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MOSAIC MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

6 *Green Flags for new Relationships*



HAVE YOU FOUND THE ONE?

We're all well-versed in the warning signs of a bad partner, but what are the signs that you've found a keeper? We asked marriage therapists across the country to share a few little green flags that you've struck luck with your new boo. See what they said below.

1. THEY'RE THE FIRST PERSON YOU WANT TO SHARE GOOD — OR BAD — NEWS WITH

"When you've found a person you consider your lifelong mate, you want to share all the best and worst news with them because you know they'll celebrate with you or provide the support to get through the rough times," said said Ryan Howes, a psychologist in Pasadena, California. "If they're your first go-to with this news, it means you feel safe to share the most intimate parts of yourself with them."

2. YOU'RE THE REAL, AUTHENTIC 'YOU' AROUND THEM

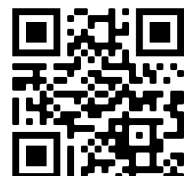
"You don't have to try too hard to impress them because you know they adore you no matter what," said Shannon Chavez, a psychologist and sex therapist in Los Angeles.

"You can be hanging out in your pajamas all day and they remind you how beautiful you are and how much they love spending time with you. They notice the small things that are truly who you are and they appreciate them."

3. THEIR COMMUNICATION SKILLS ARE TOP-NOTCH, EVEN WHEN LIFE IS CRAPPY

A good partner knows that communication really is the cornerstone of a healthy relationship: They're consistent with calls and texts when you're apart and are tuned in and engaged during conversations. A great partner keeps those A+ communication habits up even when the two of you inevitably butt heads. Instead of stonewalling or running away from conflict, they want to see it through with you.

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4. THEY'RE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO DO SOME THINGS YOUR WAY WITHOUT BEING RESENTFUL, BLAMING OR THINKING THEY'VE 'LOST'

All couples fight — in fact, it would be unhealthy if you didn't argue here and there. Couples with sticking power have arguments, but in the midst of the fight, they keep one thought firmly in mind: We're on the same team.

"Anyone can 'go along to get along,' but a healthy and secure person can let go or try things in a new way out of curiosity or generosity," she said. "There's no grudges. No keeping score."

And when they are wrong on the issue, they're comfortable admitting it, said Benjamin Gallenson, a counselor at Framework Associates, a therapy practice in Santa Monica, California.

"It's a good sign for the relationship when both partners can recognize their own shortcomings," he said. "It's even better when both partners have the ability to let go of their ego and defenses and admit fault. Introspection like that is unique."



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5. YOUR CLOSE FRIENDS ARE BIG FANS

Your best friends have had a front-row seat to your dating life: They've seen the good, the bad and the ugly during your dating app days. They know what unhealthy relationship patterns you're trying to nip in the bud. That makes them uniquely qualified to give their opinion on your new partner and the impact that person has on you.

"Old friends know your dirty laundry and have a perspective on you that predates the life you currently live," he explained. "They'll know whether your current mate is an improvement on your relationship trajectory or a regression."

Early on in your relationship, ask yourself this: Are you confident that your new S.O. will get your friends' stamp of approval or are they going to tell you you're sliding back into your old ways with them?

6. YOU'RE PROUD TO CALL THEM YOUR PARTNER

At the end of the day, you're proud to have this person by your side — and they feel exactly the same way about you, said Kathleen Dahlen deVos, a psychotherapist based in San Francisco.

"Whether it's their dedication to their career, passion for volunteer work, commitment to friends and family or the knowledge that you could take them anywhere and they could hold their own, you are proud to know this person and to have them by your side," she said.



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