Healthy, Unhealthy or Abusive?

Where does my relationship sit?

What this is

Relationships aren't simply good or bad. They sit on a spectrum from **healthy** to **unhealthy** to **abusive**, and can move along it. Unhealthy patterns can often improve with effort from both people. Abuse is different: it's about one person gaining **power and control** over the other, and it is never the victim's fault. Abuse can happen in any relationship, at any age, and to any gender or orientation.

	Healthy	Unhealthy	Abusive
Talking	You talk openly and feel heard	One of you avoids issues or shuts down	You're afraid to speak up, or punished for it
Respect	You value each other's opinions and differences	There's frequent criticism or name-calling	You're humiliated, insulted or degraded
Trust	You trust each other without checking	There's jealousy or checking up	Your phone, location or messages are monitored
Independence	You both have friends and time apart	Time apart causes arguments	You're cut off from friends and family
Decisions	You decide together	One of you usually decides	One person controls everything
Money	Money is shared fairly or openly agreed	Money causes secrecy or resentment	Money is withheld, or you're kept from working
Sex	Both freely choose, and no means no	One feels pressured sometimes	Sex is forced, coerced or used as punishment
Conflict	You disagree without fear	Fights get nasty or go unresolved	There are threats, breaking things, hitting or pushing

Forms of abuse

Physical (hitting, pushing, choking, restraining) · **emotional and verbal** (insults, threats, humiliation, gaslighting) · **sexual** (any unwanted sexual act, including in marriage) · **financial** (controlling money, debt in your name) · **digital** (tracking, sharing images, constant messages) · **coercive control** (a pattern of rules, isolation and intimidation, even without violence). In South Africa, all of these are recognised as domestic violence under the Domestic Violence Act.

Based on the relationship spectrum (loveisrespect) and coercive control (Stark, 2007).

My reflection

Where does your relationship sit for each area? This is private.

	Healthy	Unhealthy	Abusive	Not sure
Talking	☐	☐	☐	☐
Respect	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trust	☐	☐	☐	☐
Independence	☐	☐	☐	☐
Decisions	☐	☐	☐	☐
Money	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sex	☐	☐	☐	☐
Conflict	☐	☐	☐	☐

What did I notice?

What would I like to talk about in session?

If any of the **abusive** column fits, please tell me. You're not alone and you don't have to decide anything right away. **Help is available, 24 hours, free:** GBV Command Centre 0800 428 428 (or dial *120*7867# for a call back) · Stop Gender Violence Helpline 0800 150 150 · Police 10111 · Emergency from a cellphone 112.

Based on the relationship spectrum (loveisrespect) and coercive control (Stark, 2007).