



Is This Healthy?

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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It doesn't matter whether it is marriage, friendship or causal relationship there are certain things that are important to observe in order to ensure that what you are involved in is healthy. Following are some ways to assess the health how you are doing:

1. Mutual investment - Some people are takers and others are givers. If you are always the giver, you might soon burn out or begin feeling resentful. A healthy relationship is one where both people give and take.
2. Honesty - When people lie to you then you don't really know who they are and if you aren't honest then they will soon lose trust. There are ways to speak truth in love.
3. Expectations - It isn't good if you feel bound by "should", "must" or "have to". These can come from another person or actually come from inside you. Healthy relationships are not laced with guilt or based on "people-pleasing" only to avoid upsets.
4. Fun - It is important to laugh and enjoy the company of other people. When it isn't fun anymore, there is a serious problem.
5. Trust Can you depend on the other person to do what they say they will do? Or do they have a habit or just giving you lip-service?
6. Boundaries - Know where you stop, and the other person begins. This requires knowing and showing respect for each other.
7. Encouragement - Do you truly want the best for the other person? A healthy perspective is to be happy when the other person grows and does well.
8. Resolving conflict - People don't usually break apart because of conflict. They break apart because they don't know how to deal with conflict. Learn strategies for problem-solving and use them.
9. Communication - When you aren't talking, there can be misunderstandings, feelings of loneliness and a lack of progress towards goals. Sometimes, however, relationships are so healthy that both individuals involved appreciate less frequent conversations. Know when silence is positive and when it is hurting the relationship.
10. Self-care - If you want to have good friends then you have to be a good friend. This means ensuring that you are healthy and interesting. No one person can meet another person's needs, so it is a good idea to find a number of ways and people to enhance your life.

Sometimes people get caught in an unhealthy relationship with one person and can't seem to get out of it. They feel annoyed, sad or drained but worry about hurting the feelings of the other one so stays locked in. It is important to think about whether this is helping or harming you.

Perhaps having a conversation with the other person might help to re-establish healthy boundaries, resolve conflict or re-balance the input each of you contributes.

Psychologists are trained to help people deal with difficult situations. Book an appointment today and you will have made the first step towards healthy decision-making.