

MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER

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HEALTHY, TOXIC, ABUSIVE

Healthy relationships should have these traits:

- clear and consistent communication
- mutual respect
- honesty and trust
- enjoying time apart and enjoying time together
- clear boundaries that are respected

Toxic relationships can sometimes be mutually-toxic, and may have some or all of these traits:

- lack of mature communication
- frequent disrespectful arguments
- manipulation (see vocabulary below)
- lack of boundaries / ignoring boundaries
- more time stressed and upset, than not
- only spend time with each other
- always checking on who you talk to or what you post online

Abusive relationships are never mutually-abusive, and may have some or all of these traits:

- clear and consistent imbalance of power
- physical violence, threat of physical violence
- accusing the other of cheating, constantly checking up on the other
- one partner isolating the other from friends and family
- restricting you from participating in activities without them
- extreme intentional manipulation (see vocabulary below)

VOCABULARY OF MANIPULATION IN TOXIC RELATIONSHIPS

Gaslighting happens when the toxic partner attempts to convince their significant other that they are mistaken or illogical, even when they are not, causing the significant other to doubt him or her self and the reality of the situation.

Passive Aggressive Behavior can be demonstrated through sarcasm, avoidance of confrontation, and making excuses to avoid responsibility.

Love-bombing involves the manipulator going over the top in making their significant other feel special and flattered, causing the significant other to feel like they "owe" the toxic person love or forgiveness.

<https://bayareactcenter.com/top-10-manipulation-tactics-and-how-to-counter-them/>



SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON
THIS MONTH'S TOPIC
[HTTPS://LINKTR.EE/NICOOMS](https://linktr.ee/nicooms)

FRIEND VS ROMANTIC PARTNER

Friendships can have toxic traits just as easily as a relationship with a romantic partner. If you notice toxic behavior in your friendship you must decide if it is appropriate to confront that friend or to remove yourself from the situation. For teens, it may be helpful to get an adult perspective on the best way to proceed.



RELATIONSHIP: TOXIC VS ABUSIVE

Toxic and abusive behaviors exist on a spectrum, and how one categorizes these behaviors can be based on frequency and severity. While physical abuse is clearly defined, emotional abuse is subjective. The classification of emotional abuse can be based on perspective.

A toxic relationship involves negative patterns that undermine the well-being and happiness of one or both individuals in the relationship. Manipulation and emotional harm result in stress and dysfunction.

In an abusive relationship, there is always an imbalance of power. A relationship can never be mutually-abusive, because the same partner always has the upper hand. Abuse involves the deliberate intent to control, dominate, or harm the victim.

Both toxic relationships and abusive relationships can be especially harmful to teens. The relationships you experience in your formative years can shape your expectations of future relationships. As a teen, if you recognize that you are in a toxic or abusive romantic relationship, you need to remove yourself from that relationship as soon as you can safely do so. If you are struggling to break off a toxic or abusive relationship, reach out to a trusted adult for help.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/invisible-bruises/202407/the-difference-between-toxic-and-abusive-relationships>