

## Empowerment Resource for Episode 14: Avoiding Toxic Relationships

### 📌 Understanding Toxic Relationship Patterns

Toxic relationships often follow predictable patterns that can leave you feeling drained, manipulated, and unsure of yourself. Recognizing these patterns is the first step to protecting your well-being.

### 🚩 Common Red Flags in Toxic Relationships:

**Love Bombing:** Over-the-top flattery and attention at the beginning, creating an intense bond quickly.

**Boundary Violations:** Ignoring your needs, making you feel guilty for saying "no."

**Gaslighting:** Making you doubt your reality by denying things they said or did.

**Control and Possessiveness:** Dictating your actions, isolating you from friends and family.

**Blame-Shifting:** Refusing accountability, making everything seem like your fault.

**Intermittent Reinforcement:** Alternating between affection and mistreatment, keeping you hooked in a cycle of hope and confusion.

## ✍ Reflection Journal Prompt

💡 Think about a past or current relationship. Have you noticed any of these red flags?

Write down a time when you felt confused, guilty, or responsible for someone else's emotions.

How did their actions make you feel?

Looking back, what warning signs do you see now that you may have overlooked at the time?

## 🔧 Interactive Activity: Your Relationship Checklist

Use this Personal Relationship Checklist to evaluate whether a connection is healthy or potentially toxic. For each question, answer YES or NO honestly.

- ✓ Does this person respect your boundaries?
- ✓ Do you feel safe expressing your emotions around them?
- ✓ Do they take responsibility for their actions, or do they blame others?
- ✓ Do they uplift you, or do they criticize and put you down?
- ✓ Do they support your personal growth and independence?
- ✓ Do they communicate openly and honestly with you?

If you answered 'NO' to multiple questions, it might be time to reassess the relationship. You deserve to be in relationships that honor and support your well-being.

## **How to Protect Yourself from Toxic Relationships**

If you recognize toxic patterns in your relationships, here are steps you can take:

**Trust Your Intuition:** If something feels off, it probably is. Listen to your gut feelings.

**Set Firm Boundaries:** Clearly state what behaviors you will and won't tolerate.

**Detach Emotionally:** Reduce your emotional investment in people who constantly hurt you.

**Surround Yourself with Safe People:** Seek out supportive friends, family, or a therapist who understands your experience.

**Prioritize Your Healing:** Focus on your personal growth, self-care, and emotional well-being.

**Know When to Walk Away:** If someone continually disrespects your boundaries, it's okay to distance yourself.

## 💬 Affirmations for Healthy Relationships

Repeat these affirmations to remind yourself of your worth:

- ✨ "I deserve relationships that uplift and support me."
- ✨ "I trust my intuition to guide me toward safe and healthy connections."
- ✨ "I am strong enough to walk away from toxicity and choose peace."
- ✨ "I honor my boundaries because they protect my well-being."
- ✨ "I am not responsible for fixing others; I am responsible for protecting my peace."



### Action Step

This week, commit to one action that will help you move toward healthier relationships.

👉 What's one boundary you need to reinforce?

Write it down and practice stating it with confidence.



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