

# Importance of Building and Maintaining Healthy Relationships

Dr. P. Swathi  
Department of Psychology  
Osmania University  
Hyderabad





- An interpersonal relationship refers to the association, connection, interaction and bond between two or more people. There are many different types of relationships.
- There are four types of relationships:
- **Family relationships**
- **Friendships**
- **Acquaintanceships and**
- **Romantic relationships**

# Examples of interpersonal relationships

- Individuals working together in the same organization.
- People working in the same team.
- Relationship between a man and a woman (Love, Marriage).
- Relationship with immediate family members and relatives.
- Relationship of a child with his parents.
- Relationship between friends.

# Characteristics of Interpersonal relationships

- It involves independent individuals. ...
- It involves self-disclosure, or revealing personal thoughts, feelings, and reflections.
- It is rational. ...
- It involves personal choice. ...
- It is constant and inescapable.

# Is your relationship healthy?

- Ask yourself:
- Does my partner encourage me to grow?
- Do we share goals for the future?
- Do we want the same kind of relationship?
- Can I be myself with them?
- Do I accept them for who they are?
- Do we give and take from each other fairly equally?
- Is my life better with them in it?
- Does our time together have meaning?

- If you mostly answered yes, your relationship is probably a strong one.

- *The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.—  
Theodore Roosevelt*

# Prerequisites for a Healthy relationship

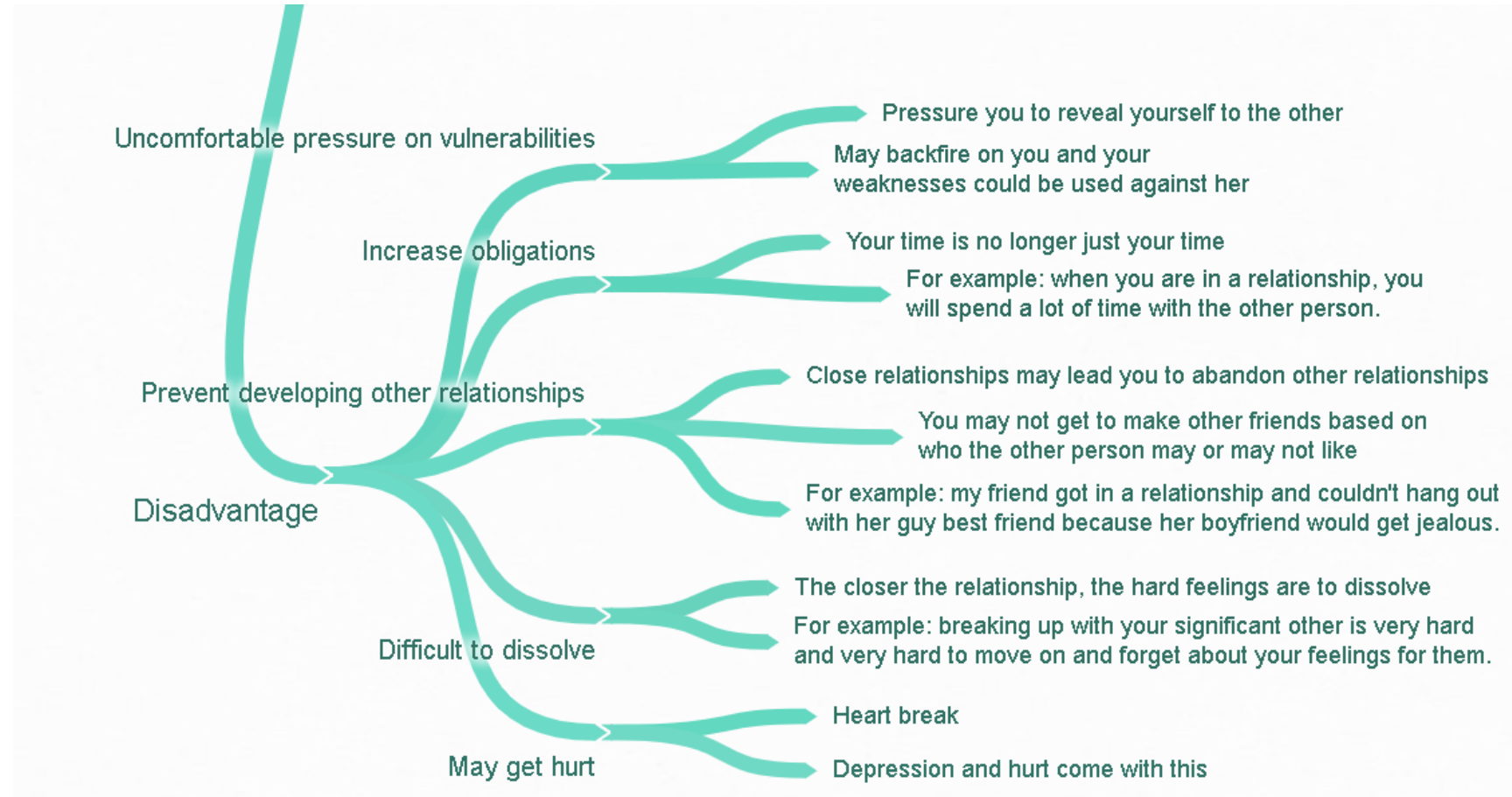
- **Loyalty**
- **Support**
- **Trust**
- **Mutual respect**
- **Reciprocation**
- **Love (Close Relationships)**



# Benefits of Interpersonal relationships



# Disadvantages of Interpersonal relationships



# Stages of Interpersonal Relationships

- Acquaintance
- Build-up
- Continuation
- Deterioration
- Ending

# Relationship Stages



Process	Stage	Representative Communication
Coming Together	Initiating	“My name’s Rich. It’s nice to meet you.”
	Experimenting	“I like to cook and refinish furniture in my spare time. What about you?”
	Intensifying	“I feel like we’ve gotten a lot closer over the past couple months.”
	Integrating	(To friend) “We just opened a joint bank account.”
	Bonding	“I can’t wait to tell my parents that we decided to get married!”



Coming  
Apart

Differentiating	“I’d really like to be able to hang out with my friends sometimes.”
Circumscribing	“Don’t worry about problems I’m having at work. I can deal with it.”
Stagnating	(To self) “I don’t know why I even asked him to go out to dinner. He never wants to go out and have a good time.”
Avoiding	“I have a lot going on right now, so I probably won’t be home as much.”
Terminating	“It’s important for us both to have some time apart. I know you’ll be fine.”

- **Initiating stage:** People size each other up and try to present themselves favorably.
- **Experimenting stage:** People exchange information and often move from strangers to acquaintances.
- **Intensifying stage:** we indicate that we would like or are open to more intimacy, and then we wait for a signal of acceptance before we attempt more intimacy.
- Includes creation of nicknames, inside jokes, and personal idioms; increased use of *we* and *our*; increased communication about each other's identities (e.g., "My friends all think you are really laid back and easy to get along with"); and a loosening of typical restrictions on possessions and personal space (e.g., you have a key to your best friend's apartment and can hang out there if your roommate is getting on your nerves).

- **Integrating stage:** Two people's identities and personalities merge, and a sense of interdependence develops.
- "Let's invite..."
- Opening a joint bank account
- **Bonding stage** includes a public ritual that announces formal commitment. These types of rituals include weddings, commitment ceremonies, and civil unions.

- **Differentiating stage:** Communicating the differences becomes a primary focus. Differentiating is the reverse of integrating, as *we* and *our* reverts back to *I* and *my*.
- **Circumscribing stage:** Communication decreases and certain areas or subjects become restricted as individuals verbally close themselves off from each other. They may say things like “I don’t want to talk about that anymore” or “You mind your business and I’ll mind mine.”



- **Stagnating stage:** The relationship may come to a standstill, as individuals basically wait for the relationship to end. Outward communication may be avoided, but internal communication may be frequent.
- For example, a person may think, “There’s no need to bring this up again, because I know exactly how he’ll react!” This stage can be prolonged in some relationships. Parents and children who are estranged, couples who are separated and awaiting a divorce, or friends who want to end a relationship but don’t know how to do it may have extended periods of stagnation.

- **Avoiding stage:** It may be a way to end the awkwardness that comes with stagnation, as people signal that they want to close down the lines of communication. Communication in the avoiding stage can be very direct—“I don’t want to talk to you anymore”—or more indirect—“I have to meet someone in a little while, so I can’t talk long.”

- **Terminating stage:** This stage of a relationship can occur shortly after initiation or after a ten- or twenty-year relational history has been established. Termination can result from outside circumstances such as geographic separation or internal factors such as changing values or personalities that lead to a weakening of the bond.
- Communication messages can be “We’ve had some ups and downs over our three years together, but I’m getting ready to go to college, and I either want to be with someone who is willing to support me, or I want to be free to explore who I am.
- “I think it would be best if we don’t see each other for the first few months, but text me if you want to.

# Types of abuse in a relationship

- **Physical abuse:** hitting, kicking, slapping, choking, punching, hair pulling, shoving, and physically restraining.
- **Emotional/Psychological abuse:** belittling, constant criticism or putting down, making threats.
- **Sexual abuse:** unwanted touching, forced sex, degrading sexual comments.

- **Spiritual abuse:** not allowing a person to practice their religion, not able to go to their place of worship.
- **Financial abuse:** controlling finances, unreasonable expectation of goods for funds provided, and the denial of funds to purchases necessities such as food and medication.

# Healthy Relationships

Open Communication	Feeling left out	Safety	Comparing yourself	Respecting differences
Dependence	Trust	Dishonesty	Problem-solving	Compromising
Control	Balancing relationship and self-care	FREE SPACE	Non-judgmental	Focusing on strengths
Jealousy	Supporting goals	Working together not against each other	Blaming	Understanding boundaries
Taking time to learn about one another	Having some of the same interests	Ignoring	Being nervous to talk about your feelings	Keeping promises

## Healthy

A healthy relationship means both you and your partner are:

- Communicating
- Respectful
- Trusting
- Honest
- Equal
- Enjoying personal time away from each other
- Making mutual choices
- Economic/financial partners

## Unhealthy

You may be in an unhealthy relationship if your partner is:

- Not communicating
- Disrespectful
- Not trusting
- Dishonest
- Trying to take control
- Only spending time together
- Pressured into activities
- Unequal economically

## Abusive

Abuse is occurring in a relationship when one partner is:

- Communicating in a hurtful or threatening way
- Mistreating
- Accusing the other of cheating when it's untrue
- Denying their actions are abusive
- Controlling
- Isolating their partner from others







# Signs of a healthy relationship

- **Respect:** Understand that others have their own emotions, thoughts and feelings.
- Respect is to listen to one another, support each other's careers, hobbies, and interests.
- It is also to give each other space when needed, and value each other's needs and feelings, as well as speaking kindly to and about one another.

- **Trust:** Trust issues are common these days due to the world being littered with toxic behavior (only 31% of us trust each other on average).
- This does not mean that people who have been hurt badly and therefore have trouble trusting automatically make for unhealthy relationships.

- **Open communication:** Real and genuine communication leads to emotional connections.
- Communication is about honesty and talking openly about your feelings without fear.
- If one party is unhappy about something, then the other should listen and try to empathize, talking rationally and with understanding.
- We stay connected through communication, it is absolutely vital to building strong relationships.

- **Equality:** In a healthy relationship, both partners should be equally heard and have their needs met.

# Life Positions

Attitude toward Oneself

Positive

Negative

I'm OK —  
You're not OK

I'm OK —  
You're OK

I'm not OK —  
You're not OK

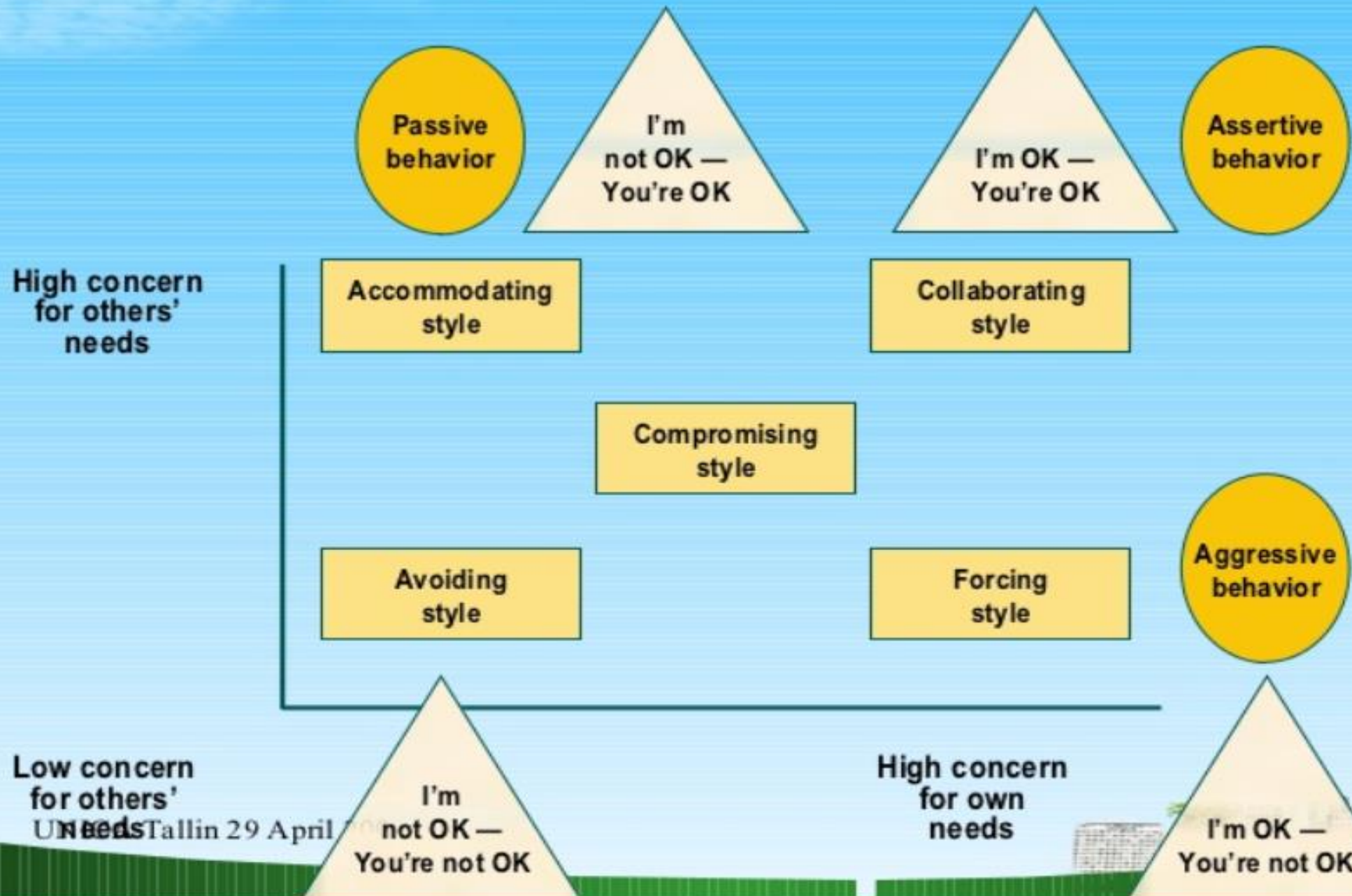
I'm not OK —  
You're OK

Negative

Positive

Attitude toward Others

# Management Conflict Styles



Low concern for others' needs

UNIVERSITY OF TALLIN 29 April

High concern for own needs

# How to build a healthy relationship

- **Communication:** Communication in a healthy relationship means listening, not just talking.
- Listening is also communication.
- Hearing what your partner wants and needs out of the relationship helps you do what you can for the person you love, and vice versa.
- Once you know your needs, and their needs, you can both work together as a team to ensure both of your needs are met, thus creating more happiness and minimal conflict.



# Interpersonal Skills/ Facilitation Skills

listening



language &  
communication

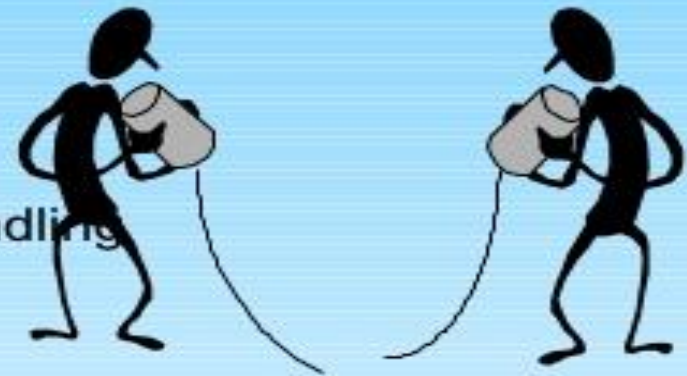
? questioning



\* conflict handling



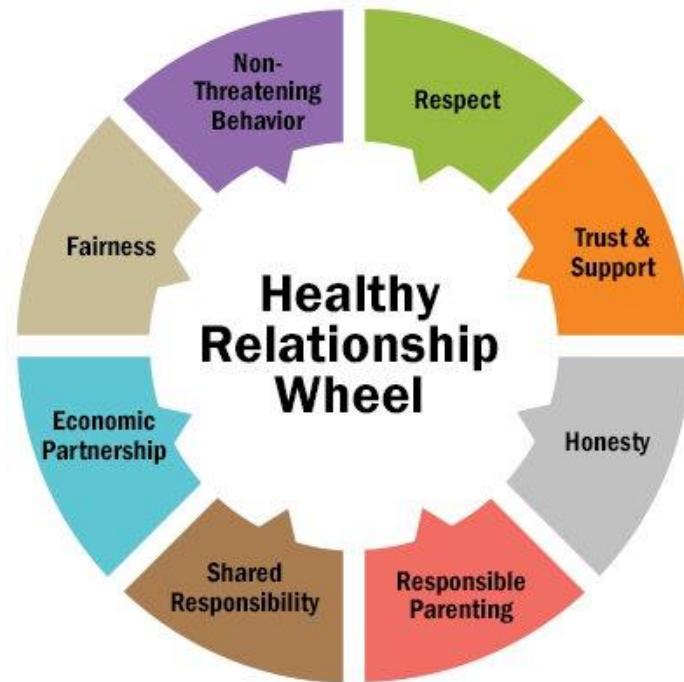
using  
feedback



- Spend quality time together
- Give and take in your relationship
- Realistic expectations
- Stay connected
- Accept and celebrate differences
- Give people your time
- Manage mobile technology
- **Develop empathy:** *"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."*

- **Playfulness or light heartedness**
- **Teamwork**
- **Identify your relationship needs**
- **Develop your People Skills**

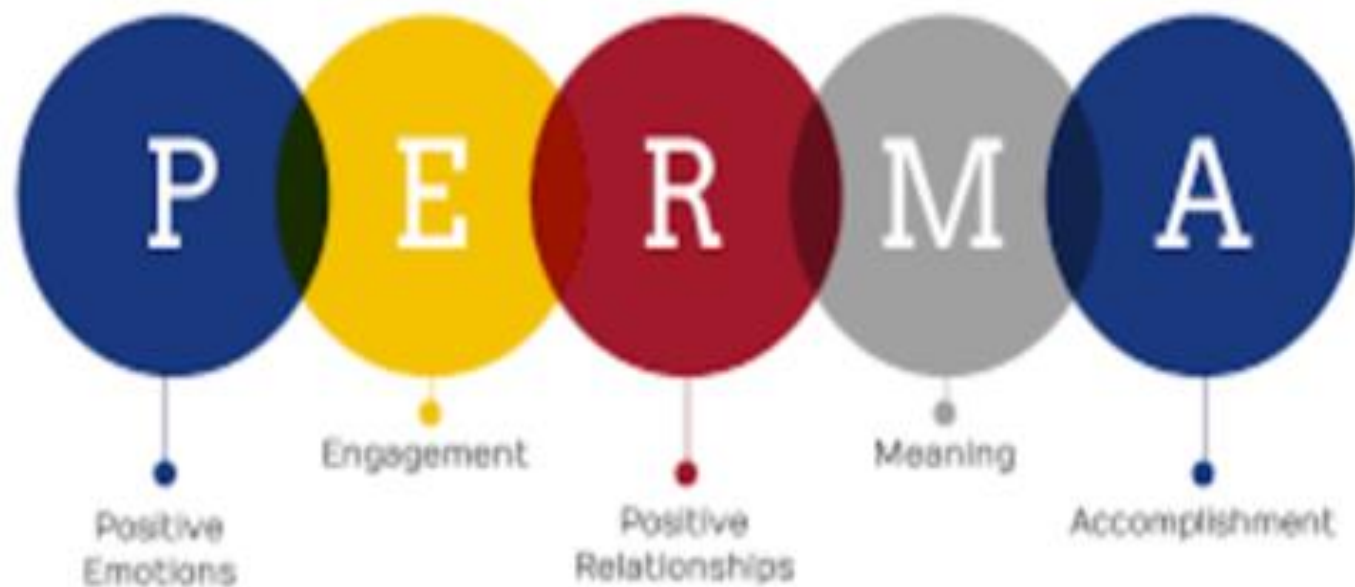




# Red flags

- **Criticism**
- **Controlling behavior: sign of abusive behaviour**
- **Distance**
- **Lack of conflict resolution**

# KEY to Well-Being



- *By building positive relationships with others, we will be happier and more fulfilled and feel more supported, supportive, and connected.*