

## Are You in an Unhealthy Relationship?

Take this quiz to find out.

(Quiz adapted from Santa Monica University Counseling Center)

1. Do you feel afraid to speak your mind, express how you feel or ask for something you need?
2. Does your partner tell you are "stupid", "crazy", or "inadequate" when you disagree?
3. Does your partner make fun of your ideas or opinions?
4. Is your partner bossy and/or try to control every detail in your relationship?
5. Is your partner extremely demanding and jealous?
6. Do you often feel guilty and second-guess your choices in friends, social activities, jobs, etc. because of your partner's negative comments about these choices?
7. Are you afraid of your partner's temper, feel like you walk on eggshells, and/or are constantly monitoring what you say and do as an attempt to avoid making him/her angry?
8. Do you find yourself making excuses for your partner and justifying his/her actions to others?
9. Do you feel more "free" to be yourself when he/she isn't around?
10. Does your partner throw or break things when angry?
11. Does your partner try to control where you go and what you do?
12. Does your partner pressure you to engage in sexual activities that you are uncomfortable with and put you down if you refuse?
13. Does your partner threaten to kill or hurt him/herself if you have a differing opinion, try to end the relationship, or do something they disapprove of?
14. Does your partner try to make you feel guilty for having a "life" (i.e. friends, interests) apart from the relationship?
15. Does your partner criticize your family and friends and ask you to stop seeing them?
16. Do you feel that you have changed, lost touch with who you are, or become someone else in order to be with your partner?
17. Have your friends or family expressed concern about your relationship and/or your well-being?

18. Does your partner know how to make you feel bad (i.e., what buttons to push) and use it often to hurt you?
19. Have you lost touch with your friends, and only hang out with your partner's friends?
20. Does your partner try to control you with anger and guilt, or lash out when you don't do exactly what he or she wants?
21. Has your partner ever hit, slapped, punched, shoved, grabbed or shook you?
22. Has your partner ever threatened to hurt you, take important things away, or leave you?
23. Has your partner ever called you names, put you down, insulted you, and/or embarrassed you in front of others?
24. Do you feel like you never get anywhere when you try to communicate?
25. Do you spend large amounts of time preoccupied with what you've said or how it's interpreted?

If you answered yes to 3 or more of these questions you may be experiencing the signs of an abusive relationship.

You are not alone! A great deal of young adult relationships involve some form of abuse. Many people do not realize they are involved in an unhealthy relationship because problems may develop over a slow period of time.

### How to get help:

Recognize and admit the seriousness of abuse and make recovery your first priority.

Talk to friends, family, or go to the counseling center (ex. 2905) to help you restore self-esteem.



To ensure a successful relationship both people in the relationship need to develop assertive skills. So what exactly is assertiveness?

### Assertive behavior is:

- Standing up for one's rights no matter what the circumstance.
- Correcting the situation when one's rights are being violated.
- Seeking respect and understanding for one's feelings about a particular situation or circumstance.
- Interacting in a mature manner with those found to be offensive, defensive, aggressive, hostile, blaming, attacking, or otherwise unresponsive.
- Direct, upfront, (not defensive or manipulative) behavior. Those using assertive behavior confront problems, disagreement, or personal discomforts head on, and their intent is unmistakable to others.
- Verbal "I" statements, where individuals tell others how they feel about a situation, circumstance, or the behavior of others.
- Taking the risk of being misunderstood as being aggressive, abrasive, or attacking.
- Being able to protect one's rights while protecting and respecting the rights of others.
- Risk-taking behavior that is not ruled by fear of rejection or disapproval, but is directed by the rational belief that "I deserve to stand up for my rights."
- Rational thinking and the self-affirmation of personal worth, respect, and rights.
- **A healthy style in which to conduct interpersonal relationships.**
- **Finding a "win-win" solution in handling problems between two individuals.**



"Sometimes it's smooth sailing and sometimes they sink. That's why they're called relationships!"

# Relationships 101

Brought to you by:

*The Career & Counseling*

*Team at Aquinas*

*College*

(Ex. 2905)

**WARNING!!!** Obviously assertive behavior is not passive behavior. However, many people get assertive behavior and aggressive behavior confused.

Passive Behavior: The "You win, I lose" philosophy. People who display this behavior are vulnerable to having their rights violated.

Aggressive Behavior: The "You lose, I win" philosophy. People who display this type of behavior always want things their way 100% of the time. They are usually not liked well by others.

Assertive Behavior: The "You win, I win" philosophy. When this is the case, both parties are satisfied and nobody's rights are violated.

#### How To Build Assertive Skills:

- 1.) Use "I" statements to ID your feelings
- 2.) Be respectful of the thoughts/ feelings/ experiences of others.
- 3.) Pay attention to your non-verbals.
- 4.) Pick appropriate times to assertive.
- 5.) Practice....starting now!



#### Healthy Relationships in College:

Beginning a relationship: The first months are usually free of many rough spots. It's easy to overlook potential problems for the relationship. The focus should be on:

- 1.) Exploring each other's interests, so you have a long list of things you like to do together
- 2.) Build a foundation of respect – Make a point of noticing small things you appreciate about your partner.
- 3.) Establish a pattern of apologizing if you make a mistake, which builds trust.

Changes in the relationship: Welcome change as a chance to enhance the relationship rather than to prevent change from happening. Check in with each other about changing goals and expectations. Talking about change is not easy but if you avoid difficult topics for too long you may drift into "rocky waters" that are difficult to navigate.

Throughout the relationship talk about what it means to:

- 1.) Have differing expectations of what a loving relationship is like.
- 2.) Respect the changes in each other
- 3.) Accept the differences in each other
- 4.) Express your wants and needs directly (not mind reading)
- 5.) Respect each other's rights to have their own friends, activities and opinions.