

A romantic couple is shown from behind, holding hands and looking out over a calm body of water under a soft, hazy sky. The man on the left wears a white long-sleeved shirt, and the woman on the right wears a white blouse with puffed sleeves and a red plaid skirt. The overall mood is peaceful and intimate.

*5 TIPS FOR*

# Cultivating healthy relationships

BY TINA POKUAAH

**If you are reading this, chances are you already know that relationships are an incredibly important part of our lives. From birth they are important to our development, mental health and feelings of belonging.**

**They can be inherently positive; contributing to our happiness, confidence, health and even advancing our life aspirations. Therefore being intentional and self reflective about the relationships you cultivate shouldn't be taken lightly.**

**The below tips are not an exhaustive list, but are a good starting point for your self-reflection process. I must highlight that the tips are not only relevant to intimate relationships, but can also apply to friendships, family and colleagues too!**

Let's get  
started!

## *1. DEFINE A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP*

**First and foremost, understand and define what a healthy relationship means to you. Healthy relationships don't look the same for everyone since we all have different needs, which can also change throughout different life stages. With this in mind, note down what the important internal characteristics are to YOU.**

**Also being clear about what exactly you are looking for in a partner will help you define your expectations and set a strong foundation for a healthy relationship.**

## *2. COMMUNICATE YOUR NEEDS*

**Be honest about your expectations and intentions of the relationship. Are you looking to cultivate a relationship with someone with similar interests and hobbies?**

**Or if you're simply looking for a Netflix and chill relationship, then it's advisable for you to be completely transparent with the person in question right from the beginning .**

**Once you've established your intentions, you both should start being comfortable voicing your thoughts, concerns, and sharing perspectives without fear of judgement.**

### *3. TRUST YOUR INSTINCT*

**Listening to those internal thoughts and feelings you may have can save you a lot of heartache and trauma. Before you fully commit yourself to the relationship, take the time to check in with yourself.**

**Analyse the situation and identify what might be early warning signs of an unhealthy relationship.**

**Always pay attention to how your energy increases or decreases when you're around them. Do you find yourself feeling uneasy, anxious or drained?**

#### *4. SET BOUNDARIES*

**Boundaries are the imaginary lines we draw around ourselves to maintain balance and protect our bodies, minds, emotions, and time from the behavior or demands of others.**

**It's important to understand that setting boundaries is a healthy and respectful way to treat yourself and others. Evidently, relationships are not always 'butterflies and walks in the park', and that's okay.**

**However, what is not OK is normalising intentional abuse, never-ending pain and suffering all for the sake of keeping a relationship together.**

## *5. PRACTICE EQUALITY*

**Last but not least, a healthy relationship is a balanced and reciprocal one in which both parties give and receive. This involves a positive exchange of all the good things like support, affection, trust and respect.**

**If you are giving more than you receive, or vice versa it's important to question that maybe that person doesn't have your best interest at heart.**

**I'm deeply passionate about seeing you renew your mind and setting higher expectations. I've included some positive affirmations for you to have as a reminder that you're worthy and deserve to be in healthy, fruitful relationships!**

- 1. I am building relationships with people who are good for my mental health**
- 2. A healthy relationship doesn't discourage my growth, they say "I see who you are today, I cannot wait to see who you become tomorrow"**
- 3. I am NO longer being everybody's everything and leaving nothing for myself**
- 4. I deserve the same love I pour into others**
- 5. How they respond to my boundaries tells me everything I need to know about how they'll treat me**

**Here is to healing, happiness and healthy relationships**





**ABOUT**

# **TINA POKUAH**



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5 Tips For Cultivating Healthy Relationships

With over 10 years experience, Tina Pokuaah is a leader in the field of Youth Development and GBV with a particular specialism in Domestic Abuse. As a reputable gender based violence consultant, Tina has successfully designed and delivered training to 5000 people globally on GBV prevention and response strategies with NGOs, schools, community groups, both private and public sector businesses. Using her substantial expertise, Tina often leads and provides advice to clients on the development of gender inclusive strategies for their companies.

Tina has also used her experiences and expertise to Co-found 5GirlsProject, a non-profit organisation that invests in the education, skills, and training of young women in Ghana. Under her leadership the organisation has to date supported over 300 girls and young women across Ghana. This has resulted in her being recognised for her honourable service to humanity by the Humanitarian Awards Global (2021) & also being listed on the next generation trailblazer by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex (2020).