn't place any value of themselves, then why will a partner?

The aim of any relationship is to feel safe, supported and respected. In an intimate relationship, we can also add feeling wanted, unconditionally accepted, and loved for who we are. A healthy relationship encourages personal growth, supports individuality and never diminishes the self-worth of either party. A person with healthy self-worth isn't likely to stay in a toxic or unhealthy relationship for too long. They simply won't tolerate it because they value their quality of life and aren't willing to be hurt.

Characteristics of a healthy relationship

Relationships that are healthy and build self-worth are based on trust, good communication and mutual respect. When in a relationship like this, a person can feel empowered, protected and loved. A healthy relationship is characterised by:

- Trust
- Honesty
- Mutual respect
- Equality
- Supporting each other in all things
- Good communication
- Commonality
- A sense of fun/enjoyment in time shared
- Being separate people who are joined by a strong connection.

Behaviours characteristic of a healthy relationship

How a person acts in their relationship can be telling. While it's great to know the characteristics of a healthy relationship, we must follow through and walk the talk. Being aware of how we act towards each other is vital to maintain a high level of functionality. In a healthy relationship, partners will:

- Maintain healthy self-worth
- Trust each other implicitly
- Resolve conflict well
- Maintain their individuality and respect the individuality of the other
- Are able to communicate clearly and honestly without fear of consequences
- Feel comfortable
- Feel safe and secure
- Have no concerns of violence or other forms of abuse
- Understand the boundaries of your relationship
- Have a good balance of give and take.

Qualities of a healthy relationship

Recognising what constitutes a healthy relationship may help you with a baseline of loving and respectful behaviour.

- You and your partner listen to each other.
- You like what you and your partner have to offer each other.
- You can agree even when you disagree.
- You think about each other when you're not together.
- You think highly of your partner, even when they don't think highly of themselves due to personal setbacks.
- You and your partner are growing together as people.
- You can laugh together.
- You greet each other positively when you get home.
- Your partner knows your greatest fears and doesn't use them against you.
- You have our own 'love language' (terms of affection for each other).
- You support your partner's goals and dreams, as they do yours.
- You're willing to sacrifice your time to help them, as they are for you.
- You feel safe knowing that your partner wouldn't jeopardise your life in any way.
- Your partner lets you 'in' to their inner world.
- You both know when to initiate physical intimacy and sexual contact.
- No topic is off limits.
- You both respect relationships with family, friends and work colleagues.
- You can turn to each other in times of stress or pain.
- You know each other's favourite books, songs and movies.
- You know each other's best friend and why that person is so important to your partner.

Where to get help

Always remember you are not alone. Your doctor or registered health professionals are there to help you.

Our online resource page also has a full list of organisations where you can get further information. http://mindshift.org.au/suggested-links/.

Things to remember

Healthy relationships are characterised by trust, good communication, mutual respect and love. A person with a healthy relationship will be a in place to either have or develop healthy self-worth with the support of their partner.

In Summary

Low self-worth can affect the quality of relationships, but in understanding what constitutes a healthy relationship, a person is in a better place to take action to improve their life and their self-worth.

In a healthy relationship, a person will experience trust, respect, equality and a shared approach to living that helps both partners grow as people. This can only strengthen self-worth and provide a supportive environment to experience a good quality of life.

Updates and Further information

For the latest updates and further information please visit www.mindshift.org.au.

Our Mission

It is our mission to ensure that every person has access to the resources available to build healthy self-worth, to have a positive sense of self, and to find meaning in life.

Disclaimer

Content is provided for education and information purposes only. Information about a therapy, service, product or treatment does not imply endorsement and is not intended to replace advice from your doctor or other registered health professional. Content was accurate at the time of publication. Readers should note that, over time, currency and completeness of the information may

change. All users are urged to always seek advice from a registered health care professional for diagnosis and answers to their medical questions.

The Mind Shift Foundation is a registered charity not to be confused with the commercial enterprise The MindShifts Group