

Three healthy relationship hacks

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Credit: University of Colorado at Boulder

Our lives are built around relationships: significant others, roommates, family, friends. Regardless of what kind of relationships you have, it takes effort to make them work. Consider these tips for building better relationships.

Know where you stand

Values represent the things you believe, expect, cherish and prioritize in your life. Aligning your life and relationships with these beliefs can help you feel more satisfied and at ease. However, when your life doesn't align with your values, it can create a point of contention, stress or conflict.

The people in your relationships won't always have the same values as you, and that's okay. Compromise is natural and unavoidable, and it can be great in small doses.

However, it's still important to know where you stand and when to draw the line on matters that are important to you. Small compromises are a given in any [relationship](#), but you should be careful not to [compromise](#) yourself or our [core values](#) for the sake of our relationships. Communicate with the people closest to you, and let them know what is most important to you.

Be reasonable (and honest) about expectations

Understanding exactly what you want out of a relationship is important. Each of us has unique needs, and we often look to our relationships to help fill them. It may take some introspection, but getting a sense of what you want and what you're asking of others can help you pinpoint the kinds of relationships you are looking for.

Sometimes we expect others to support us in ways that are unrealistic, or in ways that the other person isn't aware of or is unable to fulfill. Understanding our own needs and expectations is just the first step, though. Being open and communicating these with the people in our relationships is just as important. Take time to sit down and have a

conversation about your needs and expectations, and allow the other people in your relationships to do the same.

Practice listening over speaking

We're all guilty of it: listening just enough so that we can formulate our own response. While you may be able to get away with this in the short term, it's important to actively listen in your relationships to have the best outcomes [long term](#).

Try taking a step back to really listen to the people in your relationships. Ask questions and clarify what you hear. Giving people your undivided attention helps you to better communicate and makes them feel heard. When it's your turn to speak, ask for them to do the same. It may take some practice, but it'll be well worth it in the end.

Provided by University of Colorado at Boulder

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