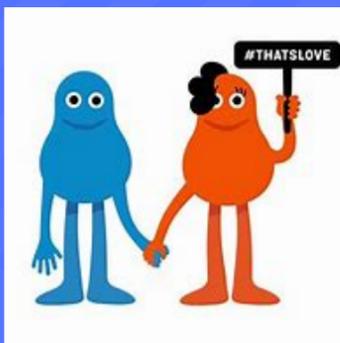


# NAVIGATING LONG DISTANCE RELATIONSHIPS

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## Types of Relationships



There are many types of relationships, and we often just think of relationships as romantic ones. Still, this term can be used to describe the relationship we have with ourselves, our friends, monogamous relationships, polyamorous relationships, casual, formal committed, and open relationships, and our overall relationship with everything around us.

## Grieving the Loss of our Normal



Many times, we think to grieve is only to focus on the loss of a person. Still, we mourn the loss of many things such as loss of closeness with a friend, family member, partner, loss of routine, loss of plans, vacations, and time planned to be together, loss of planned community events, etc. This means that we go through all the emotions of grief with these losses as well (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance). And remember we do not all grieve in the same way, and we do not go in the stages in order.

## Communication



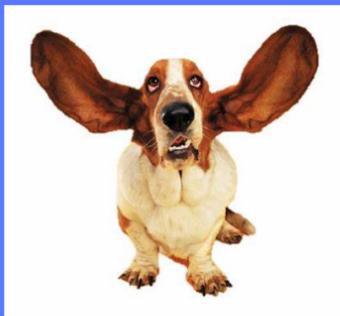
Communication is key. It is how we make sure that our needs and wants are heard and respected. When we are communicating, we want to make sure we actively listening and being direct with our communication. a great way to do this is by using "I" statements and taking ownership and responsibility for our feelings by being specific and open.

## 5 Love Languages



Love languages are ways that we receive love, and it is different for each of us. The 5 love languages are words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, and physical touch. We all express and receive love in different ways. Learning your love language and the love language of others around you can help you create a stronger bond with yourself and with others around you.

## Active Listening



We listen for many reasons, for enjoyment, to understand, to learn, and to gather information. However, when we are talking to one another it is important that we use our active listening skills to ensure that we are being present in our conversations. When we are actively listening, we are paying attention, showing that we are listening, providing feedback not judging the other person, and responding appropriately.

## Creating Goals for your Relationships



When we create goals it helps us stay on track and one way to do that is by creating SMART goals for yourself and for your relationships by creating fun activities that you can do to make sure that you are attending to your love languages. SMART goals are Specific, measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. For example: create a date when you can have a virtual dinner with friends or create a date where you are taking care of your own needs like taking the time to mediate or going to therapy.