

RELATIONSHIPS

- 1. Realistic Expectations:** No one can be everything we might want him or her to be. Sometimes people disappoint us. It's not all-or-nothing, though. Healthy relationships mean accepting people as they are and not trying to change them!
- 2. Communication:** It can't be said enough: communication is essential in healthy relationships! It means- Take the time. Really be there. Genuinely listen. Don't plan what to say next while you're trying to listen. Don't interrupt. Listen with your ears and your heart. Sometimes people have emotional messages to share and weave it into their words. Ask questions. Ask if you think you may have missed the point. Ask friendly (and appropriate!) questions. Ask for opinions. Show your interest. Open the communication door. Share information. Studies show that sharing information especially helps relationships begin. Be generous in sharing yourself, but don't overwhelm others with too much too soon.
- 3. Flexibility:** Most of us try to keep people and situations just the way we like them to be. It's natural to feel apprehensive, even sad or angry, when people or things change and we're not ready for it. Healthy relationships mean change and growth are allowed!
- 4. Self-Care:** You probably hope those around you like you so you may try to please them. Don't forget to please yourself. Healthy relationships are mutual!
- 5. Dependability:** If you make plans with someone, follow through. If you have an assignment deadline, meet it. If you take on a responsibility, complete it. Healthy relationships are trustworthy!
- 6. Fight Fair:** Most relationships have some conflict. It only means you disagree about something, it doesn't have to mean you don't like each other! When an issue arises, set time aside to have a conversation. Try not to have a conversation when you are angry or tired. Healthy relationships are based on respect and have room for both.
- 7. Emotional Warmth:** Studies tell us warmth is highly valued by most people in their relationships. Healthy relationships show emotional warmth!
- 8. Balance:** Other people help make our lives satisfying but they can't create that satisfaction for us. Only you can fill your life. Don't overload on activities, but do use your time at college to try new things-clubs, volunteering, lectures, projects. You'll have more opportunities to meet people and more to share with them. Healthy relationships aren't dependent!
- 9. Process and Time:** Sometimes it looks like everyone else on campus is confident and connected. Actually, most people feel just like you feel, wondering how to fit in and have good relationships. It takes time to meet people and get to know them! Healthy relationships can be learned and practiced and keep getting better!
- 10. True to Yourself:** It's much easier and much more fun to be you than to pretend to be something or someone else.

The above "Ten Tips for a Healthy Relationship" comes from the University of Kansas website.