

When learning about relationships, we often are not instructed fully on what is healthy, what is normal, and what is unproductive. When people talk about Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), or domestic violence, we can easily point out the negative actions, but what about the positive actions?

In this brochure we are exploring the Equality Wheel* and examples of Negotiation and Fairness.

Healthy conflict is based on both people winning rather than feeling like either I win or lose, or feeling like you always give up more than the other person.

Conflict and disagreements are normal in all relationships. In healthy relationships you can come to an understanding while remaining calm and respectful and acknowledging your partner's point of view.

* The Equality Wheel was developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project Duluth, MN

Facts on the basis of a healthy relationship:

Partners trust each other to not deliberately hurt one another and are intent upon loving themselves and each other.

They each work to support one another, rather than being intent on protecting, avoiding or controlling.

Healthy partners, instead of being threatened by the other's success or joy, are delighted by it.

It is the commitment to learn about love that leads to being able to take personal responsibility for your own feelings.

For more information or help call:

[Insert your local contact info]

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NEGOTIATION AND FAIRNESS



What does it look like to have cooperation in relationships?



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Jennifer and Dennis have been together for 16 years and they have a 14-year-old daughter and 12-year-old son. Both come from abusive homes, so they try their best to role-model healthy interaction between themselves.

Learning about each other and communicating goals and dreams helps partners understand one another's lives – what they have experienced personally or professionally – and establishes a base upon which to build a relationship.

Early in the relationship Dennis had shown signs of being controlling. He sought help and Jennifer suggested they learn conflict resolution and communication skills.

Conflict is unavoidable – it happens even in good relationships. Conflict can reveal that there is something important to resolve. Knowing how to resolve conflict constructively can help clear the air and help each partner understand the other is feeling and what they really want.

NEGOTIATION AND FAIRNESS

Seeking mutually satisfying resolutions to conflict

- accepting change
- being willing to compromise.

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Making money decisions together • making sure both partners benefit from financial arrangements.

As parents, Dennis lets the kids stay up late or get more computer time as rewards, while Jennifer rewards them by taking them out for meals or shopping.

Co-parenting has challenges, but remember, a parent's job is to create healthy and productive children rather than worrying about one another. That is how parent-child bonds are formed between each in a unique way.

Dennis recognizes the different pressures society puts on women in managing family, work, and self that he doesn't experience. Out of fairness for her he ensures Jennifer has the time, space and support to decompress and gripe about what is affecting her on a daily basis.

Gender norms assign women the household work and the need to be ultra-professional at work, while looking like a supermodel. Although many wife-husband relationships are moving toward equality, men continue to exercise greater power within the family. However, societal pressures on men to be hyper-masculine can have negative effects on them as well. Bringing men into the conversation on gender equality takes a step toward breaking down the societal expectations of both genders.

Cindy was remarried a few years after she and Donovan separated. Donovan took the time to meet and get to know the new man in his child's life, knowing that supporting the new relationship is supporting his child.

In healthy relationships ex-partners know that they will never be replaced as parents, while step-parents know their role is to complement the care and guidance of the child. Separations happen – we all hope that new partners are capable and loving and see that the children are actually lucky to have another caring adult in their lives.