

CWK Marriage and Family:

Spotlight Marriage and Relationships

Lesson Title: Personal Beliefs in a Relationship

Grade Level: High School

Extension for: SEL Spotlight High School

Topic: Marriage and Family Project: Identifying Personal Attitudes, Beliefs and Values and how they Impact an Intimate Relationship

Essential Question: What values should be a consideration when choosing an intimate partner?

Materials and Preparation

- A resource for further reading and support can be found at www.loveisrespect.org website operated by the National Domestic Violence Hotline.
- Posters or poster sized pieces of paper
- Markers and writing utensils

Procedures

Review and restate session norms. These should remind students how to interact and communicate respectfully. The topic involves intimate relationships and should be discussed appropriately. Essential question should be prominently displayed.

[2-3 minutes]

Activity 1

Have students stand up and go to an open space in the room. This activity is a group building warm-up exercise called “Bus Stop”. Using tape, string or rope have two parallel lines on the floor far enough apart that the entire group can fit in between them. Facilitator is the “bus driver” and will give students several pairs of words. Students choose their preference and get off the “bus” on the side pointed to by facilitator. For example, the driver might say “pencil” and point to the left and “pen” and point to the right; students would then go to the side they prefer. The facilitator may use the following suggestions or come up with additional ones.

- Spend/Save
- Dog/Cat
- Train/Bus
- Sports/Movie
- Coke/Pepsi

Facilitator should do several times so that almost all students split up one time or another. Do not use personal characteristics such as hair color, every word pair should involve a choice each student makes.

Debrief with students by discussing that everyone has preferences and no matter how similar one person is to another there will always be differences of opinion and/or preferences.

[10-15 minutes]

Activity 2

Individual Reflection

Ask students the following questions. Give students time to think and possibly write down some answers or thoughts.

- In the “Bus Stop” activity, did other students that you have a lot in common with always make the same choice as you?
- In intimate relationships, couples usually have many things in common. Do you think that even with a partner that you share a great deal in common, that both of you will always have the same feelings and beliefs?

After students have reflected, have them share some thoughts. You may wish to read students’ comments aloud to the group to keep the comment anonymous and less emotionally charged.

[10 minutes]

Activity 3

Group Activity

Using your knowledge of students in the group, place students in groups of 2, 3 or 4.

In their groups ask students to brainstorm and write down things that they would value in an intimate (long-term) relationship. It may be helpful to mention that some of the “Bus Stop” word pairs can indicate values (such as spend/save) and other word pairs would not be examples of values (such as Coke/Pepsi). Point out that we are talking about values not necessarily common interests.

Once students have come up with their lists of values, have students rank order the values they think are most important in their groups. If there is not inter-group agreement that is okay, have students note that if they could not agree on the order of their lists.

After groups have completed their lists and rankings, have each group share out. After students have heard each group’s lists and rankings have students stand up and play “Agree, Disagree or Neutral”. Pick a value from one of the lists and how the group ranked its importance. Have students go to one side of the room if they agree with the importance of that value, the other side if they disagree and in the middle for neutral. Randomly choose students from each group to support their positions and allow students to move from

one group to another as they see fit. Keep picking values from lists to encourage student comments. Make sure that each student has spoken if at all possible.

It is to be expected that there will be some disagreement which the facilitator should use to encourage discussion about values. The goal is for students to see that values within relationships may not always match with their partner's values and respectful discussion if used to find common ground.

Facilitator should be mindful that abusive relationships are covered in other sessions and attempt to keep students focused on important values in a non-abusive relationship.

[20-30 minutes]

Conclusion:

Debriefing questions.

- What personal values are important when considering a partner in an intimate relationship?
- What values do you think are most important to consider when entering a potential intimate relationship?