

# Nurturing a Healthy Relationship

Most relationships are fleeting#the salesperson, the waiter, the bus driver#all of them are in our lives for mere moments. But what makes life really worth sticking it out for is the longer relationships, the ones that last months, years, or lifetimes.

The simplest definition of the word relationship is a connection between two people. It often includes the feelings of one person toward another. This can be a romantic relationship, a business relationship, or parent-child relationship. All three tend to be important in all of our lives.

Most people fail to understand what a relationship really means. Many cannot distinguish a strong relationship from a pallid one. This lack of knowledge is why many people fail to have successful relationships.

A good relationship reveals itself in a person's life. The person you see humming at work is likely enjoying a solid partnership. But do not expect that everyone you meet will have a relationship with you, because there are some who enter our lives for only a few minutes.

Self-awareness of the relationship itself is a skill most people must still learn. To avoid hurt and frustration, become good at "reading" your relationships; not obsessing on them, but rather learning to see the relationship itself as a living creature.

To help you achieve your goals with your partner here are 10 tips that may help you build and maintain a strong and successful relationship:

1. Continue to learn new things that will help improve your relationship. Learn to take personal growth seriously. You may find yourself astounding your partner.
2. Shared kindness is important to make a relationship work successfully. The term "give and take" is very applicable because it always takes both.
3. Realize that both passionate love and conflict are not final outcomes but are simply phases on the journey of love. Disappointments and arguments are means for curing and improving for both partners.
4. Discover new methods to communicate that will make your discussions protected and private. This encourages honest sharing.
5. Always tell your partner what you need and how you feel. No one can read your mind, not even your own partner, so let your partner know when you feel bad about something and why you feel that way. People will not get the contentedness that they want without first getting connected or involved with someone intimately. They tend to enjoy being with someone who shares all their achievements and failures in discussion.
6. Have an occasional heart to heart talk about what you both like and what makes you two feel love. This way you will learn more each time about what make your partner happy.
7. Consideration is also highly important in a relationship. It was not only June Cleaver who felt that being considerate of others' feelings was important.
8. Avoid things that will not be helpful to or might harm the relationship. Some people treat their partner worse than they do strangers, and do things they know may hurt a partner. If you want your relationship to work, then work it yourself.
9. Listen to the things your partner is saying. And appreciate things that your partnering does for you no matter how small. Why not say "thanks for doing dishes"? Or "thanks for cleaning the bathroom" to your partner. Little appreciative moments go a long way.
10. When you wake up in the morning, promise to try removing guilt and disapproval#things that often creep into a relationship. If there are times you did not keep your promise, accept it and apologize to your partner.

These ten tips may seem self-evident to some, but lucid advice to others. Take what you can and remember that the ups and downs of relationships are almost always better than the flat highway of loneliness that some people face. Nurture your relationship and it will nurture you back. It only takes a few minutes a day to put a little effort into it, and the rewards can be magnificent.