

Does each partner get the space they need to live healthy lives as individuals?

As great as it is to want to spend time with your partner, it's important to have some time away from each other, too. It's not healthy for either partner to try to set limits or use guilt or pressure to control where their partner goes or who they spend time with. Everyone should feel free to spend time alone or with friends and family without having to get permission from their partner or check in and explain their whereabouts. If boundaries around personal space are not being respected, that may be a sign that one or both partners is having trouble with trust.

Is intimacy comfortable and consensual at all times?

Sexual consent is absolutely essential in a relationship, whether you're just starting to date or you've been married for years. Sex should never feel obligatory, and you should always feel that your partner cares about your comfort and boundaries. Everyone has different backgrounds, desires, and comfort levels when it comes to intimacy, sex and methods of protection. It's important to feel comfortable communicating your boundaries around intimacy and to trust that your partner will always respect them.

It can help to talk with your partner about boundaries and expectations around sex before you're in the moment, as well as talking about how you'd like to communicate with each other in the moment to make sure you are both aware of each other's boundaries throughout. While discussing boundaries beforehand can help, even in the moment you always have the right to set boundaries or change your mind. People's levels of comfort and desire change, so it should never be assumed that just because someone was okay with something in the past, they will always be okay with it. No matter how long you've been with someone or how many times you've done something, you have the right to say no at anytime for any reason.

Is there mutual respect for privacy?

Everyone has the right to privacy, and that's not something you should have to give up to be in a relationship. While it's okay to share personal information like passwords to social media, bank accounts, email, phone, etc. if you wish to, it should never feel required and it's completely reasonable to keep those private. Having access to another's personal accounts or information also doesn't give anyone the right to look through them without the owner's permission. Even if you have shared passwords with your partner, you have every right to expect them to respect your privacy and boundaries. Leaving your private accounts open is never an invitation to invade your privacy. Talking with your partner about what you do and don't wish to share can be a great way to lay some ground rules around privacy.

Do you and your partner respect each other's boundaries without getting angry or making each other feel bad?

As we've said, everyone has the right to set boundaries. You should always feel comfortable communicating your boundaries to your partner without being afraid of how they'll react. In a healthy relationship, both people want their partner to feel happy, respected and comfortable and they use

knowledge of each other's boundaries to help them understand how to keep the relationship happy and healthy. Using pressure, making you feel guilty, or arguing with you about whether your boundaries are reasonable is not respectful or healthy. If you don't feel comfortable or safe setting boundaries, or your boundaries are not being respected by your partner, that can be a red flag for unhealthy or abusive dynamics in the relationship.