

Activity 8.3: Generic Expectations for Faithful Personal Relationships

Use to apply general concepts of faithfulness you your personal situation.

For additional ideas see <http://www.wikihow.com/Be-Faithful-in-a-Marriage>

Faithfulness is the key to maintaining key personal relationships

In successful long-term personal relationships, both parties are loving and work hard to be faithful in their thoughts, feelings, and actions toward the other person. They both compromise, and neither party dominates or is submissive. Being unfaithful means not being 100 percent trustworthy, devoted or loving in words and deeds. It includes words and actions that hurt the relationship (e.g., lying; deceiving; disrespect and discourteous or angry behavior; insults; belittling; blaming; withholding love, attention, or money; any form of physical abuse and infidelity, or cheating.

The following are common perceptions of what being faithful in a relationship looks like

- ◇ **Be real.** You are both imperfect emotional beings that can't fully understand the other person's thoughts or motivations; you both need affection, compromise, change, and forgiveness.
- ◇ **Have unconditional love and trust.** If two people really do love each other and want to be together, both have to work hard at it. Unconditional love requires 100 percent trust and honesty.
- ◇ **Good relationships require commitment to good communication.**
 - Establishing and enforcing boundaries may be necessary in areas when you don't see eye-to-eye.
 - Keep it personal.
- ◇ **Minimize challenges to unfaithfulness and unhappiness: Consider**
 - Do you need to status on Facebook?
 - If married, do you need to wear your wedding ring all the time?
 - Do you put yourself in situations e.g., online dating, chats, bars, etc. where you may seem available.
 - Are you open about things that please you or don't please you e.g., how often you have intimate relations; positions, location, displays of affection, etc.)
 - Women: Do you consistently dress modestly in public areas? (Dressing in short, sexy outfits and in high heels, even without flirting, may send a message that can be interpreted as a desire for attention).
 - Men: Did you realize that whistling, hooting, touching, using sexual words, or making innuendos to women other than your wife can be perceived as demeaning and in many situations can be legitimately considered sexual harassment.
- ◇ **It takes two.** Each party has to want to maintain faithfulness, good communications, forgiveness, and love. If the other person fails to do his or her part in maintaining the relationship, it signals it may be time to change the relationship.

If you've tried everything but can't work it out, stop the insanity and change your relationship status. Get the help you need. Learn from the experience and move forward to a happier, healthier life.