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### Learning Objectives

- Self assessment of where you stand on the healthy vs. unhealthy relationship continuum
- Steps toward building emotional intimacy in order to get to where you want to be in your relationship
- Appropriate ways to have our needs met in our relationships
- The importance and the establishment of boundaries
- Relationship tools to enhance success

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### Bridges and Dams

Where I am now on the continuum?

←————→

Dam/Unhealthy Bridge/Healthy

Where I would like to be on this continuum?

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## Emotional Intimacy

### Steps Toward Developing Emotional Intimacy

- Identify and own your feelings
- Create quality or bonding time together
- Use this time to be authentic and real with each other – sharing on a feeling level
- Address issues as they arise, or as soon as possible thereafter
- Be trustworthy by demonstrating integrity and honesty
- Show the other person that you appreciate him or her with thoughtfulness and kindness

Make these techniques a standard of communication in your relationships

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## Meeting Our Needs

I can meet my need by:

- Asking for what I need and want directly and clearly
- Being flexible and willing to negotiate how my needs get met
- Believing I am worthy and deserving of what I need or want
- Having a network of support people in my life to whom I can turn to help me meet my needs and wants
- Owning my needs and wants and using "I" messages to relay that
- Being open to either a "yes" or "no" response
- Being appreciative



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## Boundaries

Boundaries are essentially limits we set to:

- Protect ourselves
- Allow us to be separate
- Provide intimacy
- Create room for empathy

Boundaries ironically allow people to grow more intimate and deeper



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## Establishing and Maintaining a Healthy Relationship



**Tools to keep your relationship strong:**

**Active listening**

- Be involved with the speaker to better understand what is being said

**Nonverbal communication**

- 90% of the message isn't what we say but how we say it!

**Owning our messages**

- Take responsibility for how you feel. No one "makes" you feel a certain way. Use "I" messages

**Don't let anger grow**

- Create boundaries for arguments. Share feelings and take a time out if necessary. Negotiate on an agreement where both parties can have most of their needs met

**Have fun**

- It is critical to spend time just having fun with each other!

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## The Big Question

**How has your partner, family member or friend helped make you a better person?**

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## The Next Big Question

**How have you made your partner, family member, or friend a better person?**

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## Providing Support Is Also a Tool

Communicate

Love unconditionally

Share common goals

Be a patient listener

- Allow your partner some venting times

Use time to spend it doing quality things

Get help – sometimes a third party is necessary



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## 5 Key Ingredients to a Successful Relationship

### 1. Communicate

- Know when to talk and when not to talk
- Speak nicely to each other
- Don't throw in the "kitchen sink"

### 2. Honesty

- Feel free to share
- Secrets are dangerous for a relationship
- Refrain from being judgmental

### 3. Respect

- Even when you disagree understand where the partner is coming from

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## 5 Key Ingredients to a Successful Relationship

### 4. Reliability

- Do what you say you are going to do
- Be thoughtful
- Remember you are also linked to your partners families

### 5. Act like you're in love

- Be silly
- Be affectionate
- Dress for your partner sometimes



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### What will be your action plan?

List three action statements for your relationship to strengthen it and list three things that you have rediscovered that is going well for your relationship.

Doing Well:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Needs Improvement:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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  - Resources
  - Self assessments
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  - Health/wellness library
  - Legal forms

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## Questions?



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