

Building Healthy Relationships



The best way to build a relationship is slowly and over time...

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Two people working and communicating well together in order to create and maintain shared trust, respect and common goals.

The snail is our mascot as it not only provides us with an acronym that is easy to remember, but it is also the best way to make sure that you actually remember that relationships take time. Whether you are building a friendship or a dating relationship you need to move slowly and investigate along the way to ensure your safety and success.

The **SNAIL** as a symbol for **Relationships**

The **SNAIL** moves slowly and takes its time to lay its path so that it can travel safely. **Healthy Relationships** need to move slowly as the people involved learn about one another and create a safe environment for each other.

The **SNAIL** paves its own way and protects its belly (where it is most vulnerable) by creating and leaving a trail. This path protects the snail's body and shows where it has been. So remember, you create your own path and you impact the lives of people with whom you interact. You're responsible for your own safety and for the safety of the hearts

with whom you connect. To choose the safest path takes time and thought.

The **SNAIL**'s shell looks a lot like the inner part of the human ear. An important part of any **Healthy Relationship** is listening. You must listen to yourself, to your heart and to the other person to hear what he/she is saying and feeling.

The **SNAIL**'s shell is a never-ending spiral, a series of circles within each other representing the different steps in your relationships. All the steps in building **Healthy Relationships** are related.

The **SNAIL** carries its personal space or home on its back. Other snails can't occupy it. This is how it creates and sets clear boundaries. The same applies when building **Healthy Relationships**. As close as we may feel to someone, setting appropriate boundaries will ensure that both parties' needs are met equally. **Healthy Relationships** ultimately help you become a better person and enriches your inner world as well as your life.

We also created an acronym for you to remember the important **SNAIL**.



Slow down; make sure you understand yourself and the other person that you are with. **Set expectations.**



Negotiate the Dos and Don'ts (we call this the **Code of Conduct**) of your relationship.



Ask, how will my choices and behaviors affect the other person and our relationship? Always attend to the pink and red flags.



Investigate before you decide on a long term relationship.



Listen to your heart and listen to what your partner is saying with their words and actions.

Activity

Identify our SNAIL

First complete our acronym! Second, complete the following questions under each letter. Later, with your friend/date share the questions and together discuss the answers:

S

How can I/we build our friendship?

What are the things that I/we like to do?

What do I/we expect from the relationship?

What do I/we think your friend should expect from you?

N

What do you think the rules of the relationship should be?

How will I/we share these rules and agree to them?

What should I/we do if a rule is broken?

A

What are some of things that I/we will need to know in order to be considerate of your friend's feelings?

What are some of things that I/we will need to know in order to be considerate of your feelings?

I

What are some of the questions you should ask in order to decide if I/we should be friends or if you are dating?

L

Give an example of when your words and actions didn't match: For instance when you promised that you would do something that you didn't do.

Did you have a legitimate reason for not following through?

Did your reason for not following through make sense to the other person?

Is the above example something that you do often? If so, what changes can you make?

Give an example of when your friend's/dating partner's words and actions didn't match: For instance when he/she promised that he/she would do something that he/she didn't do.

Did your friend/dating partner have a legitimate reason for not following through?

Building Healthy Relationships

For many lucky people, relationships are experienced over a lifetime. Any relationship is a learning and teaching process where two people who are attracted to each other spend time to teach and learn how they each view life and the world. Together, and through this investigation, they will figure out if they are well matched and agree to commit to each other.

It takes trust, respect, and shared goals with open and honest communication to build life-long friendships. When you find that

special person, it may take hard work and you may experience some disappointments, but as you continue to build the relationship the rewards will often far outweigh the hardships.

Being the right person is just as important as
finding the right person.

Be the person you want to find!