

Life Relationship Notes



From: The Center for Marriage and Family Studies

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One of the deepest and most pressing needs for humanity is to have trusting, fulfilling relationships--so much so that some people are willing to settle for second best. Take a minute to think about relationships you have had or those you have now. Do these relationships build you up by encouraging you and affirming you as a person or are these relationships soul draining, energy zapping and leaving you with feelings of resentment, depression, hopelessness, frustration, guilt, shame and being used?

“Many people in destructive relationships don’t recognize them for what they are,” said Dr. Jill Murray, psychologist and author. “Destructive relationships can occur with parents, children, co-workers, supervisors, male and female friends, siblings, spouse or significant other. The relationship does not have to be violent and most frequently is not. Just because you don’t have a black eye or a broken arm does not mean the relationship isn’t destructive.”

Emotional abuse – exists when the intent is to destroy a person’s spirit and crush their self- esteem. This type of abuse reveals itself in jealous and controlling behavior. The abusive person is always checking in, they often blame the other person for everything and never take responsibility for their own behavior.

Sexual abuse – date rape and sexual assault – involves unwanted touching or kissing. Boys and girls are very aggressive in touching each other – they touch wherever they want.

Physical abuse – While we think of males assaulting females, female to male physical violence has tripled in the last two years.

If you believe you are in a destructive relationship here are ***some things to remember***:

- Love is a behavior, not a feeling. Look at the way a person treats you, not how you think they feel about you or what you believe their intent would be.
- In any relationship you have, when you get that creepy feeling in your stomach ask yourself at that very moment – “Would I consider this loving behavior?” – often the answer will be no.
- It is very difficult to stay in a relationship where you acknowledge the behavior is unloving. If you acknowledge the behavior as unloving and you choose to stay, you are a part of the problem and you should seek help.

You always have options. There are three things that we have control over in life – our thoughts, behaviors and reactions. We cannot control the way somebody treats us, but we do have 100 percent control over how we react – whether you stay, leave, speak up or accept it.

~Adapted from: First Things First September Newsletter