

Child & Adolescent Sexual Development: Learning to Love

Grades 11 and 12, Lesson #6

Time Needed

One to three class periods ...
one for activities 1-3; one for activities 4-5 and 7-8; one for a panel

Student Learning Objectives

To be able to...

1. Name the two essential components of love (liking another and caring about his or her welfare).
2. List and describe at least four different kinds of love and describe a “healthy relationship.”
3. Describe at least five warning signs, concrete behaviors that show that a romantic relationship could be, or is, unhealthy (dysfunctional, abusive, codependent, unequal).
4. Evaluate the relative health of his or her own current or future romantic relationship.

Agenda

1. Administer the pretest and explain the lesson’s purpose.
2. Use the first question of the Love Worksheet, with discussion, to introduce the concept of love (definition, different kinds).
3. In a small group exercise, address the concept of “healthy vs. unhealthy relationships”.
4. Teach the concept of “concrete behavioral warning signs” using Love Cards in small groups, followed by large group debrief.
5. Summarize the lesson thus far.
6. OPTIONAL: Invite a panel.
7. Assign homework, reading the Relationship Test aloud.
8. Provide closure by linking this lesson to the parents-as-sex-educators lesson.

Materials Needed

Student materials:

- *Love and Sexual Exploitation Pretest* (1 per student)
- *The Love Worksheet* (1 per student)
- *Family/Friend Homework Exercise on "Love" - confirmation sheet* (½ sheet per student)
- *The Relationship Test* (8-sided self-assessment, 1 copy per student)

Classroom materials, equipment:

- *The Love Transparency* *
- *Healthy vs. Unhealthy Love Cards* (2 sets per class period)
- *Warning Sign* (8 per class period)
- Scissors (8 pairs)
- Red crayons or markers (8 wide ones)
- Scotch® tape

* Alternately, beginning in late 2006, all FLASH transparencies will be available as PowerPoint files on the FLASH web site: www.metrokc.gov/health/famplan/flash

Activities

1. Take five minutes to administer the pretest (unless you did it on day one of the unit). Correct it aloud. If the class' average score is below 4 out of 5 correct, we recommend beginning with remedial lessons on sexual exploitation, before you continue with this lesson. You may want to use lessons 9-12 of **9/10 FLASH**, especially lesson 10.

Correct answers are: 1.a, 2.c, 3.b, 4.a, 5.c

When you are ready to begin with this lesson on Love, explain its purpose and relevance:

*About a week ago, we spent a day or two looking at **child** sexual development, from birth to puberty. Then, we began examining **adolescent** sexual development by looking at three key issues ... issues that are very important to many people during adolescence:*

- a. *their **gender expression** (Am I feminine or masculine enough?) and*
- b. *their **sexual orientations** (Who am I attracted to and what does that mean about me?)*
- c. ***sexual discrimination** (What do I believe about it? What am I prepared to do about it?)*

*Figuring out these things about yourself is a critical task of adolescent sexual development. There is another critical task of adolescence and young adulthood: **learning to love**. That's what today's lesson is about. Each of us has to spend some time (usually a number of years) figuring out ...*

- *what love is and how you know it when you see it (this is especially hard for people who **didn't** grow up seeing much of it ... but it's not impossible)*
- *how to love ourselves (not in a conceited way, but in a mature, confident way)*
- *what we like and look for in others ... what kinds of people we can be friends with, what kinds we can love*
- *how to tell the difference between lusting (or being infatuated) and loving*
- *how to tell the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships ... and how to make healthy ones (This last task is one people often work at well into adulthood, and even elderhood.)*

Remember that at the beginning of the unit we said that sexuality was much more than "sex"? It is liking and loving and friendship and family. People put a lot of energy into their social selves — learning to build friendships and especially romantic love relationships during adolescence and young adulthood, probably more energy than at any other time of their lives except during infancy. So, today we are finishing our study of adolescent sexual development with a look at love.

Love is a sensitive topic; I want to ask everybody to remember our ground rules.

2. Hand out the Love Worksheet and ask people to spend a couple of minutes starting to fill out **just the first question**. Invite sharing and discussion, including disagreement as long as people respect the ground rules.

Try to reach consensus on a definition. If students' definitions include only some aspects of a definition, you might propose this one:

“Love is liking and enjoying someone, plus caring about them (their needs, their feelings, their safety, their general well-being).”

If you propose this definition, write “LIKING + CARING” on the blackboard. If you do, however, challenge part 2 of your own definition:

What about a baby then? It “likes” the parent — that’s an understatement, but it doesn’t yet care about her needs, feelings, etc. That kind of empathy isn’t possible until the baby figures out that it is even separate from the caregiving parent. Does it not love her?

No, we don’t think so; not yet. So far it needs her. **She** may love the baby, but so far, by the definition above, the baby simply needs her, rather than “loving” her. Later, as a child with a growing cognitive awareness of her separateness and her humanness, the child may **grow** to love her. The message: **Not everyone is capable of loving.**

Then, challenge part 1 of your own definition:

*What about your cranky, senile grandfather, then? You care about his needs, and you may remember **having** liked him in the past, but you haven’t enjoyed being around him in years. Do you love him?*

Well, not by the definition above. By that definition, you “care about” him, but don’t exactly “love” him, as you once did. Unless *remembering*-having-liked someone counts. Perhaps the definition needs to be revised, because you can still love someone you *have* loved, even when you hate his or her behavior and not enjoying being around him or her.

So, maybe the definition should be:

“Love is liking, enjoying someone (or remembering times when you have liked and enjoyed them) plus caring about them (their needs, their feelings, their safety, their general well-being).”

If the class has agreed on another definition with these two components (but in their own words), write their agreed upon definition on the blackboard. Otherwise, put the *Love Transparency* on the screen. Have students copy one of these definitions onto their *Love Worksheets*.

Brainstorm and discuss “kinds of love”. Have people jot four of the types they brainstorm onto their worksheets. The brainstorm should include:

- love of self,
- love of God or a “higher power”,
- love for a parent or other mentor-type person (grateful, appreciative love),
- love for one’s child, younger brother or sister, elderly parents or other person one takes care of (nurturing, responsible love),
- love for a friend to whom one is **not** sexually or romantically attracted (love between equals),
- romantic love (which may include all the above components, as well as “lust” or sexual attraction)
- and even love for a pet.

Also discuss which kinds may overlap. For example, if your parent was sick and needed your help, you might experience grateful and nurturing feelings at the same time. If your spouse were teaching you a foreign language, you might experience him or her as a beloved peer and mentor, both at the same time.

3. Introduce the concept of healthy vs. unhealthy “love” relationships (romantic relationships). Begin by dividing students into groups of 3 or 4. Ideally, there will be some coed groups and some all-male and all-female groups. Remind people of the ground rules.

Give students one instruction at a time (waiting until they finish one task, before you assign the next):

Within your groups, each person needs to choose a letter, so you’ve got person A, person B, person C, and maybe person D.

*Now, everyone close your eyes. Think of two people you know who have a very healthy relationship, the healthiest one you can think of (can be a parent and child, a couple “in love”, a pair of close friends, an aunt and nephew, **any** two people with a healthy loving relationship). — If you absolutely can’t think of any real people who you know personally with a healthy relationship, fictional ones (from TV or a book, perhaps) will do.*

(This last instruction is in recognition that children from dysfunctional families, especially if they have been socially isolated, simply may not have any healthy models.)

Now I am going to give Person A exactly one minute to explain why they chose that particular relationship ... Why you would describe that relationship as “healthy” ... What exactly you mean by “healthy”. You have to speak for the entire minute. Go.

After exactly one minute, call time. Person B gets the floor, and so forth. After all the members of the group have had a minute, the group should talk it over, and try to agree on a definition for a healthy relationship.

Allow no more than three minutes for this small group discussion. Then debrief, quickly, as a large group. Have them rattle off, without debate as many specific, concrete behavioral indicators as possible ... actions they have observed that let them know those relationships are healthy.

Repeat the process looking at unhealthy relationships:

- a. Students silently (eyes closed) identify an unhealthy relationship.
 - b. Each has a minute, in small groups, to describe the relationship and why they call it unhealthy.
 - c. The small groups try to agree on a definition of an unhealthy relationship.
 - d. The whole class brainstorms behavioral indicators of unhealthy relationships.
4. Optional (if you can allow a second or third day) ... Introduce the concept of warning signs by asking people to imagine this scenario:

Imagine that your best friend moved away. Your friend, T.J., may be male or female, and heterosexual, bisexual or homosexual; that doesn’t matter for this exercise. Six months later you get a phone call from T.J.

“I know it’s long distance but I just had to talk to you. Wait ‘til you hear this. You won’t believe it. I’m in love.”

So you chuckle at your friend’s excitement and you say, “OK, OK Tell me the three things you love most about this person.” Suppose your friend starts out,

‘Well, this may sound stupid but one thing I love about her (or him) is that she (or he) is patient with me. You know me; I’m late a lot. But she (or he) never crabs at me about it.’

*You might say to yourself, “**Alright!** Finally found someone who treats you right. Sounds like a **healthy sign** to me.” (Write “**HEALTHY SIGN**” on the blackboard.) But suppose, instead of talking about how patient this new love was, your friend started out,*

“Well, the thing I love the most is that he (or she) has a lot of time for me. He (or she) is not in school or working, so we can be together as much as I want.”

*You might say to yourself, “Uh-oh. No school **or** job?! This person could be a real loser. Maybe it’s no big deal ... maybe it’s just a vacation. But, does T.J. really know what he (or she) is getting into?” You might not say it out loud, unless your friend asked your opinion, but you might be thinking, “This **could be a warning sign** about a not so healthy relationship. I’m a little worried about T.J.” Or you might say to yourself, “There goes T.J. being stupid again.” (Write “**WARNING SIGN ... TROUBLE?**” on the blackboard.)*

I am going to give each group a couple of pages of statements your friend might make about why he or she is so in love.

NOTE: There are four 2-page sets of “Love Cards”. So, if you have eight groups of students, two groups will get copies of set “A” and so on. Sets “A” and “B” are about a female loved one. Sets “C” and “D” are about a male loved one. Give each group a 2- page set of cards, and this instruction:

In each set of Love Cards, there are 7 or 8 that ought to set off little “worry alarms” in your heads. Each one, by itself, may be no big deal. But they may be signs of a problem, if they are all that your friend sees in this new person, or if they get carried to an extreme.

Try to find 3 of these statements ... ones your group thinks could be warning signs, dangerous or shallow things to love about someone ... statements that, if T.J. chose those 3 you might be a little worried, or you might shake your head. Talk about why you’d be concerned.

As you work on this, I’ll be handing each group a roll of tape, a Warning Sign (notice it’s shaped like a stop sign) and a red marker (or crayon). While you talk, one of you can be coloring in your stop sign. When you have chosen at least three “warning signs” cut them out and tape them to your stop sign. Now, go ahead and try to find the warning signs among your Love Cards. I’ll give you five minutes.

As each group finishes taping their warning signs to their stop sign, have them choose a spokesperson who can explain why they decided they ought to be concerned about those three statements.

When most of the groups are finished, stop them all. Have the spokespeople from groups that **have** finished report to the class. Once they have reported, encourage discussion. Warning signs **we** hope your students will have identified are the following (If students haven't chosen at least one from each constellation, you should add them):

ONE-WAY STREET

cards 1, 24, 46, and 69

I love ... how much s/he does for me, all the things s/he gives me... that I enjoy doing things for him / her.

HOW COULD THIS BE A PROBLEM? It's only a problem if it's a one-way street. It is healthy to enjoy another person's attention, their little gifts and symbols of caring. It's healthy to take pleasure in doing for someone you love. It is not healthy, though, unless it is a mutual thing. Why not ask T.J. if it goes both ways?

LOOK WHO I'VE GOT

cards 5, 27, 50, and 72

I love ... how proud s/he seems to feel of our being a couple ... how proud I feel to be seen together.

HOW COULD THIS BE A PROBLEM? It's only a problem if it's one's **only** source of pride (if he or she feels otherwise inadequate), or if one's partner is only a showpiece. It's certainly not healthy to be in a relationship you are ashamed of. It is terrific and healthy to be proud of a relationship, as long as other people's approval isn't the **reason** for the relationship. Why not ask T.J. if they both enjoy walks alone in the park (or doing homework together), or if they only ever spend time with people who shower them with approval?

PEOPLE AS THINGS

cards 6, 38, 51, 52, and 83

I love ... his car ... his height ... that she's rich ... her legs ... her hair.

HOW COULD THIS BE A PROBLEM? These are all shallow things. Some people might consider it wrong or stupid to find the money and the car attractive, or to focus on body parts instead of whole people. But even those who **don't** consider it wrong (who agree, for example that it's fun to be in love with a tall man or a leggy woman) will probably concede that if that's all one finds attractive, the relationship is not likely to be very fulfilling. Liking these things may not be a problem; liking only these sorts of things, may be. Why not ask T.J. what else he or she loves about this person?

BETTER THAN ME

cards 8, 33, 45, 53, 78, and 90

I love ... his/her maturity ... that s/he knows how to do everything ... he puts me on a pedestal, says he doesn't deserve me ... she looks up to me, says she wonders what I see in her.

HOW COULD THIS BE A PROBLEM? Loving someone's maturity and talents is healthy. It's only a problem if it's a sign of a real difference in age, life experience, or self-esteem. These kinds of differences usually mean big disparities in personal and emotional power in the relationship. They set the less confident partner up for serious pain and disappointment ... even sometimes abuse. They set the more confident partner up for guilt, if they end the relationship ... and also sometimes for abuse (the less confident partner may become abusive to try to take back or equalize the power). Why not ask T.J. whether they feel like equals, whether they take turns deciding things and **both** admire the other?

MOMMY OR DADDY

card 14

I love ... how much he needs me, he's such a little boy.

HOW COULD THIS BE A PROBLEM? Seeing the child in one's partner can be a healthy thing, a sign that you are seeing behind the partner's public self, to the real person inside. But this statement could also show a condescending attitude, or a power disparity. Is it usually a relationship of equals, or is T.J. stuck in a parent-child dance with this person? Sometimes parent-child struggles in romantic relationships lead to abuse.

MINE ALL MINE

cards 18, 63 and 89

I love ... that s/he's jealous, doesn't like for me to talk to other girls/guys ... that she's a real lady and not a slut, that she doesn't flirt or come on to other guys.

HOW COULD THIS BE A PROBLEM? Experts disagree about whether a little jealousy is a healthy sign or not. But they are unanimous in their concern that an excess of jealousy, especially over a partner's platonic friendships, is a sign of low self-esteem and often precedes abusive behavior. Maybe you can help T.J. think of **healthier** symbols that this new love reciprocates his or her feelings.

POPULARITY JUNKIE

cards 35 and 80

I love ... that s/he is so well-liked, so popular.

HOW COULD THIS BE A PROBLEM? Enjoying the other person's success is healthy, including his or her success at social skills (at making friends, making acquaintances feel liked, etc.). When it's **not** healthy is when the partner's popularity is a commodity, like money or a car ... when you like them only for something they can give you: second-hand popularity as the partner of the star. Why not ask T.J. what about this person's popularity is so much fun? If it's fun to watch the person having fun at center-stage, more power to them both. If it's fun because T.J. gets invited places as this person's date, then it's worth finding out what **else** T.J. likes about this person.

MARLBORO MAN, STEPFORD WIFE

cards 44 and 59

I love ... that he's a real man, not a wimp, doesn't let people push him around ... that she let's me be the boss, wants to do what I want to do.

HOW COULD THIS BE A PROBLEM? Enjoying someone else's assertiveness could be healthy, but not when it becomes aggression and only if the partner can assert herself in the relationship, too. The problem with needing to "be a real man" is that our images of ultra-masculinity can be distorted; fantasy images that may be fun in movies, but that aren't safe or kind in real life. Experts agree that relationships based on rigid gender roles (whether they are heterosexual or homosexual), while certainly not guaranteed to lead to abuse, are at greater **risk** for it than relationships between people who feel like equals. That doesn't mean that one person can't enjoy dressing in ruffles, or that the other can't prefer football to sewing ... it just applies to how they feel about and treat one another.

LUST AS LOVE

cards 2, 25, 47, 70

I love ... how sexy and attractive s/he is ... how sexy and attractive I feel when I am with him/her.

HOW COULD THIS BE A PROBLEM? Being "turned on" by someone you love romantically is healthy, and most people would even describe it as an essential part of romantic love. It's only unhealthy if it's all that attracts you about the person, or if you confuse this "**lust**" or "**infatuation**" for love itself. It **isn't** love, by itself. It's just a nice **precursor** (it often happens early in a relationship, before you know a person well enough to love him or her) or an **enhancement** or **component** of love. Maybe you can find out if T.J. is confusing this feeling with love.

- Summarize the lesson thus far, by reiterating these key points from the discussion, if they've been raised, or by raising them, if students have not:

I've heard some of you say (or "Experts say...") that the best advice is:

- *Pay attention to a person's actions, not his or her words.*
 - *As you get to know the person, ask yourself if he or she is **capable** of loving. (Remember the baby we talked about earlier, who is capable of needing his or her parent, but not yet, able to truly love?)*
 - *A person is capable of loving another only if he or she*
 - *has healthy self-esteem (not conceit, but confident self-love: likes own self, knows own strengths and weaknesses, takes good care of self).*
 - *is cognitively and emotionally able to understand that others have needs, feelings (all babies and, sadly, some adults, are simply unable to understand this).*
 - *wants to (not only is **able** to, but does indeed, like and care about the other person).*
- Optional (if you can allow a second or third day) ... Have as guest speakers a panel of persons/couples who are, ideally, 18-25 and:

- a. in relationships of a year or longer duration, **and/or**
- b. in treatment/recovery from a relationship that included domestic violence.

If you choose option (a) above, we suggest trying to balance the panel, if possible, to include at least one couple who is abstaining from sexual intercourse (or who did, until marriage).

If you choose option (b) above, try to make sure that at least one panelist is male.

In either panel, try to provide diversity of race, religion and gender orientation.

7. Assign homework. People have 3 choices:

- They can finish the Love Worksheet, individually, in writing.
- They can finish the Love Worksheet with a family member as a Family Homework Exercise, aloud. Then, instead of turning in the worksheet for credit, they turn in only a Family Homework Confirmation Slip. (Hand these out.)
- Or, **if** they have a romantic relationship (boyfriend or girlfriend, husband or wife), and **if** they are willing to have someone — the partner or a family member — see their answers, they can take the Relationship Test, and have the partner or family member sign a Family Homework Confirmation Slip to attest that they completed it.

(They can also take the Relationship Test and keep their answers totally to themselves, but this would not be for credit.)

Hand out the Relationship Test. Explain that people are **not** to fill it out in class. It is too sensitive and personal. However, its reading level is fairly high. So rather than simply assigning it for homework, make sure you have it read aloud, first. Go up and down the aisles having people read the questions aloud, passing if they prefer not to read.

8. Close with a plea to the class, as future parents, linking this lesson back to the Child Sexual Development lesson:

*Most of you will be parents some day, if not biological ones, then parents in a more general sense. You know that young people who grow up watching healthy relationships at home have an advantage. They are more likely to choose partners who will treat them well, and more likely to know how to treat a partner well in return. Of course that **doesn't** mean that kids who've grown up watching adults hurt one another can't break the cycle. But they have to pay extra attention to the subtle, early clues of warning in their relationships ... and it's hard. I'm asking you to work at developing healthy relationships, if not for yourselves then for your children: what you show them is all they will know. Please, teach them how to love, by loving another adult really well.*

Love and Sexual Exploitation Pretest

NAME _____ DATE _____ PERIOD _____

DIRECTIONS: Check the best answer to each question.

1. The opposite of "exploitive" touch is:
 a. consenting touch
 b. adult touch
 c. illegal touch
 d. embarrassing touch
2. Suppose you're going with someone, and they say they want to have sex with you, and they change their mind at the last minute. If you get mad and make them do it, that's:
 a. persuasion
 b. adult
 c. illegal
 d. consenting
3. Forcing a person to have sex is called "rape," even if the two people know each other.
 a. true, but not if one has led the other on
 b. true, no matter what the situation
 c. false
4. Touching a person, in a sexual way, while he/she is drunk or high is an example of:
 a. exploitive touch
 b. fair touch
 c. persuasion and consent
 d. mutually consenting touch
5. Suppose two people want different kinds or amounts of touch, and they talk it over. They care about each other's feelings and they end up agreeing on touch they both feel good about. That's called:
 a. sexual assault
 b. sexual harassment
 c. persuasion and consent
 d. abstinence

NUMBER OF ANSWERS THAT WERE CORRECT TO BEGIN WITH (before you changed them): _____

(Please be honest. This won't affect your grade. I just need to know in order to plan lessons.)

Love Worksheet

NAME _____ DATE _____ PERIOD _____

DIRECTIONS: Answer each question with specific, concrete examples. Use extra paper, if needed.

1. What is love?

your definition: _____

your class' definition: _____

2. List four kinds of love:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

3. Think of two people you know who have a very healthy relationship -- the healthiest one you can think of (can be a parent and child, a couple "in love", a pair of close friends, an aunt and nephew, any two people with a healthy loving relationship).

a. Why do you describe their relationship as "healthy"? What do you mean by "healthy"?

- b. Still thinking about the same relationship, describe at least one specific thing each of them does to keep the relationship “healthy”. Describe one concrete behavior you have seen one of the people do, and then one concrete thing you’ve seen the other person do.

person 1: _____

person 2: _____

4. Think of two people you know who have a relationship you consider unhealthy ... the unhealthiest one you can think of (again, can be any two people, but don’t identify them by name or say how you know them).

Why do you describe their relationship as “unhealthy”? _____

What concrete behaviors have you seen that shows you it’s “unhealthy”? _____

5. Describe the kind of person who is able to love someone, in a healthy sense.

6. List five things someone could do, that would warn you that a relationship with this person would probably be unhealthy.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

Family/Friend Homework Exercise on "Love" - CONFIRMATION SLIP

FOR FULL CREDIT, THIS EXERCISE IS DUE: _____

Today you got a handout called the *Love Worksheet*. Read it and think about it. Talk it over with a family member or another trusted adult or with a close friend, boyfriend or girlfriend. Practice really trying to understand the other person's point of view. Then together, sign this homework confirmation slip. Return it for credit.

We have completed the LOVE WORKSHEET, aloud together.

Date: _____

Student's signature

signature of family member or friend



Family/Friend Homework Exercise on "Love" - CONFIRMATION SLIP

FOR FULL CREDIT, THIS EXERCISE IS DUE: _____

Today you got a handout called the *Love Worksheet*. Read it and think about it. Talk it over with a family member or another trusted adult or with a close friend, boyfriend or girlfriend. Practice really trying to understand the other person's point of view. Then together, sign this homework confirmation slip. Return it for credit.

We have completed the LOVE WORKSHEET, aloud together.

Date: _____

Student's signature

signature of family member or friend

Relationship Test

This test combines the results of several studies of healthy and unhealthy relationships.

If you are in a romantic relationship (if you have a boyfriend or girlfriend or if you are married) try asking yourself these questions. Nobody has to see your answers but you. You will not be turning them in. This test is just for you.

Circle your answers:

1. Can you describe specific things you love about him or her? Yes No
2. Does he or she have a lot in common with your "ideal partner"? Yes No
3. Is he or she willing for you to spend time by yourself, instead of being together every minute? Yes No
4. Is he or she glad you have other friends and interests?..... Yes No
5. Does he or she have other good friends and interests, besides you?.. Yes No
6. Is he or she pleased about your goals, plans and dreams? Yes No
7. Does he or she both talk and listen?..... Yes No
8. Does he or she ever ask your opinion?..... Yes No
9. Does he or she ever express an opinion?..... Yes No
10. Does he or she enjoy your successes, and let you enjoy them, instead of ignoring them or putting them down? Yes No

How many times have you said "yes" so far? Add them up:..... _____



The more "yes" answers in questions 1-10, the more likely it's a healthy relationship.

11. Has your partner ever bitten, hit, slapped, kicked, pushed, shoved, choked or punched you? Yes No
12. Has your partner ever thrown objects at you? Yes No
13. Has your partner ever left you somewhere that wasn't safe? Yes No
14. Has your partner ever refused to help you when you were sick, hurt or pregnant? Yes No
15. Has your partner ever held you to keep you from leaving or locked you out of the house? Yes No
16. Has your partner ever tried to get you to break a family rule or said you were immature for caring what your family thinks? Yes No
17. Has your partner ever forced you to ride with him or her when he or she had been drinking or was driving recklessly? Yes No
18. Has your partner ever threatened or hurt you with a weapon, or threatened to hurt your family or friends? Yes No
19. Has your partner ever made jokes or insulting remarks about people of your gender, religion, race, class, sexual orientation or family? Yes No
20. Has your partner ever punished you with the silent treatment (sulking, "splitting" in the middle of an argument)? Yes No
21. Has your partner ever put you down or told you to "shut up" in front of other people? Yes No
22. Has your partner ever called you names (especially "slut" or "dyke" if you are a woman, or "wimp" or "faggot" if you are a man) or told you that you are stupid, ugly, no good, etc.? Yes No
23. Has your partner ever insulted or driven away your friends or family?. Yes No



- 24. Has your partner ever taken your car keys, your money, or any other things you value or need? Yes No
- 25. Has your partner ever told you about “cheating on you” or accused you of “cheating” when you weren’t? Has he or she ever “come on” to someone else in front of you? Yes No
- 26. Has your partner ever lied to you or broken a promise? Yes No
- 27. Has your partner ever insisted that you dress in a more “sexy” way than you wanted? Yes No
- 28. Has your partner ever forced you or pushed you into doing something sexual that you didn’t want to do? Yes No
- 29. Has your partner ever broken, burned or torn something of yours in anger? Yes No
- 30. Has your partner ever gotten drunk or high and used it as an excuse for sex or to hurt you? Yes No

How many times have you said “no” in questions 11-30? Add them up: _____

Even one “yes” to these questions means you are being abused, by most standards. If you said “yes” to one or more of these, think about getting help from a trusted adult or an expert.



DIRECTIONS:

If you are female and your partner is male, answer questions 31-35.
 If you are male and your partner is female, answer questions 36-40.
 If you are both male, answer questions 41-45.
 If you are both female, answer questions 46-50.

- 31. Does he think women can be as smart and capable as men? Yes No
- 32. Does he like and admire the women in his family? Yes No

- 33. Does he show you affection even when he isn't saying he's sorry for something he's done, or asking for sex?..... Yes No
- 34. Do you mostly feel good about yourself when you are around him?.... Yes No
- 35. Could you feel proud about telling him you got accepted to your first choice of college or that you got a great new job? Do you trust that he would be truly happy for you? Yes No
- 36. Does she think men can be as gentle and caring as women? Yes No
- 37. Does she like and admire the men in her family? Yes No
- 38. Does she mostly feel good about herself, instead of always needing your approval? Yes No
- 39. Do you mostly feel good about yourself when you are around her? Yes No
- 40. Could you feel safe about telling her you walked away from a fight or that you cried about something? Do you trust that she would still respect you? Yes No
- 41. Is he proud of loving you and able to tell at least a few of the people who care about him?..... Yes No
- 42. Does he respect and admire any other gay men? Yes No
- 43. Does he mostly feel good about himself, and enjoy being a man? Yes No
- 44. Do you mostly feel good about yourself when you are around him?.... Yes No
- 45. Does he find anti-gay jokes offensive, rather than funny? Yes No
- 46. Is she proud of loving you and able to tell at least a few of the people who care about her? Yes No
- 47. Does she respect and admire any other lesbian women? Yes No
- 48. Does she mostly feel good about herself and enjoy being a woman? . Yes No
- 49. Do you mostly feel good about yourself when you are around her? Yes No
- 50. Does she find anti-lesbian jokes offensive, rather than funny? Yes No

How many times have you said “yes” in questions 31-50? Add them up: _____

FINISH THIS SENTENCE: So far, looking at my answers makes me realize ...

If you have had, or think you might ever have, penis-vagina intercourse in this relationship, or if this is someone you might marry, answer questions 51-55.

51. Have you talked about whether you want a pregnancy?
 And are you in agreement?..... Yes No sort of
52. If you have agreed that you want a baby, have you discussed how you will afford it and who will do which chores? ... Or if you have agreed that you don't want a baby right now, have you talked over what you will each do in terms of birth control? Yes No
53. No matter what they do to reduce risk, sometimes couples do have unplanned pregnancies (unless they abstain). Have you talked about what you think you would each want to do if an unplanned pregnancy started? And do you agree?..... Yes No sort of
54. **Guys:** Even if they think they would choose abortion or adoption, sometimes women change their minds. In case that happens, is this the person you would really want to be the other parent of your child? Even if you split up (or divorced)?..... Yes No
- Girls:** In case you did get pregnant and chose to raise the baby, is this the person you would really want to be the other parent of your child? Even if you split up (or divorced)? Yes No
55. **Guys:** Even if they think they would choose to raise a baby, sometimes women change their minds and decide on abortion or adoption. Could you live with those decisions, even if you disagreed?..... Yes No
- Girls:** If you did get pregnant and didn't feel you could raise a baby, are you prepared to have to choose abortion or adoption? Yes No

If you have had, or think you might ever have, any kind of intercourse (oral, anal or vaginal) in this relationship, answer questions 56-65.

56. Did you both get tested for HIV and other STDs before your first sex with each other? Or, if you haven't had sex yet, will you both be tested first? Yes No one of us
57. Has he or she accepted your right to use condoms or (for oral-vaginal or oral-anal sex) a dental dam? Yes No
58. Do you trust that he or she will tell you if he or she has, or later gets, symptoms of an STD? (Base your answer on whether he or she has been willing to talk about really hard, really personal issues in the past.) Yes No Not sure

- 59. Has he or she always paid attention to your feelings about touch and been willing to accept it when you have said “no” (without pushing, pouting, or any other pressure)? Yes No sort of
- 60. Can you tell each other, in words (not just body language) what you like and dislike when you touch ... even about simple things like kisses? Yes No
- 61. Do you have many of the same feelings about sexual touch (about what is fun, what is “yucky”, or whatever)? Or do you, at least, both know and care about the other person’s feelings?..... Yes No Not sure
- 62. Do you have mostly the same values about sexual touch (about what kinds are right or wrong, if any)? Or do you, at least, both know and respect the other person’s values? Yes No Not sure
- 63. Have you talked about what parts of your relationship are private and what parts you don’t mind being discussed with other people? Yes No
- 64. Have you talked about whether you both really do want sex or is it really one person’s choice? And, if you do both want it, do you have similar reasons?..... Yes No sort of
- 65. Do you both show your caring in ways other than sex ... not just in words, but in how you act and what you do?.....Yes No sort of

How many times have you said “yes” in questions 51-65? Add them up: _____

The more you said “yes”, the better.

Any “no” or “maybe” answers in questions 51-65 should be signs for concern. Are you risking your health, your future family, your future sex life? Is it worth it? Could you “go with” this person, but not have sex, or at least not intercourse? Could you wait until you know each other better, or until you are married? Or maybe this won’t ever be the right person. Is this relationship good for you? Is it what you want?





FINISH THIS SENTENCE: My answers to questions 51-65 make me realize...

What five adjectives would best describe your relationship? _____

Is this relationship good for you? both of you? _____

Is there anything you've learned about your relationship that you are happy about?
What? _____

Is there anything you discovered that you want to change about your relationship?
What? _____

Now comes what may be "the hard part" of this exercise: **do you want to talk about it with your partner** (boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife, etc.)? If so, you may **both** want to fill out the "test", first. Then go someplace private, where there won't be interruptions (phone, TV, etc.) Get a couple of cups of coffee, tea, or cocoa and take your time to really listen to one another. Good luck.

*Parts of this test were adapted with permission from **Getting Free**, by NiCarthy and **No is Not Enough**, by Adams, Fay, and Loreen-Martin.*

Love Transparency

LOVE (luv) n.
Liking, enjoying someone
(or remembering times when
you have liked and enjoyed
them), PLUS caring about
them ... their needs, their
feelings, their safety, their
general well-being.

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Love Cards

(SET A: 1-23)



1. One thing I love about him is ... how much he does for me, all the things he gives me.	10. One thing I love about him is... that he likes and gets along with my family.
2. One thing I love about him is... how sexy and attractive he is.	11. One thing I love about him is... how strong and capable he is.
3. One thing I love about him is... that I just enjoy being together, spending time together.	12. One thing I love about him is... how we can argue without trying to hurt each other.
4. One thing I love about him is... that I can be my real self with him. He knows the real me behind my public mask.	13. One thing I love about him is... how much he enjoys being with me, spending time with me.
5. One thing I love about him is ... how proud he seems to feel of our being a couple.	14. One thing I love about him is... how much he needs me. He's such a little boy in some ways.
6. One thing I love about him is... his car.	15. One thing I love about him is... how he doesn't put other people down or talk about them behind their backs.
7. One thing I love about him is... his brains.	16. One thing I love about him is... that he doesn't let me bully him. He stands up to me.
8. One thing I love about him is... his maturity.	17. One thing I love about him is ... that he gets just as excited as I do when I accomplish something. He doesn't tell me I'm conceited.
9. One thing I love about him is... how much we have in common.	18. One thing I love about him is .. that he's kind of jealous. He doesn't like for me to talk to other guys.

(SET A: 1-23) continued ... 

<p>19. One thing I love about him is ... that he isn't jealous and possessive. I can have other friends without his feeling left out.</p>	<p>22. One thing I love about him is ... that we enjoy doing the same kinds of things for fun.</p>
<p>20. One thing I love about him is... how much we share in terms of spiritual beliefs.</p>	<p>23. One thing I love about him is ... how good he is at _____ (cooking, fixing things, playing drums, whatever).</p>
<p>21. One thing I love about him is... that he is active in the community (volunteer work, politics, whatever).</p>	

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Love Cards

(SET B: 24-45)



24. One thing I love about him is... that I enjoy doing things for him. It makes me feel good.	33. One thing I love about him is... that he knows how to do everything!
25. One thing I love about him is... how sexy and attractive I feel when am with him.	34. One thing I love about him is... how he doesn't let me hurt myself, take stupid risks, put myself down.
26. One thing I love about him is ... that he lets me know the real him, the part of him the "public" doesn't see.	35. One thing I love about him is ... that he is so well-liked, so popular.
27. One thing I love about him is... how proud I feel to be seen together.	36. One thing I love about him is ... that he takes pride in looking good.
28. One thing I love about him is ... all the things he does for other people.	37. One thing I love about him is... that he cares about my feelings.
29. One thing I love about him is ... his sense of humor.	38. One thing I love about him is ... his height.
30. One thing I love about him is... that we feel like equals.	39. One thing I love about him is... that he understands my sadness or hurt or whatever I'm feeling.
31. One thing I love about him is ... that he likes and gets along with my friends.	40. One thing I love about him is ... how affectionate and romantic he is.
32. One thing I love about him is... how good I feel about myself when we're together (smart, mature, funny, whatever).	41. One thing I love about him is... that he is active in church (or synagogue, mosque, temple).

(SET B: 24-45) continued ...



<p>42. One thing I love about him is... that he is active in school activities (sports, music, whatever).</p>	<p>44. One thing I love about him is ... that he's a real man and not a wimp; he doesn't let people push him around.</p>
<p>43. One thing I love about him is ... that he thinks women can be as wise, organized, and strong as men.</p>	<p>45. One thing I love about him is ... he puts me on a pedestal; he sometimes says he doesn't deserve me.</p>

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Love Cards

(SET C: 46-68)

46. One thing I love about her is ... how much she does for me, all the things she gives me.	55. One thing I love about her is ... that she doesn't take me for granted. She appreciates things I do for her.
47. One thing I love about her is ... how sexy and attractive she is.	56. One thing I love about her is ... that she really cares about me. She even helped me stop smoking.
48. One thing I love about her is ... that I just enjoy being together, spending time together.	57. One thing I love about her is ... how we can argue without trying to hurt each other.
49. One thing I love about her is ... that I can be my real self with her. She knows the real me behind my public mask.	58. One thing I love about hers... how much she enjoys being with me, spending time with me.
50. One thing I love about her is ... how proud she seems to feel of our being a couple.	59. One thing I love about her is ... that she lets me be the boss. She wants to do what I want to do.
51. One thing I love about her is ... that she's rich.	60. One thing I love about her is ... how she doesn't put other people down or talk about them behind their backs.
52. One thing I love about her is ... her legs.	61. One thing I love about her is... that she doesn't let me bully her. She stands up to me.
53. One thing I love about her is ... her maturity.	62. One thing I love about her is... she gets just as excited as I do when I accomplish something. She doesn't tell me I'm conceited.
54. One thing I love about her is ... how much we have in common.	63. One thing I love about her is ... that she's kind of jealous. She doesn't like for me to talk to other girls.

(SET C: 46-68) - continued...



64. One thing I love about her is ... that she isn't jealous and possessive. I can have other friends without her feeling left out.	67. One thing I love about her is ... that we enjoy doing the same kinds of things for fun.
65. One thing I love about her is ... how much we share in terms of spiritual beliefs.	68. One thing I love about her is ... how good she is at (fixing things, cooking, playing drums, whatever).
66. One thing I love about her is ... that she is active in the community (volunteer work, politics, whatever).	

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Love Cards

(SET D: 69-90)



<p>69. One thing I love about her is... how much she does for me, all the things she gives me.</p>	<p>77. One thing I love about her is ... how good I feel about myself when we're together (smart, mature, funny, whatever).</p>
<p>70. One thing I love about her is... how sexy and attractive I feel when I am with her.</p>	<p>78. One thing I love about her is ... that she knows how to do everything!</p>
<p>71. One thing I love about her is ... that she lets me know the real her, the part of her the "public" I doesn't see.</p>	<p>79. One thing I love about her is ... how she doesn't let me hurt myself, take stupid risks, put myself down.</p>
<p>72. One thing I love about her is ... how proud I feel to be seen together.</p>	<p>80. One thing I love about her is ... that she is so well-liked, so popular.</p>
<p>73. One thing I love about her is... she's nice, but she doesn't let people walk all over her. She's not too shy to speak up.</p>	<p>81. One thing I love about her is... that she takes pride in looking good.</p>
<p>74. One thing I love about her is... her sense of humor.</p>	<p>82. One thing I love about her is... that she cares about my feelings.</p>
<p>75. One thing I love about her is... that we feel like equals.</p>	<p>83. One thing I love about her is... her hair.</p>
<p>76. One thing I love about her is ... that she likes and gets along with my friends.</p>	<p>84. One thing I love about her is... that she understands my sadness or hurt or whatever I'm feeling.</p>

(SET D: 89-90) – continued ...



<p>85. One thing I love about her is ...how affectionate and romantic she is.</p>	<p>88. One thing I love about her is... that she thinks men can be as responsible, caring and human as women.</p>
<p>86. One thing I love about her is... that she is active in church (or synagogue, mosque, temple).</p>	<p>89. One thing I love about her is... that she's a real lady and not a slut; she doesn't flirt or come on to other guys.</p>
<p>87. One thing I love about her is... that she is active in school activities (sports, music, whatever).</p>	<p>90. One thing I love about her is... she looks up to me; she sometimes says she wonders what I see in her.</p>

Warning Sign

