

Relationships and Consent



There are different kinds of relationships in our lives. We have relationships with our family, friends, romantic partner, classmates, colleagues, our community, etc. Not only are healthy relationships good for us, but they are also essential to our well-being. Healthy and strong relationships provide support and stability during difficult times. They help to reduce stress, make us feel more connected with others and lead to a happier, more fulfilling life.

When we are in a healthy and positive relationship, we feel safe and respected. In terms of romantic relationships, each of us has a list of things that we look for in a partner. However, there are a few basic qualities that should be present in everyone's list. For example,

- Respect
- Consent
- Safety – no threats, abuse or violence
- Kindness
- Honesty
- Equal power
- Healthy boundaries

An integral part of healthy relationships involves setting emotional and physical boundaries with people in our lives and respecting their boundaries. Communicating these boundaries allows us to be aware of each other's needs and comfort levels. In this way, we can all feel safe in the relationship.

BOUNDARIES

IT IS NOT MY JOB TO FIX OTHERS	IT IS OKAY IF OTHERS GET ANGRY	IT IS OKAY TO SAY NO
IT IS NOT MY JOB TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OTHERS	I DON'T HAVE TO ANTICIPATE THE NEEDS OF OTHERS	
IT IS MY JOB TO MAKE ME HAPPY	NOBODY HAS TO AGREE WITH ME	I HAVE A RIGHT TO FEEL MY OWN FEELINGS

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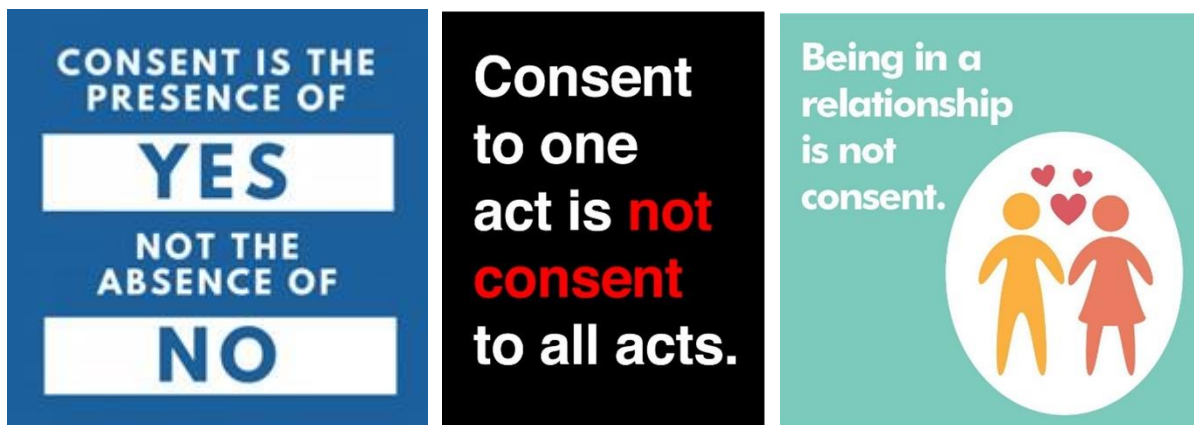
I AM ENOUGH 

What do healthy boundaries look like?

- Feeling comfortable communicating your needs and wants
- Respecting what your partner wants and doesn't want
- Having your own space/me-time and respecting your partner's need for that as well
- Showing respect for differences in opinion, perspective, and feelings
- Being able to negotiate in a fair way and handle disagreements with maturity
- Having your own personal identity, interests, friends, and hobbies

Consent in Relationships

Consent is required in all kinds of relationships. Sexual consent is showing agreement to take part in a sexual activity. It must be given explicitly, freely and voluntarily. There must be no threat, intimidation, pressure, or guilt-tripping to make any party commit to a sex act. Just because no one said "no", it does not mean there is consent. Similarly, if a person is asleep, intoxicated, mentally incapacitated or passes out, there is no consent.



To help you understand better, here is a video explaining consent using tea as an analogy: [Tea and Consent - YouTube](#)

You may also read more about consent here ([What is consent? - Sexual Assault Care Centre \(aware.org.sg\)](#)).

Creating healthy relationships and boundaries is a process; it takes time and effort. Below are some tips to get you started. Remember, everyone deserves healthy, positive and strong relationships!

1. Start by understanding yourself – your needs, preferences and what you want in a relationship
2. Communicate your needs and limits openly and clearly
3. Stick to your boundaries - say "no" when you need to
4. Respect each other's needs and boundaries
5. Be present, show appreciation and support each other

REFERENCES

- 1) *Pin on Mindfulness for Anxiety & Stress*. (2018, May, 1). Pinterest. [Pin on Mindfulness for Anxiety & Stress \(pinterest.com\)](#)
- 2) FII. (2014, Dec, 23). *10 simple posters that define what is consent*. <https://feminisminindia.com/2014/12/23/consent/>
- 3) Thames Valley Police. (2015, Nov, 16). *Tea and Consent*. [Video]. [Tea and Consent - YouTube](#)
- 4) Sexual Assault Care Centre. (n.d.). *What is Consent*. Retrieved Jun 6, 2023, from [What is consent? - Sexual Assault Care Centre \(aware.org.sg\)](#)