

## Build a Healthy Relationship # 10 Tips

From the moment we're born, we begin to build relationships. Ideally, strong parental bonds are developed in infancy, as these will become the bases upon which all other relationships are built. Friendships, business associations and romantic partnerships are all constructed upon the same basic foundation of trust and respect. Unless you've lived your life since birth in complete solitude, it's impossible to say that you've never experienced a relationship.

While it's not always apparent, every relationship is built upon love. Saying that "love conquers all" does hold some truth, but in order to conquer the enemy, even love needs some help from time to time. Having a relationship is easy; in order to build a healthy relationship, you'll have to do a little work.

Love has no rules, but here are some tips to help you build a healthy relationship:

1. Spend quality time together. It doesn't matter if you're trying to strengthen your marriage, your business partnership, or your relationship with a child. Everyone needs one-on-one time with those who are important. If, for example, you've been too busy working to notice that your daughter has grown up too quickly, try to set aside an hour every day to make up for lost time. Without quality time together, your relationship will falter and fail.
2. Love yourself # and your partner. Independence is an attribute to any relationship, but there has to be a healthy balance. Be dependant to yourself without making your partner feel as though he or she is unwanted. On the other hand, you need to be able to show your partner that you really need him or her, without becoming too overbearing or clingy.
3. Learn to give and take. There are two parties to every relationship, and knowing how to share is paramount to success. You might have discovered as a five year-old that if you didn't share your toys, you'd soon have no one to play with. The same rule holds true in your marriage. If you don't share your thoughts, feelings, hopes and fears, your relationship can quickly become stagnant and you'll find yourself all alone. Don't be shy to express your gratitude or to ask for the same treatment in return. Giving, and taking, helps to strengthen relationships.
4. Show your appreciation. Give tokens of your affection and gratitude from time to time. Leave a love note on the pillow. Pick up flowers on your way home from work. Show honest interest while your partner is talking # anything less would just be rude and inconsiderate. Tell your partner that he or she is smart and talented and attractive. If you don't say it, he or she will wonder whether or not you believe it.
5. Ask for feedback. If you partner doesn't readily show his or her feelings, don't be afraid to ask for appreciation. It's the only way to find out his or her true feelings. If you can't get a direct response, make some general comments or ask for an opinion, and take it from there.
6. Love unconditionally. You wouldn't want someone trying to change you, and those you love certainly don't want your criticisms. Love and accept your partner and your children for who they are. Sometimes it the differences between people that can create the strongest bonds and keep relationships intact.
7. Respect each other. Spouses, kids, business partners and friends all need to give respect in order to earn it. You need to show respect to your partner for opinions shared, decisions made and, basically, for the person he or she is. Giving respect is how you really show and prove your love. It needs to be felt and shown in positive, concrete actions, as well as in encouraging words.
8. Know that a little thing can be a big deal. Don't forget to say "thank you" when your partner does something nice. Even if it's a cup of coffee made for you in the morning, your partner has gone out of his or her way to do something nice, and deserves recognition. "Thanks" is a very simple word that packs a huge wallop and does wonders for the heart. Never take your partner for granted.
9. Be honest. Keeping secrets from your partner can cause serious damage to a relationship. Be open and honest, and tell your partner as much as he or she wants or needs to know. Confiding in your partner can actually help to strengthen the intimate bond you share.
10. Be faithful. Of course, this is the biggie. Remain loyal to your partner at all times, sexually and emotionally. Let him or her know that you are and will always completely devoted. This doesn't mean that you need to cut all ties with the opposite sex, but be respectful and draw the line if someone begins to flirt with you. It's also important that you trust your partner as much as you expect to be trusted.

It's not always easy to build a healthy relationship, but the efforts certainly do pay off.