

# Unhealthy relationships

## Unhealthy Relationships | Young Voices Africa

Video of Unhealthy Relationships | Young Voices Africa

Martha's boyfriend is getting controlling. Find out more about her situation by watching the animation above. What would you do in her place?

Create your own ending to Martha's story using our online comic creator. You can share your creation with your friends on your favourite social media channels.

[Download Martha's files for WhatsApp sharing! \[zip\]](#)

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### Fast Facts: Unhealthy Relationships

All relationships have their ups and downs, but unhealthy relationships often include set patterns of behaviour and can sometimes escalate into emotional or physical abuse. Have you been worried that your relationship, or one of your friend's relationships, isn't healthy? Here we look at a few of the warning signs:

1. Your partner attempts to exercise control and ultimately, power, over you.  
*Whether they do this physically, emotionally, by what they say to you, or online through Whatsapp and Facebook, this is NOT ok.*
2. They pressure you to send intimate photo messages or snapchat messages that you don't want to send.  
*This is NOT ok - and you don't know what they might do with them.*
3. Your partner is very controlling, for example trying to control how your hair looks, where you go, who you see, or what you do.  
*This is NOT healthy.*
4. You don't feel able or willing to communicate with your partner.  
*This is NOT healthy, but a breakdown in communication can sometimes be the simplest thing to fix, and can do the most good for your relationship.*
5. Your partner is being repeatedly dishonest.  
*This is NOT ok. Healthy relationships are built on trust and respect.*
6. They call you names, constantly question and criticise your choices and decisions.  
*This is NOT healthy.*
7. You don't feel you have any control over whether you use contraceptives to avoid

pregnancy and don't feel able to insist on safer sex to avoid HIV and STIs.  
*No partner should feel pressured into doing something they don't want to do, so this is NOT ok.*

8. You don't feel able to go out and see your friends without the other person being angry or sad or jealous.  
*Too much dependency on one another and isolation from social circles is NOT healthy. In a loving relationship you will want to spend a lot of time together, but you are your own person and can maintain a level of independence.*
9. You are made to feel guilty for the choices that you make.  
*This is NOT ok. Abusive relationships are often hinged on manipulation and ensuring that the other person feels guilt.*

## Ideas for discussion:

What do you (or your group) know about unhealthy relationships? Maybe you've never really thought about it before. Here are some questions to think about yourself, or discuss in your group.

1. Do you have fixed ideas about relationships? Do you think there are set rules for good and bad relationships?
2. Your partner should have many of the same qualities that you see/look for in your own friends - what are the most important qualities of your closest friends?
3. How do you think you might tell the difference between a relationship that is going through a difficult patch, and one that is just unhealthy?
4. Do you think there are ways of behaving that are never part of a healthy relationship?
5. How do you think being in an unhealthy relationship could affect your sexual health?



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he’s just a little  
controlling  
sometimes. He  
thinks I should  
ask him before I  
go anywhere.”

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