

Moving From Shame to Respect

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Rules for a Healthy Relationship
Taken from Marilyn Mason and Merle Fossum
Edits by Lynda Savage

These rules have been developed by long time recovery specialists who have helped thousands of people develop healthy relationships.

*I'll face my emptiness with God's help. You need not fill me up, nor will I fill up with abusive behaviors – food, alcohol, sex, work. Life has suffering.

*I'll trust (sometimes slowly) and tell you when I don't trust.

*I'll be there. If I tell you something, I will come through.

*I'll tell you if I'm leaving. I will not be missing in action, nor psychologically absent.

*I'll let you know my thoughts and feelings as much as possible. We don't have to think alike.

*I'll be vulnerable as often as I can.

*I'll disagree and say (and stay) when I do.

*I'll comment on my reality/perception.

*I'll take the consequences of what I say and do.

*I'll be receptive to giving and taking (receiving).

*I'll promise to respect your struggles and have compassion for you in them.

*I shall understand my needs for intimacy shall be different from yours.

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