

Relationships & wellbeing

Relationships are an important part of our emotional wellbeing. Healthy connections, whether with family, friends, or a partner can help us manage stress, build confidence, and feel less alone. Feeling valued and supported by others is just as important for our health as food and shelter.

If a relationship is leaving you feeling anxious, unsupported, or emotionally drained, it's okay to reach out for support.



All relationships have their ups and downs, but when problems stick around, they can start to affect how we feel day to day.

Signs of relationship problems

Relationships look different for everyone, but some common signs that something might not feel right include:

- 
Feeling distant
 Conversations feel forced, or spending time together doesn't feel enjoyable anymore.
- 
Frequent arguments
 Conflict happens often, and the same issues keep coming up without resolution.
- 
Feeling unsupported
 Your needs, feelings, or opinions don't feel valued or considered.
- 
Trust issues
 Things like jealousy, controlling behaviour, or dishonesty are causing tension.
- 
Avoiding time together
 You'd rather be apart, or you feel drained after spending time together.
- 
Experiencing abuse
 No one has the right to control, intimidate, or harm you.

If you suspect you're experiencing abuse, support is available. Call 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732) for confidential support and information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Effects

When relationships feel difficult or unsafe, they can affect your mental health and overall wellbeing in lots of ways, including:



Feeling more stressed or anxious

Ongoing conflict or tension can leave you feeling on edge, overwhelmed, or emotionally exhausted.



Low self-esteem

Feeling unheard, criticised, or unappreciated can start to change how you see yourself.



Loss of motivation

Feeling disconnected or unsupported can sap your energy and make things like work, hobbies, or self-care feel difficult.



Changes in mood

Relationship struggles can leave you feeling sad, frustrated, or irritable, making everyday life feel harder.



Trouble sleeping

Worry, stress, or emotional pain can make it hard to fall asleep or stay asleep.



Pulling away from others

When one relationship feels hard, you might start avoiding social situations or withdrawing from other people who care about you.

The end of a relationship can feel like losing part of your world. It's okay to grieve what was while gently finding your way forward.

Causes

Relationship problems can build up from all kinds of experiences, and often it's a mix of things that make staying connected feel harder. Some common causes include:

Trust issues

Past experiences, dishonesty, or broken commitments can make it hard to feel secure and rebuild connection.

Financial stress

Worries about money, debt, or job insecurity can put extra pressure on relationships and lead to conflict.

Grief and loss

Losing someone you love, saying goodbye to a pet, or facing a big life change can affect how people connect and support each other.

Different values or life goals

Shifts in priorities, beliefs, or future plans can make it harder to stay on the same page or grow with each other.

External pressures

Demands from work, family responsibilities, or health concerns can leave less time and energy for each other.

Communication challenges

Misunderstandings, unmet expectations, or finding it hard to express your needs and feelings can create tension and distance.

Whatever the cause, there are ways to navigate what you're feeling. And remember, support is available every step of the way.

Wherever you are, help is at your fingertips with the **Support Toolkit**

➔ lifeline.org.au/toolkit

Practical tips for building healthy relationships

Practise open communication

Share your thoughts and feelings openly, and **listen without interrupting** or judging. Feeling heard and understood helps deepen

Make time for self-care

Looking after yourself through rest, journaling, and movement can **improve self-esteem**, which can help you feel more balanced and present in your relationships.

Pause during conflict

If emotions are running high, take a 20-minute break to walk, have a glass of water, or do **box breathing**. A short pause can help you come back feeling calmer and more ready to listen.

Set personal boundaries

Let the people around you know what feels okay and what doesn't. Setting boundaries helps **protect your wellbeing** while keeping honesty at the heart of your relationships.

Reconnect with shared activities

Spend time together doing things you both enjoy like cooking, walking, or watching a favourite show. Small moments of joy can help strengthen your bond.

Try counselling

Talking with a counsellor, either on your own or as a couple, can help you build skills to strengthen your relationship, improve communication, and work through challenges together.

Want to try something now?

JOURNAL YOUR THOUGHTS & FEELINGS

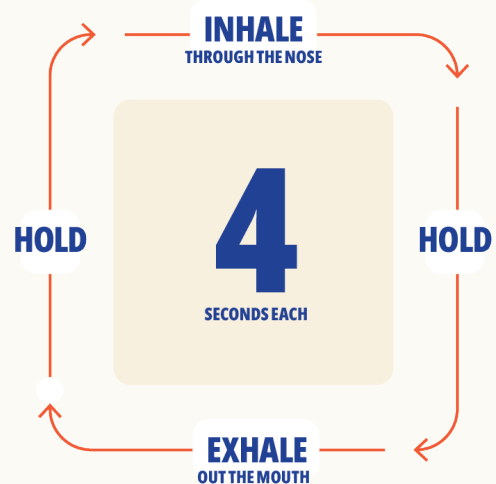


What's one emotion I'm feeling?

Where do I notice it in my body?

What might it be trying to tell me?

BOX BREATHING



Everyone is different, so what works for someone else might not work for you, and that's okay. The key is to keep experimenting until you find what helps you most.

When to seek help

You may want to speak to a trusted person or professional if:

- ✓ Relationship challenges are leaving you feeling constantly stressed, anxious, or overwhelmed.
- ✓ Your self-esteem or confidence has been impacted.
- ✓ You feel unsupported, unheard, or isolated in your relationship.
- ✓ Conflict feels unmanageable, or the same issues keep coming up without resolution.
- ✓ You're experiencing controlling, intimidating, or harmful behaviour.
- ✓ You're feeling unsure about whether to stay in or leave the relationship and would like guidance.

Reaching out can feel difficult, but it's a sign of strength.

Support is always available to help you feel more in control and hopeful for the future.

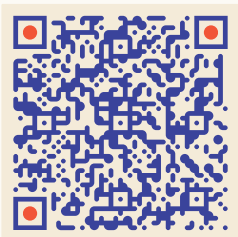
Support is available

Building healthy relationships isn't something you have to do on your own.

Head to our **Support Toolkit** to find more practical strategies and discover national and local support services that can help.

The Support Toolkit also offers information on a wide range of mental health and wellbeing topics you can explore at your own pace, whenever you need.

Visit lifeline.org.au/relationships/services or scan the QR code to get started.



If you're feeling overwhelmed right now, Lifeline is here to support you.

You can reach us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

☎ Call 13 11 14

✉ Text 0477 131 114

💬 Chat online at lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat

If your life is in danger, please call 000.

Wherever you are, help is at your fingertips with the **Support Toolkit**

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