Non-violent relationships involve talking and acting so that both partners feel comfortable expressing themselves and doing things they enjoy.

**Support**

Non-violent relationships involve each partner listening without judgment, being emotionally supportive, and valuing each other’s opinions.

**Respect**

Non-violent relationships involve communicating openly and truthfully.

**Honesty**

Non-violent relationships involve accepting responsibility for hurtful behavior.

**Accountability**

Non-violent relationships involve sharing parental responsibility and being a positive role model for children.

**Responsible Parenting**

Non-violent relationships involve agreeing on a fair distribution of work and making family decisions together.

**Shared Responsibility**

Non-violent relationships involve making money decisions together, making sure both partners benefit from financial arrangements.

**Economic Partnership**

Non-violent relationships involve seeking mutually satisfying solutions to conflict, acceptance of change, and willingness to negotiate and compromise.

Adapted from POWER AND CONTROL: TACTICS OF MEN WHO BATTER By Michael Paymer and Ellen Pence, 1990

For former victims seeking a healthy relationship:

- Create limits and go slowly in a new relationship to establish trust.
- Look for a partner who can express feelings honestly and appropriately and who consistently demonstrates healthy boundaries.

For former perpetrators seeking a healthy relationship:

- Accept responsibility for past use of violence.
- Examine and deal with your need to control. Attend and fully participate in a weekly batterer intervention group for 12-18 months.

Adapted from GETTING FREE: YOU CAN END ABUSE AND TAKE BACK YOUR LIFE By Ginny NiCarthy 2004 and SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO: A GUIDE TO KNOWING IF YOUR RELATIONSHIP CAN AND SHOULD BE SAVED by Lundy Bancroft and JacPatrissi 2011

Consent is sexy

It’s important to talk about what turns the both of you on, how you like to communicate, and where you draw your boundaries, even if it feels awkward. Asking questions is erotic because you can give your partner what your partner wants. It’s always better to have these conversations before having sex, but often they happen in the heat of the moment. Here are some ways to ask for consent when you’re gettin’ busy: “May I touch you here?” “Are you into this?” “What would you like me to do?” “What do you like?” “Will you let me know when you’re not into what I’m doing?” “I think it’s hot when you do________to me.”

From Project SURVIVE peer educators and hysteria collective

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MATURE RELATIONSHIPS

A mature relationship strives for the following characteristics:

- It allows for the individuality of each partner.
- It seeks to bring out the best in both partners.
- It is open to change and exploration.
- It invites growth in both partners, i.e., there is room and desire for each to grow.
- It encourages open expression of feelings and thoughts.
- It allows both partners to be responsible for themselves.
- It encourages realistic expectations of each other.
- It promotes good self-esteem in each person.
- It accepts occasional absences as a natural part of life.
- It welcomes spontaneity.
- It welcomes closeness and vulnerability, i.e., each partner is willing to risk being real.
- It affirms the equality of each partner.
- It welcomes humor.
- It encourages negotiation and conflict resolution skills.
- It encourages separate interests and outside friends as opposed to "total involvement" and a restricted social life.

The statements above are guidelines; they are not requirements. Mature relationships involve a process of growth. These guidelines are not conditions which must be met before the relationship can be termed healthy; rather, they are conditions to be strived for.

Adapted for HEART (Help End Abusive Relationship Tendencies):
A PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAM MANUAL FOR BATTERED AND FORMERLY BATTERED WOMEN (1988)
by Dawn Franks, Robert Geffner, Ph.D., et al.
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HEALTHY SEXUALITY

Sexuality is a natural part of being human. Being sex-positive means feeling good about yourself and being comfortable with your sexual desires, fantasies, and behavior. Each person consents, has fun, and knows the risks and can live with them. Knowing the risks and being able to live with them means that each person feels safe. Both partners are less likely to contract a sexually transmitted infection, get unintentionally pregnant, or be harmed. There are many sex-positive resources available. You could look at the library or browse at a store like Good Vibrations. If you’re a survivor of sexual abuse, The Survivor’s Guide to Sex might be a good place to start.

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