



INDEPENDENCE HOUSE, INC.

Cape Cod's leading resource, counseling and advocacy center to address and prevent domestic and sexual violence.

Promoting safe and healthy relationships

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A HEALTHY VS. HARMFUL RELATIONSHIP

Healthy

- Seek understanding and solutions to problems
- Can talk about anything
- Have clear boundaries, but flexibility is allowed
- Each person enjoys doing things for the other and for self
- Have fun
- No one tries to “fix” or control the other
- Each person accepts oneself and partner’s true self
- Needs and feelings are expressed
- Each person is able to let go of the need to ‘be right’
- There is self-confidence and security
- Ability to face conflict directly
- Open to constructive feedback
- Have mutual trust
- Give and receive
- Are fair and democratic
- There is forgiveness
- Learn from mistakes
- Have vulnerability
- Take risks
- Have interests and connections outside of the relationship
- Each person can enjoy time spent alone
- Privacy is respected
- Encourage personal growth and exploration
- Have commitment
- There is responsibility for one’s own behavior and happiness

Harmful

- **Your happiness is not important to your partner**
- **Your ideas and feelings don’t matter**
- **You hide what you really think and feel**
- **You do things you don’t want to do**
- **You are always blamed. You are always wrong.**
- **You are not allowed to make decisions or disagree with your partner and you are punished if you do so.**
- **You are afraid to make your partner angry**
- **You are not allowed to spend time with family and friends**
- **You are pushed, pulled, shoved, shaken, pinched, slapped, hit, kicked, bitten, spit on, frightened or hurt**
- **You are threatened**
- **You are forced or coerced to do something you don’t want to do.**
- **You are afraid to leave the relationship**
- **You don’t have control over or access to money**