

# How Do I Know My Partner Will be Faithful?



Trust in a relationship is key to its success. Most people do not automatically trust someone they do not know. They often determine trust by giving a little at the beginning of the relationship, observing behavior, and then giving or rescinding it, based on their perception of the person's behavior. According to "Assessments of Trust in Intimate Relationships and the Self-perception Process," in *The Journal of Social Psychology* (reference below), for intimate partners to progress toward feeling fully secure in the longevity of a relationship, fundamental traits need to be exhibited. Two of those traits are predictability and dependability, which lead to faith in the survival of the relationship.

Predictability means that in any given situation, you have an idea of how your partner will respond. The article suggests that this knowledge is gained by a series of observations and behavioral responses. As a partner follows through with promises, the other person in the relationship can determine

if he or she feels there is consistency in the behavior. Feeling as if we know what to expect is one way to build trust. Conversely, if a partner shows a lack of consistency in what he or she says and does, this can erode the base foundation of a trusting relationship. Once predictability is proven, a couple can move toward establishing dependability.

Dependability in a relationship means you can count on your partner to be reliable and trustworthy. This includes being willing to admit mistakes and always being truthful, including in interactions with others. Saying what you mean and meaning what you say are part of being truthful. However, there may be times when your partner needs to make a change to plans. Their willingness to communicate about the change is imperative.

Our own past experiences can influence how we perceive behaviors. A breach of trust in a past relationship can color the way we interpret behaviors in the present. Open communication about your thoughts and feelings is vital to establishing a trusting relationship.

Use the following questions to explore trust in your intimate relationship.

- Does my partner keep promises?
- Does my partner tell me about needed changes to a plan?
- More often than not, is my partner's behavior in our relationship positive?
- Do I know what to expect from my partner in most situations?
- Do I feel physically, mentally, and emotionally safe with my partner? Why?

If you are still uncertain whether or not you can trust your partner, explore your past experiences and behaviors that

caused you concern, and determine why. Talk with your partner about your concerns. If you do not feel comfortable discussing them, seek out a licensed therapist to help explore your experiences and thoughts.

## Reference

· Zak, A. M., Gold, J. A., Ryckman, R. M., & Lenney, E. (1998). Assessments of trust in intimate relationships and the self-perception process. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 138(2), 217–228.  
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By: Eva Timothy, Extension assistant professor, Eva.Timothy@usu.edu, 435-864-1483