

Study: Asexual relationships need same ingredients as any other relationship

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Many asexual individuals, those with little to no sexual attraction, are in long-term satisfying romantic relationships, but there has been little study on how and why they last and thrive. New research from Michigan State University found that, despite asexuals' lack of or dislike for sexual attraction, the ingredients that make for a successful relationship among asexual individuals are virtually the same as those in any other relationship.

"Although asexuals don't have the desire for [sexual relationships](#), they nevertheless form [romantic relationships](#) and those connections look at least somewhat similar to non-asexuals' romantic relationships," said William Chopik, associate professor in MSU's psychology department and coauthor of the study.

The study, published in *Frontiers in Psychology*, is among the largest studies of asexual individuals' relationships ever conducted and the only one to examine what predicts commitment and longevity in their relationships. The study looked at a sample of 485 people who self-identified as on the asexual spectrum and are currently in a [romantic relationship](#). This is one of the only published studies that allowed people to self-identify with any asexual spectrum label, in addition to allowing them to use any other sexual or romantic labels that fit.

"I sincerely hope that this study will more widely show the diversity of the asexual community, shed light on their experiences and show that being on the asexual spectrum does not preclude one from successful

romantic relationships or love," said coauthor and research associate Alexandra Brozowski.

The long-standing theory about what predicts who breaks up and who stays in relationships, called the Investment Model, says that people stay in relationships if they are happy and satisfied, if they have invested time and energy into the [relationship](#) and if they don't have any other options. Many theories say that sex is a central part of romantic relationships, which doesn't leave room for asexual relationships.

"We found that the same ingredients predict success in these relationships, so they're not weird, bizarre, worse than or much different at all from non-asexual people's relationships." Chopik said. "The hope is that this destigmatizes asexual people's relationships as just as satisfied and common as non-asexual people's relationships."

More information: Alexandra Brozowski et al, A test of the investment model among asexual individuals: The moderating role of attachment orientation, *Frontiers in Psychology* (2022). [DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.912978](#)

Provided by Michigan State University

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