



Three Oaks

SHELTER • COMMUNITY
OUTREACH



Three Oaks

**Healthy
Relationships
&
Boundaries**

Get Support Today.

**24/7 Crisis Line: 613-966-3074
toll free 1-800-267-0533**

threeoaks.ca



SIGNS YOU ARE IN A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

You Speak Your Mind.

Relationships thrive when couples can express themselves freely and honestly. Both partners feel heard.

You Like Yourself and Your Partner.

Neither of you is perfect, and you accept and value each other for who you are right now—not who you might become.

You Find Balance.

Sometimes you and your partner have obligations outside of the relationship. That's life. What matters is that in the long run, your trade-offs seem fair.

You Treat Each Other With Kindness.

Nothing is more important than treating (and being treated by) the person you love with care, consideration, empathy and appreciation.

You are Intimate.

Sex is only one part of a healthy relationship and it is different than intimacy, which is less about physical satisfaction than about bonding, friendship and feeling connected.

You Trust Each Other.

Healthy relationships are built on both partners trusting and being honest with one another.

You Have Boundaries.

You and your partner respect each other's boundaries. You and your partner create a safe space for each other to communicate needs. You and your partner respect what is important to each other. You and your partner make space to care for each other, while still creating time to take care of yourselves.



SIGNS YOU ARE IN AN UN-HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

Your Partner is Controlling.

One partner makes all of the decisions without considering or talking about it to you.

Your Partner is Dishonest.

Your partner lies to you. Your partner tries to hide things from you.

Your Partner is Physically Abusive.

Your partner is physical with you. You feel scared your partner is going to hurt you.

Your partner is Disrespectful to You.

Your partner makes fun of your opinions, feelings and/or interests. Your partner makes fun of your friends.

Your Partner Causes you Discomfort.

You feel uncomfortable or anxious/nervous about what your partner might do or say if you be your true self in front of your partner. You feel uncomfortable addressing concerns with your partner out of fear of how they may react.

Your Partner does Things Without your Consent.

Your partner coerces or forces sexual activities you are not comfortable with or do not want to do. Your partner makes you feel guilty for not engaging in sexual activities you're not comfortable with. Your partner does not practice on-going consent with you.

You or Your Partner Feel Dependent on One Another.

Your partner becomes upset if you visit with friends or engage in hobbies outside of your relationship. You do not feel like you have a life outside of your relationship.

Your Partner is Hostile With You.

Your partner is mean, rude, and/or humiliates you. Your partner is passive aggressive towards you.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP CHECKLIST

- It is safe for me to say no.
- I feel safe to communicate my thoughts and feelings to my partner.
- I can safely express a different thought or opinion to my partner without being judged or shamed.
- My partner shows an interest in my life and the things that are important to me.
- My partner allows me to do things independently without needing specific details (For example: who I am with, where I am going, when I will be home, etc).
- My partner meets my needs and I do not feel like I am always tending to my partners needs.
- My partner treats me with kindness and respect.

UN-HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP CHECKLIST

- My partner calls me multiple times a day and becomes upset when I don't answer right away.
- I feel scared/nervous to communicate my thoughts and feelings to my partner in fear of what they might say or do in response.
- My partner disregards my thoughts and/or feelings. My partner makes fun, judges or shames my beliefs and opinions.
- My partner does not want me to see my friends and wants me to spend all my free time with them.
- My partner sets "rules" for me to follow but is allowed to do whatever he/she/they want.
- My partner checks my phone often and knows all of my passwords.
- My partner calls me names, makes fun of me or makes me feel humiliated.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

You feel like you are walking on eggshells.

You feel like you are carefully watching your words and actions in fear of what your partner might say and/or do. You feel like you never know when the next act of aggression and/or violence may take place.

Your partner tells you how to act and/or dress in public.

Your partner tells you how to act and/or dress in public as a tactic of control. Your partner may tell you that they do not approve of an outfit or make you change into something else. Your partner tells you how to speak and interact with others before or during social settings or your partner does not let you speak for yourself.

Your partner does not allow you to work.

Your partner may not allow you to work as a way to gain financial control over you and to isolate you. Your partner may not allow you to work to ensure you cannot make connections with anyone other than him/her/them. Your partner does this to ensure you cannot confide in anyone about what is happening in your relationship. Your partner may justify this behaviour by stating it is in your best interest or that your partner is just looking out for you.

Your partner humiliates you.

As an attempt to make you feel small, your partner will make fun or call you names, making you feel humiliated. This can take place in private or in front of others. This lowers your self-esteem and establishes power for your partner.

Your partner demands to know your location.

Applications such as Snapchat make it easy for abusers to monitor their victim's location. This classifies as stalking/cyber stalking. Your partner may tell you that they are looking out for you, that they want to keep you safe or accuse you of cheating in an attempt to allow them access your location.

Your partner threatens death.

If your partner threatens taking their own life, it puts the guilt and feeling of responsibility on you. When your partner threatens to kill you, a family member or a beloved pet, you now fear for their life, your own and the lives of others.

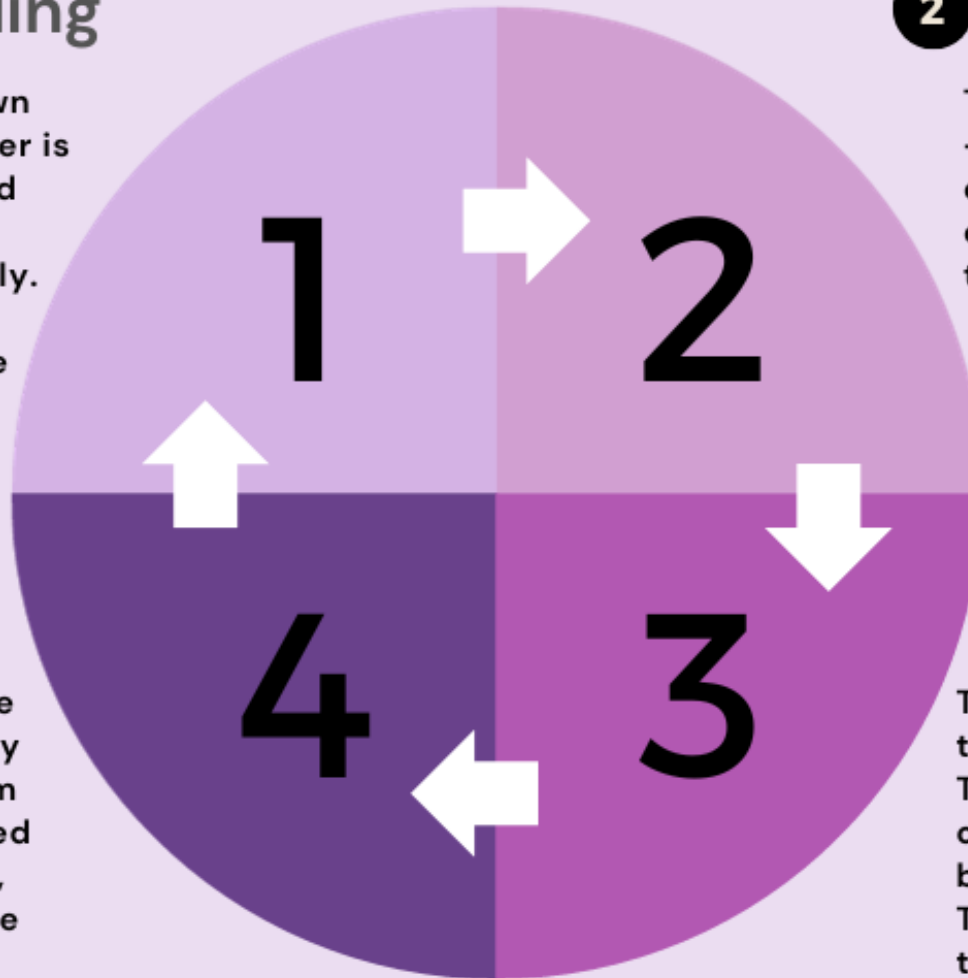
The Cycle of Abuse

1 Tension Building

Tension increases, breakdown of communication. The abuser is becoming easily irritated and seems "on-edge". Abuser is speaking passive aggressively. Victim becomes fearful and feels the need to placate the abuser.

2 Incident

The abuser may "explode" –an attempt to dominate and control the victim. Verbal, emotional, or physical abuse takes place.



4 Calm

The incident is "forgotten". The relationship becomes relatively calm. This may make the victim feel like the abuser has changed their behaviour. Unfortunately, conflicts will soon arise and the cycle will continue.

3 Reconciliation

The abuser apologizes, blames the victim and/or makes excuses. The abuser denies the abuse occurred or states it was not as bad as the victim claims. The abuser may make promises that there will be no more incidents and may shower the victim with affection, gifts (A.K.A love bombing).

WAYS WE VIOLATE OUR BOUNDARIES

You spend time with people to the point of emotional exhaustion.

You don't speak up about something that is important to you.

You try to meet others needs by giving your time, material items or emotional support without asking to have your needs reciprocated.

You do not make your opinions or feelings a priority.

You do not let others know when you have hit your [physical, emotional, spiritual, etc.] limit.

DISCUSSING BOUNDARIES IN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

Emotional Boundaries

Letting others know what you will and will not tolerate. This might be: not tolerating yelling during an argument, expressing discomfort if others make offensive jokes or asking for personal space.

Financial Boundaries

Establishing fair guidelines so that you are not taking on the responsibility of others. You are not financially responsible for other's commitments. You and your partner should equally financially contribute to the relationship. You should not feel financially responsible for your partner.

Sexual Boundaries

Both, you and your partner should feel safe and comfortable saying "no" and voicing discomfort without feelings of guilt. What you are comfortable with, may not be something your partner is comfortable with and this needs to be respected.

Your Dreams, Goals & Ambitions

You are allowed to have goals that do not include your partner. Both your short-term and long-term goals should feel respected and supported. You and your partner should cheer each other on, even if your goals are separate from your relationship.

Your Past & History

Your personal history and past is what you choose to share about yourself and your experiences. What you choose to share about yourself is up to your discretion and should only be done when you feel comfortable doing so. You are not obligated to tell your partner about all of your past experiences.

BOUNDARIES IN RELATIONSHIPS

Personal boundaries are limits we set for ourselves to support in the maintenance of our physical, emotional, mental, financial, sexual, spiritual and material lives.

Setting boundaries with the people you love and care for can be difficult.

Sometimes people will not be respectful of these boundaries.

In this case, it is important to remember that setting the boundary is all you can do. How someone chooses to behave or speak to you after you have set that boundary is not your responsibility.

THINGS I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR:

My thoughts and emotions

My reactions

Acting in a way that aligns with my values

My physical and emotional health

Prioritizing self-care and my health decisions

THINGS I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR:

Other people's attitude

Other people's reactions

Other people's behaviour

Other people's physical or mental health

How people react to my boundaries

PHYSICAL

Valuing and respecting your personal space or bubble.

MENTAL

Valuing and respecting your thoughts and ideas.

SEXUAL

Valuing and respecting your body.

EMOTIONAL

Valuing and respecting your feelings and emotions.

BOUNDARIES

MATERIAL

Valuing and respecting your things.

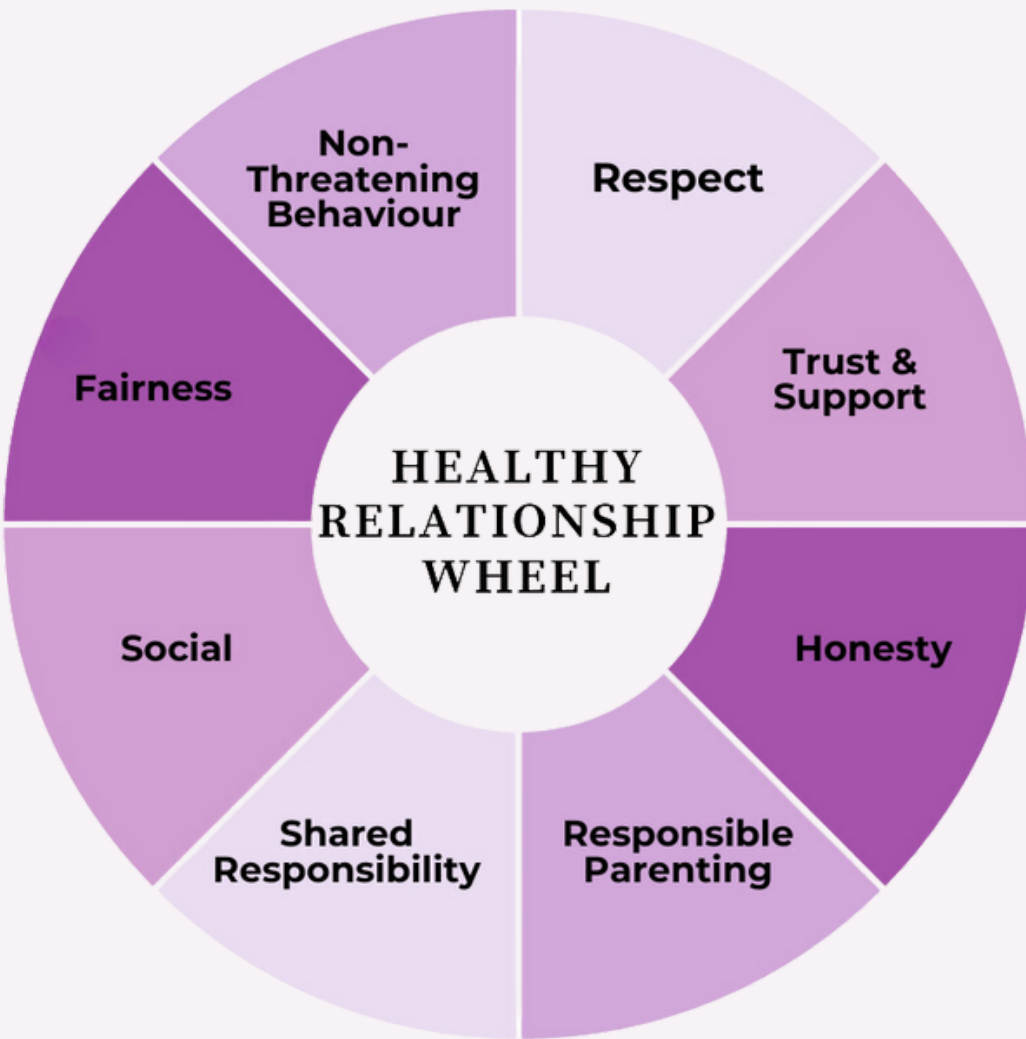
SPIRITUAL

Valuing and respecting your beliefs.

FINANCIAL

Valuing and respecting your finances as your own.

TIPS FOR SETTING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES



IDENTIFY WHAT BEHAVIOURS FROM OTHERS IS ACCEPTABLE FOR YOU. WHAT BEHAVIOURS CAUSE YOU DISCOMFORT?

CLEARLY COMMUNICATE YOUR BOUNDARIES TO OTHERS. YOU MAY CHOOSE TO EXPLAIN YOURSELF OR NOT.

DECIDE WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE BREAKS YOUR BOUNDARY

"I NEED SOME TIME ALONE WHEN I GET HOME."

"I'M NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THIS."

"I WANT TO HANGOUT THIS WEEKEND BUT IT IS NOT OKAY TO BRING ALCOHOL OR DRUGS."

When Setting Boundaries

- Be Clear about Your Needs
- Be Self-Aware
- Be Specific and Direct.
- Avoid "We" Statements.
- Use "I" Statements.