

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

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How do you build a healthy relationship?

Great question! Building a healthy relationship is probably one of life's biggest challenges, but the rewards are both defining and enduring. Clearly, there is no one way to make a relationship work, but they do share some common elements. We've all heard that trust and communication are essential, but the real key is finding everyday ways to establish and reinforce these connections with your partner. Think about how you convey your appreciation for each other in small acts – you may be surprised by how much they say.

A good relationship isn't always a bowl of cherries, nor is it predictably easy. Disagreements are inevitable, so learning to effectively address and resolve conflict is as important as sharing in the good times. And speaking of sharing, remember that communication is a two-way street that requires both individuals to contribute. "Give and take" should refer to your sense of compromise, not the roles you adopt in the relationship.

Also, try to keep things realistic with plenty of humor. Relationships that thrive tend to be based on down-to-earth expectations, not fairy tale myths. Your friend or significant other will not always be able to read your mind, fulfill your dreams, or constantly make you happy.

Research tells us that having healthy relationships, both amorous and platonic, is good for our health. People with meaningful partnerships tend to have better support networks, which enrich our lives, and may even help us live longer. Unfortunately, technological and social changes may be expanding our contacts while shrinking the number of people we can actually confide in and count on. Next time you're with a friend or significant other, be present in the moment, and focus on each other, not your phones. Remember, relationships are not 50/50, they're 100/100.



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Have a question? Email it to sextalk@email.arizona.edu



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