

Being Imperfect Together – 01-08-15

What do we mean by healthy relationships?

While there are many different views on what it means to be in a healthy relationship in a community, here are some of the characteristics of healthy relationships in general:

Respect - viewing the other as important and worthy, valuing each other's opinions, and listening in a non-judgmental manner. Respect also involves attempting to understand and accept the other's emotions.

Honesty and accountability - communicating openly and truthfully, admitting mistakes or being wrong, and accepting responsibility for one's self.

Negotiation and fairness - being willing to compromise and seeking mutually satisfying solutions to conflict or disagreement. Problem solving is the aim and practice.

Safety - talking and acting in a way that promotes both persons' feelings of safety in the relationship. Both should feel comfortable and safe in expressing him/herself and in engaging in activities together.

Patience - people aren't perfect and will fail us. We, in turn, will fail others. This is just a fact of life and community, frustrating as it is. Patience enacts the spirit of perseverance, kindness, and forgiveness.

Reflect on the qualities above: Where are you strong, and where do your challenges lie? How can you embody more of the qualities that don't come as easily for you? Are there other characteristics of healthy community relationships that are important to you?

Yours in outstanding relationships,

Art Maines

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