



Five Truths about Dating at a Distance



Dating at a distance can be challenging for relationships. Even if your relationship is healthy, there may be times when conflict arises or you feel disconnected from your partner. Here are ways you can be intentional about making your distance relationship a healthy one, based in consent and respect and free from control.

1. Respect that your partner may have interests and friendships outside of the digital space.

- a. Even if you and your partner text or video call often, they may not always be available. In healthy relationships, partners are trusting of each other and value autonomy. If they are not able to connect when you hope or they take time for other important people in their lives that interest them, offer understanding and support.

2. Sharing your location should always be a mutual choice, not a requirement.

- a. There are many reasons someone would want to share their location with a partner. It could be for safety, accountability, or keeping up with busy schedules. It may also be temporary, or time/activity-specific. No matter the reason, sharing locations should be a choice for everyone involved.

3. Keep intimate moments private and free from pressure.

- a. When dating at a distance, partners may rely heavily on digital media to have intimate moments. This can include video chatting or sending pictures or texts. Just as you would IRL, always ask for consent before sending sexual images or videos and do not pressure the other person to send something to

you. Don't make assumptions about expectations. Have a conversation about what is comfortable for each person. Lastly, always keep content that is shared with trust private.

4. Open communication is key when conflict arises.

- a. If your relationship depends on technology to stay connected, having open and honest communication can help resolve conflict. Text messages don't always capture tone or intention. It may be helpful to have a conversation over video or voice note. If you need space, be honest with your partner and set a time to pick the conversation back up.

5. Be careful and intentional with social media.

- a. For some, seeing couples who spend a lot of time together in-person can create pressure to have more face time with their partner. For others, social media is a way to bond and develop more security in their relationship. Regardless of how you use social media, keep in mind that everything is not always as it seems. If you are feeling insecure about social media or your relationship, have a conversation with your partner.

This project was supported by Grant No. 15JOVW-21-GK-02255-MUMU awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice