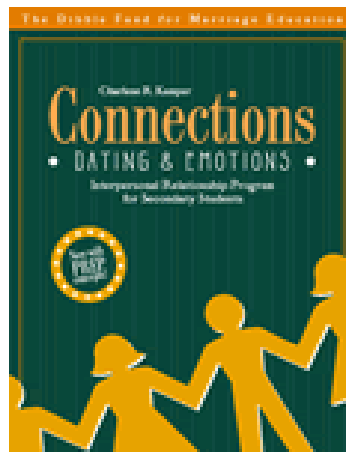


Sample Lesson

Connections: Dating and Emotions

By Charlene Kamper for The Dibble Institute



Grades 8-12

Length: 17 one-hour lessons

To order or for more information, go to

www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org

The Dibble Fund for Marriage Education

P.O. Box 7881

Berkeley, CA 94707-0881

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GOING OUT Lesson 6

Workbook Assignment

What Should I Say?

Overview This lesson will introduce the concept of self-disclosure within relationship. The participants will learn about four areas of awareness and how they affect the quality of the bond that develops between people.

- Objectives**
- ◆ Participants will learn how four areas of self-disclosure affect relationship.
 - ◆ Participants will evaluate their own comfort levels for self-disclosure.
 - ◆ Participants will identify components of communication within the four areas.
-

Vocabulary self-disclosure openness

- Key Concepts**
- Trust is the basis of self-disclosure.
 - Individuals must be willing and able to self-disclose at the same level in order for the relationship to progress forward.
 - Feeling comfortable with ones self is an important aspect of sharing with others.
 - People self-disclose more easily in an emotionally safe environment.
 - Genuine self-disclosure takes practice.
-

**Preparation for
Lesson** **Instructor will need:**

- Worksheet *What Should I Say?*
- 3x5 cards to distribute

Teaching the Lesson

Distribute a 3x5 card to each of the participants and ask them to write their name on it. Then ask them to write down three things about themselves that no one else in the room is likely to know about them. They should be instructed to choose information they are comfortable sharing because the cards will be read aloud to the group. Examples of personal information can include: shoe size, favorite movie, a childhood experience, etc.

- Collect the cards and shuffle them so they are distributed randomly before reading them.
- Select a card from the stack. Read it aloud but do not state the name of the participant on the card. After reading the items listed, ask the participants to try and identify the person in the room who wrote the card. Points or incentives can be given to participants who guess correctly.
- Read as many cards as the time allows before moving to the workbook lesson.

Questions :

1. How easy was it for you to think of things to share with the group?
2. How comfortable are you with letting others know things about you that they didn't know before?
3. Are you equally interested in getting to know more about someone else? Why might this help a relationship grow?

- Now ask the participants to turn to the workbook page entitled "*What Should I Say?*" Tell them they will be learning about something called the Johari Window. This exercise will introduce them to four areas of self-disclosure that affect closeness in a relationship. Each area is illustrated and explained on the first page of the lesson. Go over the information with the group and answer questions if they arise.

- Divide the participants into smaller working groups and ask them to decide together what kinds of personal information might be found in each of the quadrants. They can make a separate list as a group or they can write the information directly into the workbook. Allow about 15 minutes for this discussion and activity.

- Ask them to return to their individual seats to complete the rest of the assignment. They should evaluate honestly their own ability to self-disclose at the various levels in order to determine their readiness for close relationships with others. Instruct them to put in the lines of the

quadrants for the Johari Window *as they see themselves*. **Ending discussion:** Which areas are larger or smaller than the model? How might this distribution of willingness to self-disclose affect the quality of a relationship especially when two people don't match?

LECTURE NOTES:

Developing an emotional bond with another person requires trust that develops over time. Trust between friends or dating partners is the basis for self-disclosure, the process of allowing others to see more of one's inner person. But self-disclosure always involves the element of risk. One or both partners may be disappointed or lose interest if they do not like aspects of each other that are being revealed. Or, the partners may discover that they are not able to self-disclose at the same level. One partner may feel left out or vulnerable when the other partner is unwilling to self-disclose in the same way. When this happens, barriers begin to develop between partners. The inability of individuals to self-disclose at the same level may be an indication of deeper problems within the relationship.

The Johari Window was developed by Joseph Luft to illustrate awareness in human relationships. The lesson in the workbook was adapted from *Group Processes: An Introduction to Group Dynamics Third Edition*. The model is based on a concept of four quadrants that represent different aspects of self-disclosure in interpersonal relationships. Although it is a simplified visual for describing actual communication between people, it does offer an idea of how people in relationship share information.

Quadrant I – OPEN, is the area of free activity known to others and self. This is usually general information that is easily accessible to everyone. For instance: one's name, age, school, family, etc. This information is comfortable to talk about and opens the door for relationship to begin.

Quadrant II – BLIND, is an area where others see things but the individual is less aware of them. Things people are blind to may include: personal habits, personality characteristics, or motivations. Individuals may not be able to discuss these issues because they are not sensitive to them.

Quadrant III – HIDDEN, are things that are known by the individual, but are actively kept away from others. These things might include: past experiences, deeper feelings, future goals, etc. In the beginning, people are often less willing to share personally at this level because it does involve more emotional risk.

Quadrant IV- MYSTERY, are areas of self that neither the individual nor others are aware of. These areas might include: early childhood or family patterns that have been part of the person for a long time. It may also include behaviors or thought processes that are not obvious initially such as prejudice, or cultural factors, but do have an influence on the relationship.

Communication is the key to all levels of relationship. How well one is able to share thoughts and feelings at a meaningful level, does influence the quality of the relationship. The size of the quadrants will be different for different people. For some, the OPEN quadrant is where they like to communicate best. It is non-threatening; the information is at a surface level and does not involve much personal investment. As the relationship develops, more and more general knowledge about the individuals is revealed. But there will be problems if the communication stays at that level long term.

As Quadrant I gets larger, Quadrant III gets smaller. As more and more knowledge is gained between people the hidden areas reduce. The important element in communication, however, is helping people self-disclose in relatively similar ways.

The two areas of communication that require more work and maturity to understand are Quadrants II and IV. It takes effort to hide, deny or be blind to behaviors that interfere with the interactive process. Relationships that develop a strong trust between the people can begin exploring the deeper issues. When individuals feel emotionally safe with the other person, they are more willing to hear about and work on the weaker areas. It is important to note that change in one quadrant will affect all of the others. As individuals practice these awareness and communication skills, they will improve the likelihood that the relationships they choose will be successful.

WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

Building a relationship with another person requires both individuals to self-disclose. This can be difficult initially because there is always a threat that the other person may not like what is revealed and then reject us. For every person there is a *Personal* side and a *Private* side. Being willing to show others who you really are takes courage and practice.

The Johari Window is sometimes used to illustrate how individuals interact with one another. Notice that there are four areas that make up the diagram.

	Known to Self	Not Known to Self
Known to Others	Area of Free Activity OPEN	What Others See BLIND
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Quadrant I – OPEN

The area of free activity known to self and known to others.

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The area where others can see things in ourselves of which we are unaware.

Quadrant III – HIDDEN

The area represents things that we know about ourselves but do not reveal to others.

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The area where neither self nor others are aware of certain motives and behaviors. Eventually some of these things become known and show how they were influencing relationships all along.

From *Group Processes: An Introduction to Group Dynamics* 3rd ed., 1984 Mayfield Publication. Reprinted by permission of Joseph Luft.

Exercise: Working together as a group, list categories of information that might be found in each of the quadrant areas.

Open	Blind
Hidden	Mystery

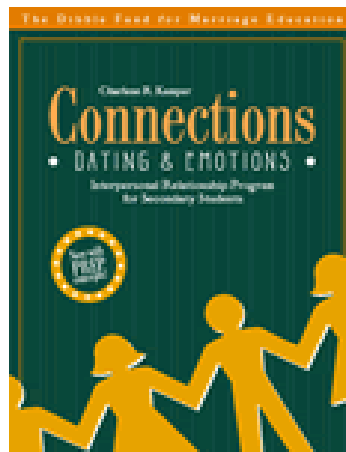
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GOING OUT Lesson 6

Workbook Assignment *What Should I Say?*

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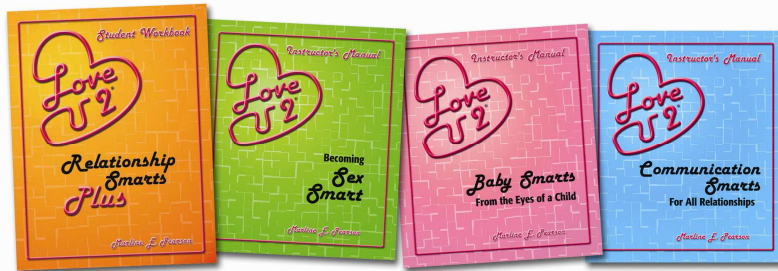
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The Love U2® Courses

Comprehensive Relationship Education for Teens

By: Marline Pearson



- NEW! Relationship Smarts PLUS
- Becoming Sex Smart
- Communication Smarts: PREP® for Teens
- Baby Smarts: Through the Eyes of a Child

Love U2® is series of units that help young people acquire practical skills for emotionally healthy, mutually respectful, and ethically sound relationships. Love U2® focuses on helping teens craft a roadmap toward what they hope to achieve, not just what they must try to avoid. Love U2® programs are designed for schools, youth agencies, clubs, and faith based organizations.

- Activity based
- Created with diverse teens
- No training required
- Incorporates Media
- Research Based
- Best Practices
- Affordable

For more information, contact The Dibble Institute at:



Love U2® Series



Relationship Smarts PLUS

- Lesson 1: Who Am I and Where Am I Going?
- Lesson 2: Maturity Issues and What I Value
- Lesson 3: Attractions and Infatuation.
- Lesson 4: Love and Intimacy
- Lesson 5: Principles of Smart Relationships
- Lesson 6: Low-risk Approach to Relationships: Decide, Don't Slide!
- Lesson 7: Is It A Healthy Relationship?
- Lesson 8: Breaking Up and Dating Abuse
- Lesson 9: A Foundation for Good Communication
- Lesson 10: Communication Challenges & More Skills
- Lesson 11: Through the Eyes of a Child
- Lesson 12: Looking Toward the Future Healthy Relationships/Healthy Marriage
- Lesson 13: Follow Your North Star

Becoming Sex Smart

- Lesson 1: Confronting the Paradox: More Sex, Less Joy; Teen Regrets; Who's Really Doing What? Why Teens Become Sexually Active
- Lesson 2: Is Experience Always the Best Teacher? Challenges of Coming of Age; Unmet Needs and Sexual Involvement
- Lesson 3: Understanding the Paradox: Who's Having the Best Sex and Why? Six Parts of Sexuality—It's More Than Physical; Sex-too-Soon and Relationship Development.
- Lesson 4: Male-Female Differences: Understanding Each Other; Gender and Sexual Arousal Patterns; Tips for Guys; Tips for Girls
- Lesson 5: The 17 Steps of Physical Intimacy and Defining Your Boundaries; Increasing Steps & Escalation of Desire; Risks to Heart and Risks to Health; How Far Should We Go? Enjoying the Early Steps
- Lesson 6: Pressure Situations and Decision-Making; Real Situations Brought to Life from My So-Called Life
- Lesson 7: STD Facts and Information That Teens Need to Know
- Lesson 8: Skills and Strategies to Adhere to Your Boundaries; Risky Situations, Pressure Lines, Refusal Skills; Mixed Messages & Faulty Assumptions
- Lesson 9: Changing Course & Designing My Personal Policy; Words and Expectations: Get On the Same Page; Gender Specific Growth Challenges
- Lesson 10: Hearing From Older Teens and Young Adults; Some Who've "Been There, Done That," and Those Who Haven't
- Lesson 11: Culture Pressures: Who's Pulling Your Strings? Advertising and Media

Communication Smarts: PREP® for TEENS

- Lesson 1: Destructive Patterns in Relationships— Four Danger Signs
- Lesson 2: Skills to Counter Negative Patterns. Time-Outs: A Path Back to Your Smart Brain; Complaints and Gripses—Being Heard, Not Ignored
- Lesson 3: Filters –"I Did Not Say That!" Personality Style and Creative Use of Differences
- Lesson 4: "I Don't Want To Talk About It" and the Speaker-Listener Technique
- Lesson 5: Issues and Events: What Pushes Your Buttons?
- Lesson 6: Clarifying Expectations—Family, Peers, Girl/Boyfriend
- Lesson 7: Problem Solving and Taking Care of Friendship

Baby Smarts: Through the Eyes of a Child

- Lesson 1: Pregnancy: How It Happens; Effects of Pregnancy on Her, Him, and the Relationship
- Lesson 2: Teen Pregnancy From the Eyes of a Child; Baby Needs and Teen Needs—In Or Out of Sync? Young Parents Who Go It Alone—Test Your Baby Smarts
- Lesson 3: What About Fathers? Do They Matter? Good Fathering and Unique Contributions—What Teens Say; The Case of Disappearing Fathers
- Lesson 4: Part I - The First Few Years. Before They're Even Born; Attachment and Emotional Attunement; Insights from Early Brain Research
- Lesson 5: Part II - The First Few Years. Early Socialization and Parenting Practices; Early Experiences and Child Outcomes
- Lesson 6: Decisions About Pregnancy: Ethical and Moral Dilemmas, Adoption Stories, Keeping My Baby—Critical Questions to Ask
- Lesson 7: Marriage: Does It Really Matter? Part I. Marriage Benefits
- Lesson 8: Marriage: Does It Really Matter? Part II. Why Marriage is in Trouble; Is Living Together a Good Idea? Research Findings on Marriage Success and Failure; The Promise of Prevention Education
- Lesson 9: Troubled Parental Relationships/Divorce: How Kids Feel; Teen Advice on Dos and Don'ts for Splitting Parents; Troubled Parental Unions and Child Outcomes
- Lesson 10: Soul Food: The Power of True Love and Enduring Commitment

For more information, contact The Dibble Institute at:



Love U2® Philosophy and Goals

The *Love U2*® series is a new kind of curriculum for teens. It looks beyond the “do’s and don’ts” of sex—too often the focus of our conversation with teens—to the context of sexuality: namely, relationships. Its goal is to help young people acquire practical skills and useful knowledge for forming emotionally healthy, mutually respectful, and ethically sound relationships. But *Love U2*® is about more than skills or facts. It focuses on helping teens craft a “North Star”—a vision of healthy relationships—that will guide their behavior

now and into the future. Teens today live and breathe in a culture emphasizing casual sex and casual connections where no relationship can be trusted to last and where even the most important family bonds sometimes can not be counted on. Indeed, for some teens, sex is seen simply as a transaction. Unfortunately, teens are short on positive models. They have few road maps that will lead them into healthy relationships and away from unhealthy ones. *Love U2*® aims at giving teens a positive model for committed and healthy love relationships. This curriculum is about what teens can hope to achieve, not just what they must try to avoid.

Why This Curriculum Is Needed

This nation has been locked in an ideological battle over sex education: Should we teach abstinence until marriage, or should we teach about safer sex, condoms, and many points in between? This discussion has divided us and shortchanged our teens. *Love U2*® breaks through this gridlock. It is unapologetically pro-abstinence for teens, but not for reasons that have to do with religion, ideology, or politics. It strongly encourages teens to wait on sex because it is concerned about the emotional and social well-being of teens.

Consider a thought experiment posed by Isabel Sawhill, president of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy* and Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution. Let us say we could somehow eliminate all of the health consequences of teen sex, including STDs and pregnancy. Given that scenario, would you want a 15- or 16-year-old to be sexually active? Many people would answer no, and the reason is that there are other compelling emotional and social reasons for teens to abstain from sex.

Sex is not just like eating pizza or driving to the movies. It is not just about health and safety. We want more from it. Consider the rather consistent finding that the overwhelming majority of sexually active teens wish they had waited. There are powerful emotional reasons to wait to have sex that have to do with the fact that early sexual involvement is not likely to deliver what teens, especially girls, want—namely, affection, connection, respect, or love. Then there are social reasons that involve benefits and freedoms of abstinence for healthy relationship development. For teens, sex typically blurs or hinders genuine relationship development, or worse, glues teens (especially girls) to bad relationships. Importantly, there are ethical reasons for thinking about the context for sex that must consider the need of a child for two parents committed to each other and the child. Sex always involves the possibility of creating a child—a simple fact that is often ignored.

For more information, contact The Dibble Institute at:



Teens are on a journey to learn about love, relationships, themselves, and their emerging sexuality. They are moving out of their families and building friendships and romantic connections. As they enter new relationships, teens find themselves in the throes of powerful feelings of attraction, rejection, and a myriad of other emotions. Most teens want affection, respect, love, and connection. Yet, our young people receive little guidance on navigating the world of teen relationships and the sexual culture. While we tell them what to say “no” to, we do too little to help teens build the healthy relationships to which they can say “yes.”

Sadly, the messages teens *do* receive about sex, and the messages they *don't* receive about developing positive relationships and why marriage matters especially if they plan to have children, set the stage for many teens to fail at developing successful relationships. Contemporary culture encourages sex without meaning, living together without commitment, and having babies without mutual commitment and healthy marriage. This perspective carries consequences that seriously disadvantage our young people, especially females. Troubled or unstable relationships and unintended pregnancies can derail teens *and* young adults in serious ways or cancel out their gains in education, employment, and parenting. Further, such relationship choices can put the well-being of children at risk.

Building Assets

This curriculum is meant to contribute to a larger project of *building assets* for youth. Insights and skills for building successful relationships are important assets for young people. It is part and parcel of the trajectory of teen and life success and is firmly rooted in a positive youth development approach.

Love U2® is meant to help young people craft a “North Star” for their relationship lives, to build critical communication and other relationship skills, and to acquire insights into healthy relationship development. It engages teens in a deep exploration of the emotional and social dimensions of sexuality and strongly encourages teens to postpone sexual involvement, using positive reasons and skill-building exercises.

Love U2® is also meant to inform young people of the findings of social science research regarding the link between child well-being and family structure. Importantly this curriculum teaches why a particular “sequence” of some of life’s most important events, such as establishing a healthy marriage before having a baby, really matters. Although teens and young adults say they highly value lifelong marriage as a personal goal, many are likely to fail and some are afraid to try. Teens and young adults are often woefully ignorant or misinformed about the basic research evidence on the importance of quality relationships and healthy marriage. They know little about the economic, social, and personal benefits of a *healthy* marriage and what research has discovered about the patterns that erode versus protect relationships and marriage. Young people have many misconceptions about cohabitation, the responsibilities of parenthood, and what it takes to raise children successfully.

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1-800-695-7975 · www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org · relationshipskills@dibbleinstitute.org



Beyond the Health Paradigm

Any curricula we develop and, more importantly, our conversations with teens should not be limited to a discourse on avoiding STDs or pregnancy. True, we need to include health concerns, but we also must move beyond the confines of a health paradigm. Sex has meaning—or, rather, sex should have meaning—even if there is no health risk. Our conversations need to include more attention to building healthy relationships, affirming the power and potential of sexual love in the right context, and the consequences for having *babies* when they are unplanned and when parents are young and unwed. We can and should reach for higher ground in our discussions with teens.

And teens want us to do just that. Teen surveys conducted by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy are particularly revealing: two-thirds of teens say their own morals, values, and or religious beliefs—as well as concerns about their future—influence their decisions about sex far more than concerns about pregnancy or STDs.

Perhaps one reason teens are bored with our conventional approaches is that they sense we have nothing of lasting substance to say beyond a description of body parts and clinical risk reduction. We have little to say that truly inspires and helps teens see a “North Star” for their relationships; we have less that makes them think about themselves and their responsibilities in relationship to others—whether it be in a romantic relationship, in their family, with a child that results from a sexual encounter, or in a future marriage.

There are other instructive reminders of what we must address from the Campaign’s surveys. Ninety-one percent of teens believe that it is important for teens to be given a strong message from society that they should not have sex until they are *at least* out of high school. Eighty-four percent of teens believe that teen pregnancy prevention should teach young people to be married before they have a child.

Unfortunately, teen pregnancy prevention programs, while emphasizing the importance of waiting until an older age to have a child, do not generally build an awareness of why and how healthy relationships and healthy marriage matters to child well-being. Yet, research shows that merely waiting until one is twenty years or older to have an out-of-wedlock or unintended child does not appear to significantly increase the well-being of mother or child. Age itself is not the key.

You will find accurate health information inside *Love U2*®, (specifically included in the *Becoming Sex Smart* and *Baby Smarts: Through the Eyes of a Child* units) but *more* attention is given in all *Love U2*® units to motivational themes exploring healthy relationship development, the meaning of sexual love, and the consequences of a disconnect between childbearing and marriage. Importantly, this curriculum sketches out a larger context for helping teens make wise relationship and sexual choices which can be summarized as, “It’s not just about “me.” There’s a bigger picture here. It’s about relationships, values, deeper meanings; it’s also about the needs of children; it’s about family, and it’s about community.” It is also about building knowledge and real skills.

For more information, contact The Dibble Institute at:



Trying to teach kids about love, sex, and protecting the heart

MARLINE PEARSON wants to change the way we teach kids about sex.

At a point in the culture wars where the abstinence-only people and the safe-sex people cannot speak to each other, Pearson offers a provocative alternative: Let's talk about protecting the human heart.

Instead of simply urging kids to wait to have sex until they are married, the Wisconsin educator wants to teach kids how to make that marriage work.

And instead of demonstrating how to use a condom and showing grisly pictures of what can happen if you don't, Pearson wants to help kids form a vision of what a meaningful relationship looks like.

To that end, she has developed a curriculum called Love U2: Getting smarter about relationships, sex, babies and marriage.

It is what she uses in her classes at Madison Area Technical College, but she says that can be late in the game to be talking to young people about smart relationships.

It should be part of high school health curriculums and parts of it could be taught in middle school, too, she says.

"I've seen too many times how troubled and unstable relationships can undo the gains young people have made in education, employment, and in their lives," she said at a Washington, D.C., press conference.

"We help with everything -- housing, GEDs, drugs, food, parenting classes, child care, transportation -- only to see it all come apart when they get into a bad relationship."

"We already know the factors and patterns linked to bad relationships," she said. "We don't have to wait for the damage to occur and then mop up."

Pearson said she would take her skills-based approach to relationships into the high schools, and below, because our children aren't born knowing how to sustain a good relationship -- and some children never see one in their own homes or neighborhoods.

Relationship skills are what is missing in sex education, she said.

"We teach young people about sex, but very little about its context -- relationships." Both abstinence-only programs and comprehensive sex education courses fail to provide young people, and especially girls, what Pearson calls a "North Star for their intimate lives."

There is no vision, she says, for good love, meaningful sex, commitment, marriage or the importance of fathers and marriage to children.

She would teach sex in its emotional and social context.

"We need to help teens think through what they want sex to mean, to be aware of the steps of physical involvement and what each step means for their heart, not just their health, then to establish their own boundaries and personal policies on sex."

That is a tall order in today's soulless hook-up culture, where sex is about as special as a phone call. Sex has become something kids just do. It has no romantic meaning, but it still has an emotional price, especially for girls.

And it may have a human price, too, if a pregnancy results. Pearson would also teach what 30 years of social science has learned: marriage matters to children.

Not only do children fare better in households where there are two parents and they are married, but children who are dragged in and out of relationships by a single parent have the worst outcome of any children.

Teens need to learn how to make emotional connections, how to keep good relationships moving forward and how to get out of bad ones because it is clear to Pearson that many of the choices they make as teen-agers are the same choices they will make as adults.

"We can't teach sex as if it stands alone. We have to help these kids put meaning and emotion back into sex," said Pearson.

Then we also have to show them how to protect their hearts from that meaning, and that emotion.

"We need to help the next generation do better," Pearson said.

Family Matters

SUSAN REIMER

PUBLISHED ON MARCH 7, 2004

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THE *Love U2*® COURSES

NEW! Love U2®: Relationship Smarts PLUS™

This unit begins with self-awareness, future orientation and planning. It then covers attractions and infatuation, ingredients and building blocks for healthy relationships, principles for smart relationships, gauging relationship health, development of a realistic concept of love and the nature of true intimacy, and breaking up. Special focus on date violence prevention and research-based communication and conflict management skills. Also offers a unique approach to pregnancy prevention by building awareness of the impact on children. New features include an engaging Teen Workbook and Parent/Guardian--Teen Connection activities. (13 lessons) **SKU: LRQ+**

Love U2®: Becoming Sex Smart™

This unit moves beyond a health-based approach to address the emotional and social consequences of sex too often ignored. Helps teens craft a "North Star", set boundaries, and acquire skills and language to more confidently navigate romantic relationships. (11 lessons) **SKU: LSQ**

Love U2®: Communication Smarts™ : PREP® for Teens

This unit teaches practical communication and conflict management skills, adapted for teens from the acclaimed PREP® programs. Students learn to identify – and reduce - patterns that can damage relationships. (7 lessons) **SKU: LCQ**

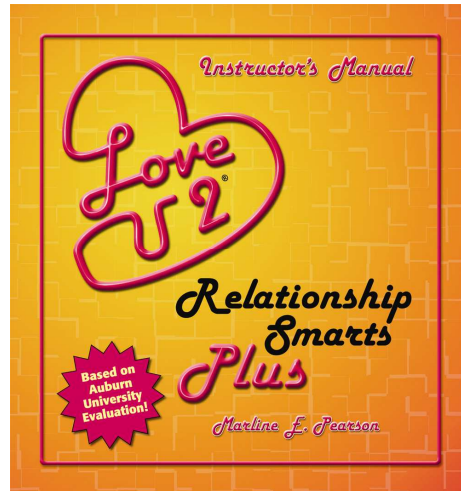
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This unique approach to pregnancy prevention challenges teens to consider, from a child's viewpoint, the consequences of having parents who are young, unprepared and unwed parents. Based on 30 years of research. (10 lessons) **SKU: LBQ**

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Principles of Smart Relationships

OVERVIEW

This lesson provides practical guidance for developing positive relationships. The first part introduces seven principles for “smart relationships.” Yes, there are smart ways and not-so-smart ways to go about relationships. Activities will provide practice for applying these insights to real-world teen relationships. An inspiring love story from *The Art of Loving Well* will conclude the lesson. The principles for smart relationships were adapted for teens from chapter six of *Relationships: An Open and Honest Guide* by Les and Leslie Parrott. See www.realrelationships.com for more resources by Les and Leslie Parrott.

GOALS

- To help each teen recognize smart and not-so-smart relationship attitudes, behaviors, and choices.
- To offer concrete guidelines for "smart relationships."
- To explore the importance of compatibility for relationships and to offer a list of key areas to consider.

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

- 5.1 Smart or Not-So-Smart
(Time: 10 minutes)
Activity: Thumbs Up or Down!
- 5.2 Seven Principles Presentation
(Time 20 minutes)
Activity: Identify the 7 Principles
- 5.3 Compatibility
(Time: 0-5 minutes)
Activity: Compatibility Checklist
- 5.4 Read Aloud Story
(Time: 5-10 minutes)

MATERIALS CHECKLIST

Resources:

- 5a. *Smart/Not-So-Smart Statement Cards* - Duplicate Master Set (**Locate on CD-ROM**)
- 5b. *Smart/Not-So-Smart Statement Cards*—Guy Class Set (**Locate colored cards in back of manual.** Cut and laminate.)
- 5c. *Smart/Not-so-Smart Statement Cards* —Girl Class Set (**Locate colored cards in back of manual.** Cut and laminate.)
- 5d. *7 Principles of Smart Relationships Handout* (Duplicate, one per teen)
- 5e. *Smart/Not-So-Smart Instructor's Key*
- 5f. *Compatibility Checklist Worksheet* (Duplicate, one per teen)

Workbook Applications:

What Makes a Great Relationship? Seven Questions to Ask

Materials:

- CD-ROM
 - Optional Lesson Five PowerPoint Presentation
 - Duplicate Masters
- *7 Smart Relationship Principles Poster* (**Locate in pocket of manual**)

- Seven signs to post in room
- Markers
- 3X5 Index Cards
- Tape
- Story from *The Art of Loving Well*
- *Appointment with Love*

PREPARATION

- Review the *Smart/Not-So-Smart Statement* cards (Resources 5b and 5c) and select the ones most appropriate for the developmental level and cultural context of your audience. Feel free to modify, add, or delete scenarios you feel are inappropriate. Note that one set is from a guy's perspective and the other set is from a girl's perspective. There are a few cards that are essentially the same—one from a girl, the other from a guy. Do not use both, but choose one or the other. Try to achieve a balance of guy and girl cards if you have a mixed group. Every teen should have one card, but you can distribute more than one per teen.
- Read the lesson to gain familiarity with the 7 principles and review the instructor's key that identifies the principles linked to each card. Note that the scenarios described on the cards can apply to more than one principle. The objective of the activities is not to pinpoint an exact principle, but to offer teens a way to deepen their understanding of all 7 principles through real-life scenarios.
- Preview the optional Lesson Five PowerPoint presentation.
- Preview the workbook application, *What Makes a Great Relationship? Seven Questions to Ask*. It is a capstone exercise which provides the opportunity for teens to explore and apply these 7 principles to their personal relationships. Print off seven sheets each with a principle from the Lesson Five PowerPoint presentation and display in the room.

Background Information and Research

The goal of this lesson is to offer some concrete guidelines for navigating one's attractions and making relationship decisions. The 7 principles offered are simple and clear. They are principles that apply as much to healthy teen relationships as they do to adult relationships.

It is important to stress that many teens have romantic relationships in high school and many do not. Remind the group that whether a teen is just beginning to date, has already been involved in romantic relationships, or has never had a boyfriend or girlfriend, this lesson can be considered a sort of "driver's ed" for relationships.

Begin this lesson by briefly reviewing some of the concepts taught in previous lessons. Remind the teens first of the information they have learned on the chemistry of infatuation. They learned that the feelings associated with attractions and the early stages of relationships are powerful, extremely pleasant, and real. Infatuation is why people feel almost giddy with excitement and energy. Teens learned that until the "love chemicals" settle down a bit, a person may not see clearly. The advice offered was to enjoy the feelings fully, but not to read too much into them.

Teens also explored the different meanings for the word "love" and the distinctions made by the Greeks between *eros*, which we commonly call lust, and *agape*, which we call committed love. Those who study love have pointed out that mature love is not one thing, but made up of three essential elements: chemistry, friendship, and trust/commitment. This lesson will offer guidance in the form of seven key questions or areas to consider in making relationship decisions.

Materials Checklist

Resources:

- 5b. Smart/Not-so-Smart Statement Cards—Guy Set
- 5c. Smart/Not-so-Smart Statement Cards—Girl Set

10 minutes



5.1 Smart or Not-So-Smart?

As a transition to the 7 principles of “smart relationships,” this section begins with a reminder of what the teens have learned so far. These principles provide a framework to guide teens in making wise relationship choices. Begin with points from the suggested script below before starting the “Thumbs Up or Down!” activity.

Suggested introductory script:

- ◆ *In earlier lessons you looked at what happens when a person is attracted to another person. Those feelings associated with attractions and the early stages of relationships are powerful, extremely pleasant, and real. An actual change in brain chemistry occurs. These changes are why people feel almost giddy with excitement and energy about the person.*
- ◆ *You also explored the different meanings for the word “love.” In the English language, we have only one word for love whereas the Greeks have more words to distinguish different aspects of love. A distinction is made by the Greeks between eros, which we commonly call lust, and agape, which we call committed love. Moreover, researchers who study love have pointed out that mature love is not one thing, but has several essential elements. We focused on a three-sided model of mature love consisting of chemistry, friendship, and trust-commitment.*

Next, announce the key objective of today's lesson.

- ◆ *Today we are going to look at smart ways and not-so-smart ways to go about making important relationship decisions.*
- ◆ *As you have learned, when a person is attracted to someone, powerful and even overwhelming feelings can be experienced (remember those “love chemicals” of infatuation). While the feelings are very real, these fabulous and exciting feelings tell a person very little about whether it is the start of a good relationship or a bad one.*
- ◆ *In fact, these strong feelings may cloud choices about whom one should date or with whom one should develop a relationship. In fact, some people tend to almost “lose their mind” when they fall in love and get involved with a poor choice.*
- ◆ *The good news is that a person can fall in love with his or her brain turned on and such a thing is not any less romantic. Consider an analogy of rock climbing. It can be thrilling even when a person is using appropriate skills and safety techniques.*

Point out that there are some key principles based on research about what we know makes a good relationship. Continue with these points:

- ◆ *There are important principles that can guide you in your relationship decisions—now and in the future. They can tell you what you should pay attention to in a relationship and what you should find out about the other person. These principles can also be used to assess an existing relationship.*

- ◆ *The 7 principles you will learn about today will help you date smart. And in turn, dating smart will have a lot to do with how happy or satisfied you'll be with the person with whom you choose to develop a relationship. Some people are good matches for you, and others are poor matches.*
- ◆ *However, here is something important to keep in mind: Many teens have romantic relationships in high school and many do not. Whether you are just beginning to date, have already been involved in romantic relationships, or have never had a boyfriend or girlfriend, this lesson can be considered a sort of "driver's ed" for relationships. The information you learn may be drawn upon now or in the future.*



ACTIVITY: THUMBS UP OR DOWN!

Announce that before you present the 7 principles the group is going to complete a brief activity to test the group's current "relationship smarts." Hold up the stack of cards and say that each one describes a "smart" or "not-so-smart" situation. Each relationship scenario describes a choice, a behavior, or an attitude. The group is to decide if it is "smart" or "not-so-smart." Note that the statement is smart if the person ultimately made a good decision or took a smart action in a negative situation.

Distribute the *Smart/Not-so-Smart Statement Cards* (Resources 5b and 5c) to each teen. If the group is small, give more than one card to each teen.

Give teens a moment to carefully read their cards. Ask as many as possible to read aloud their card while the rest of the group listens and puts their thumbs up indicating, "This is smart!" or thumbs down indicating, "This is not-so-smart!" Ask each teen to participate and vote one way or another.

Instructor's Note: There will usually be a consensus on the vote. If there are literacy issues in the class, announce that anyone can choose to have a person next to him or her read the card aloud.

This activity is typically fun and lively with laughter and comments.

Materials Checklist

Resources:

- 5d. *7 Principles of Smart Relationships* Handout
- 5e. *Smart/Not-so-Smart* Instructor's Key

Materials:

- 7 Principles Poster
- Index Cards
- 7 Principle Signs
- Tape

20 minutes



5.2 Seven Principles' Presentation

This section involves an activity that includes a mini-presentation by the instructor of the 7 principles of smart relationships while teens determine which principle is being described.



ACTIVITY: IDENTIFY THE 7 PRINCIPLES

Ask teens to notice the poster titled, *7 Smart Relationship Principles*, and the seven small signs posted around the room that correspond to each principle. Announce that you are going to describe each of the 7 principles of smart relationships.

Let them know that you will describe the first principle and then pause so everyone can look at their card and check to see if it corresponds to that principle—smart or not-so-smart.

Instruct teens to get up and stand by the sign if they think their card corresponds to that principle. Then, let them know you will proceed to describe the second principle for which they will all check their cards. Those who have matches will get up and move. Point out that you will continue to describe all the principles, pausing between each for participants to get up and move to the appropriate principle sign. At the end of the activity, everyone should be standing by a principle sign. Tell them to be aware that some cards can fall into more than one category. The teen is to go and stand by the principle he or she thinks the statement most strongly represents. If a person has gotten up to stand by one principle and then hears another principle that he or she feels applies more strongly, he or she is to quietly move to the new sign. Indeed, some situations described in their cards can apply to more than one principle. The teen's task is to stand by the principle he or she thinks the statement most strongly represents.

Instructor's Note: If you have a small group and each person has more than one card, offer scotch tape and they can tape their cards to the appropriate sign and stand by the one of their choice.

Below are the points and suggested script for each principle:

Principle #1: Seek a Good Match—Someone with Common Interests

- ◆ *Have you ever heard the statement, "Opposites attract?" Well, that's often true in terms of personality style. But, aside from personality style, for which most couples find there are some differences, it turns out that the happiest couples typically have a lot in common. They often have similar levels of intelligence and energy and share some common interests.*

- ◆ *Indeed, great relationships tend to be built on common ground. After all, you want to be in a relationship with whom you enjoy doing things and with whom you share a sense of what is important.*

- ◆ *So, if you are dating smart, you will spend the first weeks and months of a dating relationship finding out how much you have in common. Do you enjoy talking to each other? Do you find each other truly interesting? Do you enjoy similar recreational activities? Do you have similar attitudes and goals for school and life? Do you like similar music? In the best relationships, partners enjoy doing things together and talking together. They find each other interesting and fun.*

Stop: Ask those with cards representing this principle to get up and move to that sign.

Principle #2: Pay Attention to Values

- ◆ *Relationships are likely to be very troubled if the partners' basic values are out of sync. It is very important to first clarify your own values. What are your deepest beliefs and values about life? About how people treat each other? About how you treat your friends and family? About honesty and integrity? About religious or philosophical issues? About right and wrong? About tough issues such as drugs, alcohol, and sex?*
- ◆ *Then, you need to ask how in or out of sync the two of you are on such things. The big questions to ask are: Does this person share and/or respect my values? Does this person pressure me to do things that go against my values? How does this person act in situations that test his or her values?*

Stop: Ask those with cards representing this principle to move to that sign.

Principle #3: Don't Try to Change Someone into Someone He or She Is Not

- ◆ *Sometimes a person may be so desperate for a relationship or friendship that he or she is blind to who the other person really is. He or she is in love with an idea of who he or she would like this person to be. Sometimes a person believes that he or she can "fix" the dating partner or friend.*
- ◆ *Don't fool yourself into thinking you can do a "make-over" on another person. A relationship or friendship where one person is trying to change the other person is doomed. Of course, it is great to support and encourage someone in making positive changes. But, he or she must want to make the change.*

Stop: Ask those with cards representing this principle to move to that sign.

Principle #4: Don't Change Yourself to Get Someone's Love or Friendship.

- ◆ *It is important to be true to yourself. Don't try to become whatever you think others want you to be. Don't pretend your likes, dislikes, and values are something other than what they really are. You cannot maintain a satisfying relationship or friendship if you are not true to yourself.*
- ◆ *The key to good relationships is being the real you and looking for people who like you for the person you are. If you find you have to alter yourself considerably to fit in with a dating partner or group of friends, you have discovered a danger sign. Remember, nobody is perfect. We all have flaws. This principle doesn't mean you will not want to make changes or improvements to yourself.*

Stop: Ask those with cards representing this principle to move to that sign.

Principle #5: Expect Good Communication

- ◆ *If you find you have differences or conflicts in a dating relationship, talk about these issues. Don't avoid them. Don't remain quiet, simply thinking these issues will get better. How you communicate and deal with conflicts now says a lot about the future success and satisfaction you will enjoy in a relationship with someone. However, you do not have to make a federal case out of every difference. You will have differences. You won't always see eye to eye. Talking these differences out can be useful and productive. Different points of view add spice and variety to life. Having differences might expand the way you see things.*
- ◆ *Remember, conflict is inevitable in any close relationship. Another way of putting it is this way: everyone fights—family members, friends, and*

couples. But, the difference between happy and unhappy relationships and friendships is how you disagree. Fighting fairly—not hitting below the belt—is something anyone can learn. Many people “silently steam” for a long time and then explode or “unload” their complaints all at once. It is better to deal with differences and conflicts as they come along.

- ◆ *Ask yourself if you can talk openly and honestly with each other and if you can handle disagreements respectfully. Most importantly, how does this person handle strong emotions such as anger? How do you handle anger?*

Stop: Ask those with cards representing this principle to move to that sign.

Principle #6: Don't Play Games, Be Phony, or Pressure Someone

- ◆ *Just as it says—don't play games or pressure someone. If you are looking for friends or relationships that go the distance, they must be genuine and real, not phony. Also, don't pressure someone to be in a relationship with you. Don't pressure someone to do something he or she doesn't want to do. Finally, don't manipulate someone to get what you want.*

Stop: Ask those with cards representing this principle to move to that sign.

Principle #7: Expect Respect—Have Standards for What You Expect

- ◆ *It has been said that people will treat you the way you let them. Have a standard for how you want to be treated and how you want to be talked to. If people talk trashy to you, they will probably treat you trashy. This treatment is a sign of disrespect towards you. Don't ever make excuses or dismiss bad behavior; rather, confront it.*

- ◆ *Also, expect respect for your boundaries from a dating partner regarding language, behaviors, drugs, alcohol, and sex. This expectation means you also must be willing to walk away from a friendship or relationship that violates your dignity. You deserve respect and to be treated well.*

Stop: Ask those with cards representing this final principle to move to that sign.

FOLLOW-UP AND PROCESSING: 7 PRINCIPLES

Ask each group to form a small circle around their principle sign and to read each others cards. After doing this step, instruct groups to select one card that is a great representation of that principle.

After a couple of minutes, ask for each group to read aloud their chosen card.

An Instructor's Key (Resource 5e) suggesting which principle each card represents is available. Note that some of the cards can represent more than one principle as in this example:

*I really don't want to have sex. I'm not ready and it goes against my beliefs.
But my partner tells me I'm just uptight. I guess I should just get over it
and go ahead and do it.*

This statement most strongly applies to principle #2 (values), but it could apply to principle #4 (changing self) and principle #7 (expect respect—have a bottom line).

Remember, the goal of this activity is not so much to pinpoint a precise principle, but to encourage discussion of these principles and offer practice in recognizing smart and not-so-smart choices, behaviors, and attitudes.

Concluding Points for the Principles of Smart Relationships:

- ◆ *These 7 principles are simply good guidelines to keep in mind when you are attracted to someone or thinking about starting a relationship—now or later in life. These principles are what you should be finding out. If you are in a relationship right now, they are a useful tool to examine and assess your relationship.*

- ◆ *But, remember that most people go through a number of romances before finding a person with whom they want to make a life commitment. These principles do not guarantee that you will never have a broken heart or make mistakes in choosing whom to have a relationship. Expect that you will have several broken hearts and that you will break other people's hearts as well. Broken hearts are difficult to avoid as you make your way through the world of relationships. There is a lot of trial and error as you try to figure out love and relationships.*

- ◆ *There is one thing that can be guaranteed - If you leave sex out of your relationship during your teen years, the pain of a broken heart, the level of regret, and the high-cost risks of STDs and pregnancy will be reduced or avoided. You will have less baggage and more freedom to experience relationships and to move on if you need to. For now, the best advice is to enjoy each other and have fun as you try out relationships and keep these principles as a guide.*



EXTRA CREDIT— OPTIONAL

Distribute a 3x5 index card to each teen. This activity is their opportunity to come up with a smart or not-so-smart card that can be added for future classes. Teens are the experts. They have observed other teens and adults around them in relationships or in film or music. Ask teens to take a few minutes to write a 1-3 line scenario. It can be in the smart or not-so-smart category, and it should be real but anonymous. After five minutes or so, ask for a few volunteers to read their scenarios aloud. Collect the cards and consider using some in your next class. This activity can also be done outside of the session.

Materials Checklist

Resources:

- 5d. *7 Principles of Smart Relationships* Handout
- 5f. *Compatibility Checklist* Worksheet

Workbook Applications:

- *What Makes a Great Relationship?*

Materials:

- Paper
- Markers
- Magazines

0-5 minutes



5.3 Compatibility Checklist

**ACTIVITY: COMPATIBILITY CHECKLIST**

This brief questionnaire, completed in or out of session, can help a teen determine how much he or she possesses in common with a dating partner or interest. If completing in-session, allow about three minutes for teens to complete the checklist and then discuss why these qualities matter.

Distribute the *Compatibility Checklist* (Resource 5f) and announce that this list of qualities and characteristics can help teens determine how much they possess in common with a dating partner or interest. Remind teens that great relationships tend to be built on common ground.

If teens are in a relationship, instruct them to check the ones they have in common. If they are not in a relationship, they are to go through the list and check the ones they think are most important. Instruct them to jot down how or why incompatibility in the categories they choose might cause problems for them in a relationship.



HOMEWORK

Ask the group to turn to the workbook application, *What Makes a Great Relationship? Seven Questions to Ask*. Announce to the group that the instructions are self-explanatory and that they should take their time to answer all seven questions in a thoughtful and careful manner. These questions are valuable whether teens are currently in a relationship or not.



PARENT/GUARDIAN—TEEN CONNECTION

Make sure each student still has the *7 Principles of Smart Relationships* handout (Resource 5d). Request that teens take the handout home and ask a parent/guardian to read through the 7 principles. Have teens ask a parent/guardian the following questions: Which principles are most important and why? Do you wish you had known these principles when you were a teen? Do you have any additional principles to add? Request that a parent/guardian sign at the bottom and return the sheet.



EXTRA CREDIT—OPTIONAL

Have teens develop a poster promoting one of the 7 principles of smart relationships. For this activity, teens can work in small groups or individually. Each group should be given one principle (or you may allow them to choose their own making sure all seven are covered evenly). For space considerations, an 11x17 piece of paper or cardstock is recommended. The poster should briefly explain the principle. Encourage groups to use words, symbols, images, color, and magazine pictures to make the posters convincing and visually appealing. Consider displaying these in the classroom or other public places where teens gather.

Materials Checklist

Materials:

- *The Art of Loving Well*

5-10 minutes



5.4 Read Aloud Story

 **STORY AND WRITING ASSIGNMENT**

Read aloud or have teens read, *Appointment With Love*, a short story that serves as a nice ending to the 7 principles lesson.

This charming story paints a picture of a developing love relationship. The story says a lot about character. It highlights the importance of exploring values and beliefs, getting to know someone slowly over time, and laying a foundation for genuine intimacy. It reinforces the principles of smart relationships.

Be sure to point out to teens that this story is set in an earlier time. It involves a soldier who is about to be sent off to war. Just before leaving, he becomes interested in a woman. They do not get to meet face to face before he is shipped off, but they do continue a correspondence during the time he is in combat.

Instructor's Note: If reading the story aloud, read the beginning of the story (up to where Lt. Blandford has to make a decision of which woman to go with) and pause. Ask the class for their guesses as to what he will do and discuss the reactions. Continue with the story. Here are some suggested discussion prompts slightly adapted from the text. These questions can be used as a writing assignment if the reading is out-of-session.

Questions for discussion or writing assignment:

- ? Why did she NOT send her picture?
 - o Was that a good or bad choice?
 - o What does it say about her character?
- ? Why did he NOT go with the younger woman right away?
 - o What does his hesitation say about his character?
 - o What words best describe his character?
- ? What is at the core of their attraction to each other?
- ? Do you think these characters would have a good chance of being together in a positive relationship five or ten years down the road? Why?
- ? They got to "know" each other by corresponding. A modern day equivalent might be an internet chat room.
 - o Can you really get to know someone over an e-mail correspondence?
 - o Can you "love" someone after getting to know him or her on the Internet?
- ? Do you think they will live happily ever after?
- ? What should take place or what should they discuss before running off and getting married?

Notes

¹Adapted with permission: Les & Leslie Parrott (1998) *Relationships: An Open and Honest Guide to Making Bad Relationships Better and Good Relationships Great*, chapter 6. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. For more books and resources by the Parrots see www.realrelationships.com.

Resources on the following pages:

- 5d. *7 Principles of Smart Relationships* Handout
- 5e. *Smart/Not-so-Smart* Statement Cards Instructor's Key
- 5f. *Compatibility Checklist* Worksheet

Resources located at the back of the manual:

- 5b. *Smart/Not-so-Smart* Cards—Guy Cardstock Class Set
- 5c. *Smart/Not-so-Smart* Cards—Girl Cardstock Class Set

Resource located in pocket of the binder:

- 7 *Smart Relationship Principles* Poster

Workbook Applications:

- What Makes a Great Relationship? Seven Questions to Ask*

Resources located on the CD-ROM:

- 5a. *Smart/Not-so-Smart* Statement Cards -Duplicate Master Set
- Optional Lesson Five PowerPoint Presentation

7 Principles of Smart Relationships

- 1. Seek a Good Match– Someone with Common Interests:** Great relationships are built on common ground. Do you have similar interests and enjoy doing things together? Do you enjoy talking to each other and do you find each other interesting? Do you have similar attitudes about school and future goals? Are you roughly matched in energy levels?
- 2. Pay Attention to Values:** Do you have similar values? What about your priorities? Are the values and moral-ethical or religious beliefs you hold most dearly shared and respected by this person? Are your values about drugs and alcohol shared as well as your sexual values and boundaries?
- 3. Don't Try to Change Someone Into Someone He or She Is Not:** You will be sorely disappointed if you enter a relationship thinking you can do a make-over and turn the person into the type of person you desire. Also, don't be so desperate to be in a relationship or friendship that you fool yourself about who this person really is. Support someone in making the changes he or she wants to make, but also ask yourself if you like their basic personality.
- 4. Don't Change Yourself To Get Someone's Love or Friendship:** Don't *try* to pretend or be somebody or something you are not just to gain the other person's love, friendship or acceptance. Real relationships aren't based on phony fronts. Recognize and build upon your strengths and work to make the changes and improvements on yourself that you have identified for yourself. Be real, be yourself, and remember nobody's perfect.
- 5. Expect Good Communication:** Explore your differences and pay attention to how you both deal with conflict. How well do you communicate? How do you handle anger? Is there willingness to learn and improve communication skills? Remember, how you communicate and handle conflict says a lot about your future happiness in this relationship.
- 6. Don't play games, be phony, or pressure someone:** Don't manipulate (for example, try to make someone jealous) or push someone to be in a relationship. Don't pressure or use a power advantage to get someone to do something for which they are not comfortable. A worthy and equal relationship is genuine and real, not phony. It is not one based on games, pretenses, manipulations, or pressure.
- 7. Expect Respect—Have Standards For What You Expect:** Have a standard for how you want to be treated and talked to. *Expect respect* for your values and boundaries regarding drugs, alcohol, and sex from a dating partner. Don't tolerate disrespectful or abusive behavior!

Parent/Guardian: Which do you think are most important? Do you have any additional ones to add?

Signature: _____

Smart/Not-so-Smart Instructor's Key

Guy Class Set

1) COMMON INTERESTS/ GOOD MATCH	
We are serious about school, but we have a lot of fun together too. And, we can really talk—she's one of the most interesting girls I've ever met.	SMART
I like sports and the outdoors. She doesn't. I'm basically high energy and like to try new things. She never seems to want to try anything. We mostly watch movies when we're together. But, she's hot. It'll all work out—we've got chemistry.	NOT-SO-SMART
2) PAY ATTENTION TO VALUES	
Sex means a lot to her. She's probably thinking it means we'll be together forever. Hey, I haven't thought beyond next week and my values on sex...well...why not get what you can whenever you can?	NOT-SO-SMART
She respects my values about drugs. They have really messed up my family. Even though there are a lot of opportunities to do drugs, I'm not going there.	SMART
I value self-control and honesty, but my girlfriend seems to live for the moment. She's impulsive and never thinks about how her actions hurt and effect others.	NOT-SO-SMART
She's got a reputation and now she's coming on to me. Sure I'm tempted, but my conscience tells me no.	SMART
3) DON'T TRY TO CHANGE SOMEONE INTO SOMEONE HE OR SHE ARE NOT	
My old girlfriend was always so negative about everything. I thought I could change her, but finally realized that her attitude toward life was just too different from mine. I realized that it would never work with us. I broke up with her.	SMART
My girlfriend's has a lot of problems. I don't like her friends and some of the stuff she's into. But, she's gorgeous and I think I can change her.	NOT-SO-SMART

4) DON'T CHANGE YOURSELF JUST TO GET SOMEONE'S LOVE OR FRIENDSHIP	
I don't have to be perfect. Sure, there are things that I want to improve. But, basically I want a person who likes me for who I really am.	SMART
If she knew about my family—she has money, I don't—I wouldn't have a chance. I never talk about my family and would never bring her to my house. I'd lose her.	NOT-SO-SMART
I broke up with her. It just didn't feel right. I always had to pretend I was someone I'm not. I am not going to change who I am just to keep her attention.	SMART
5) EXPECT GOOD COMMUNICATION	
We disagree about practically everything. I just try to change the subject or avoid certain topics.	NOT-SO-SMART
It's impossible not to have differences and arguments at times with someone you love. That's just life. What's important is how you handle those disagreements and control your temper.	SMART
She's always right and I'm always wrong. I think it's just better to keep my mouth shut. I hate arguing. If it's meant to be, it will just work out.	NOT-SO-SMART
6) DON'T PLAY GAMES, BE PHONY, OR PRESSURE SOMEONE	
In front of others she acts totally different than when we're alone. But even then, I can't always tell if she's being honest. I'm ending this relationship. She's a fake.	SMART
She keeps talking about commitment—even about getting married. She gets really jealous if I ever talk to another girl. Hey... I'm not ready for that yet. I'm only 18. If she doesn't stop pressuring me, I'm out.	SMART
She's coming on to the other guys just to try to make me jealous. I told her I knew what she was up to. I'm not going to play games.	SMART

I think I might be gay and my friend keeps pressuring me to have sex. He says it's no big deal, but I'm not ready to take that step. I told him no.	SMART
7) EXPECT RESPECT—HAVE STANDARDS	
You know how my buddies talk, calling girls "ho's" and "bitches." I wouldn't use that language around my girl. I respect her too much. Besides, she wouldn't put up with guys talking to her that way.	SMART
She keeps cheating on me, but then always comes back and says she's sorry. But she's hot—she's got a great body. I'm lucky to have her. I guess I have to put up with it if I want to keep her.	NOT-SO-SMART
I told my girlfriend to shut up in front of my friends and then shoved her pretty hard. I was mad, but later in private I told her I was sorry. I've got a bad temper....but hey, she should know not to push me.	NOT-SO-SMART
My religious beliefs and practice are very important to me. My girlfriend is not very religious, but respects me and shows interest in finding out more about my beliefs.	SMART

Smart/Not-so-Smart Instructor's Key

Girl Class Set

1) COMMON INTERESTS/ GOOD MATCH	
We are serious about school, but we like to party and have fun, too. We have similar interests and enjoy doing things together.	SMART
I like sports, the outdoors, and dancing. He doesn't. I'm basically a high energy person who likes to try new things. He never seems to want to try anything. We mostly watch movies when we're together. But, he's gorgeous. It'll all work out—we've got chemistry.	NOT-SO-SMART
2) PAY ATTENTION TO VALUES	
We have similar values about sex. Even though the pressures are there, we're both deciding to hold off on sex. Besides, who knows if we'll even be together after high school.	SMART
I really value self-control and honesty, but my boyfriend seems to live from moment-to-moment without thinking about how his actions hurt and effect others.	NOT-SO-SMART
I'm happy with the level our physical affection and not ready to go any further. But my boyfriend tells me everyone's doing it and I'm just uptight. Maybe I should just get it over with and have sex with him.	NOT-SO-SMART

3) DON'T TRY TO CHANGE SOMEONE INTO SOMEONE HE OR SHE IS NOT	
My top priority is going to college. My boyfriend hates school. I'm always talking him into not quitting and even do a lot of his schoolwork so he'll pass. I think I can change him.	NOT-SO-SMART
My old boyfriend was always so negative about everything. I thought I could change him, but finally realized that his attitude toward life was just too different from mine. Even though it was hard, I broke up with him.	SMART
My boyfriend's real hot, but I don't like who he hangs with or some of the stuff he's into. But, I'm the only one who really understands him and I think I can change him.	NOT-SO-SMART
4) DON'T TRY TO CHANGE YOURSELF TO GET SOMEONE'S LOVE	
I don't have to be perfect. I am who I am. Sure, there are things that I do want to improve about myself. But, basically I want to feel like someone likes me for who I really am.	SMART
If he knew about my family—his family has money and mine is poor—I wouldn't have a chance. I spend a fortune buying nice clothes. I never talk about my family and would never bring him home. I'd lose him.	NOT-SO-SMART
Even though it was hard, I broke up with him. I just didn't feel right around his friends. I always had to pretend I was someone I'm not. I don't think I should have to change who I am to fit in and keep his love.	SMART
5) EXPECT GOOD COMMUNICATION	
We disagree about practically everything, but I think with time and love everything will be alright. I just try to change the subject or avoid certain topics.	NOT-SO-SMART
It's impossible not to have differences and arguments in a serious relationship. I don't think that's necessarily bad. It's how you fight and if you show respect that matters.	SMART
He's always right and I'm always wrong. I think it's just better to keep my mouth shut. I hate arguing. I think if we love each other it will just work out.	NOT-SO-SMART

6) DON'T PLAY GAMES, BE PHONY, OR PRESSURE SOMEONE	
He pressures me and says if I don't go to these parties he'll drop me. Everyone gets totally wasted and acts like a fool. I don't really want to go, but I guess I have to if I want to keep him.	NOT-SO-SMART
In front of others he acts totally different than when we're alone. But even then, I can't always tell if he's just saying something to get me to go along with him. I'm ending this relationship. He's just too dishonest. I can't trust him.	SMART
I think I'm a lesbian and my girlfriend keeps pressuring me to have sex. She says it's no big deal—we can't get pregnant. I told her no. I'm not ready to take that step, and besides I think sex is a big deal even if you can't get pregnant.	SMART
He keeps talking about commitment—even about me having his baby. He gets really jealous if I ever talk to another guy. I'm not ready for that yet. I'm only 18. If he doesn't stop pressuring me, I'm out.	SMART
He is flirting with other girls just to try to make me jealous. I told him I knew what he was up to and to just be honest with me about his feelings. I'm not going to play games.	SMART
All my friends say it is cool to be bisexual. I'm not so sure. It's too confusing. I have lots of time to consider these things when I'm older and my identity is more formed. I'm not going to be pressured.	SMART
7) EXPECT RESPECT—HAVE STANDARDS	
He was calling girls "ho's" and "bitches" in front of me. I told him to stop talking that way; I felt disrespected. I notice he doesn't talk that way around me anymore.	SMART
I was dancing with a guy I barely knew. We started off just dancing and then he started grabbing me and dancing dirty. I told him to stop dancing that way with me and he wouldn't. I walked away.	SMART
He keeps cheating on me, but then always comes back and says he's sorry. But I really like him—he's hot and I'm lucky to have him. I guess I have to put up with it if I want to keep him.	NOT-SO-SMART
My boyfriend told me to shut up in front of my friends and then shoved me. I was mad, but later in private he said he was sorry. He's had a rough background that causes him to act that way. I know he really loves me.	NOT-SO-SMART



Compatibility Checklist



An overall principle of smart relationships is to seek a good match and to pay attention to values. What do you and your partner have in common? In which areas do you find yourselves in sync? Make a check mark beside qualities you share (for example, if you are close in age, put a checkmark). This checklist is simply a tool for helping you determine how much you possess in common with a dating partner. Consider how incompatibility in any one of these areas might cause problems in a relationship. If you do not have a dating partner or interest, complete this checklist focused on a particular friendship.

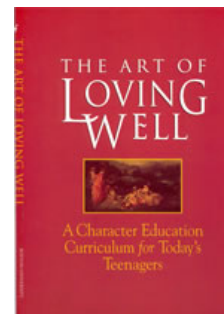
- Age
- Family Background/Upbringing
- Interests & Activities
- Attitudes about School & Educational Goals
- Use of Drugs or Alcohol
- Preferences in Music and Entertainment
- Religious or Spiritual Beliefs
- Social Life/Friends
- Goals/Vision for life in next 5 or 10 years
- Optimism & Energy level
- Self-discipline & Self-control
- Dependability & Responsibility
- Political, Moral, & Ethical Views
- Sense of Humor
- Ability to Communicate
- Ability to Manage Conflict
- Management of Anger
- Expression of Emotions
- Confidence
- Role Expectations for Males and Females
- Sexual Boundaries
- Maturity of Conscience

Problems incompatibility might cause in any of these areas: _____



The Art of Loving Well

By Nancy McLaren



THE ART OF LOVING WELL: A Character Education Curriculum for Today's

Teenagers is a nationally acclaimed, literature based relationship skills curriculum from Boston University that teaches healthy relationship skills to youth. This program teaches students about the complexities and joys of a wide variety of relationships, including friendships and family, infatuations and first romances, enduring commitments and marriage. Studying short stories, poems, essays, folk ales, and myths empowers teachers to help students connect ideas in literature to choices in real life and the skills necessary to achieve healthy relationships.

Student Text:

The Art of Loving Well anthology includes 41 selections divided into three sections: Early Loves and Losses, Romance, and Commitment and Marriage, which provide both lessons and practice. This curriculum empowers teens by honing the full range of communication and critical thinking skills, but it is also skill-based in a much broader sense. The text includes such concrete activities as rewriting a discussion to defuse anger, providing sound advice to a friend in trouble, and tending a colicky “egg baby” for four days.

Loving Well stories and poems explore universal human emotions and challenges. Experience shows That students, even students who struggle to read, are so intrigued by the stories that they read more than are assigned because the topics are so relevant to their lives. These stories teach constructive ways to resolve conflict; they teach about self-knowledge, feelings, and character; and they give language to key concepts. They also cultivate an appreciation for important communication skills like reflecting before acting and agreeing to communicate precisely, fearlessly and kindly.

Teens will learn:

- Key concepts in relationships.
- A vocabulary of self-knowledge, feelings, and character.
- Basic and subtle communication skills.
- Constructive ways to resolve conflict.
- Awareness of body language and intonations as well as word choice.
- A sense of ease with the most daunting of four letter words, L-O-V-E.

Evaluations:

Loving Well has been field tested and taught successfully in grades 7 through 12 in a broad range of language arts, English, health, counseling, and family and consumer science classes. This unique program was originally developed under a U.S. Health and Human Services grant (1987-1992) to combat the burgeoning rate of teenage pregnancy.

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Section Two: *Romance*

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Also Available: Instructor's Guide – Newly Revised!

This helpful 57 page guide offers teachers:

- Detailed guides that highlight key issues and provide questions and activities to use with each selection for each literary selection.
- Research backed, developmentally appropriate advice about how boys and girls mature differently and how to integrate their perspectives into discussions.
- Suggestions about how to use the text as a sex education supplement if desired.
- Advice about how to use the program in a fatherhood education context if desired, or as a point of departure for expanded discussions about families and fatherhood – the challenges, responsibilities, and rewards.
- Field tested hints and suggestions for implementation from experienced teachers.
- A sample journal assignment from one of the selections.
- A guide for introducing the program to students in a relatively lighthearted yet substantive way.

Literature-Based Character Education

Stephan Ellenwood

Nancy McLaren

"Relationships are the most complex things ever thought up besides computers!" Though embedded with considerable exasperation as well as awe, this insight reflects significant progress for one eighth grader in Williamstown, Massachusetts. Just six weeks earlier, before he and his classmates embarked upon an innovative educational experiment, he admittedly saw "chicks" as little more than fair targets for his unruly adolescent hormones, and the word "relationship" was not in his lexicon.

At the same time in Roxbury, one of Boston's inner city neighborhoods, chronic low achievers in another middle school classroom boasted of reading an entire book for the first time ever. Their teacher complained, with mixed emotions, of problems keeping his stock of books from disappearing. He marveled that parents, too, were often reading the homework assignments and talking to their teenagers about them.

And in rural Dudley near the Connecticut border, a thirteen-year-old girl labeled "at risk" was lamenting, "I learned practically nothing from this book. I have already learned this stuff by living my life and making mistakes... I guess I wish this book would have come out a lot earlier so I wouldn't have had to go through the things I did to learn about it."

What is this book that has adolescents clicking off their remote controls and turning to the printed word? At first glance it's an unlikely candidate for any best seller list. Its plain, red, hardcover binding with gold block lettering looks more like a volume from a set of junior encyclopedias than any publication that would appeal to teenagers. Its pages are totally devoid of pictures, and its title, *The Art of Loving Well*, has not always been a selling point. It is the forty short stories, poems, and essays in this anthology and the activities that go along with them that speak to the power of good literature and are so compelling.

The Loving Well Program teaches students about the complexities and joys of a wide variety of relationships including friendships and family, infatuations and first romances, enduring commitments and marriage. It treats sexuality education as a part of general character development and helps students develop strong personal and social ideals. Studying believable situations in short stories, poems, essays, folk tales, and myths can empower middle schools students to make wise decisions about their own lives and to grow into responsible citizens capable of a full range of healthy, loving relationships.

Roots in character education

"It's important to be virtuous; it's more important to teach others to be virtuous, and it's easier." Over the past decades, schools have not always responded well to Mark Twain's gentle coaxing. Efforts to teach students about becoming virtuous have often become misunderstood as attempts at moral control or indoctrination, and many programs are rightfully suspected of having hidden political, religious, or economic agendas. The end result is that schools have become quite afraid to teach about moral values. Unfortunately this reluctance has developed at the very time that so many are calling upon schools to help solve burgeoning problems of violence, drugs, and the erosion of civic commitment and healthy families.

Twain was not entirely accurate. Of course, it is easy to preach about virtues to others. But, to teach the importance and subtleties of character virtues can be hard. It is nonetheless a vital classroom undertaking. Schools can no longer elude their responsibility for developing students' personal and social character (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989; Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993; Leming, 1993; Lickona, 1991).

Getting the green light

The Loving Well Project began in 1987 at Boston University. Several of us at the School of Education were already enthusiastic about literature-based education as a result of The Character Project, a curriculum previously developed and field tested under a grant from the U. S. Department of Education. Although there had been no formal evaluation, teachers and students reported that the stories and activities did indeed enhance students' understanding of eight vital elements of integrity and responsible citizenship, (i.e. honesty, responsibility, respect, courage, persistence, love of country, fairness, and kindness). The precise impact on students' actions, however, was left to speculation.

When a call came from Washington challenging us to test the impact of literature-based education by tackling the problem of teenage pregnancies, The Loving Well Project was born. The Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs, a division of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, had funds from the Adolescent Family Life Act designated for prevention programs. In collaboration with College of Communication colleagues, who were to produce a videotape component of the program, we crafted a proposal and shortly thereafter celebrated its acceptance. Fortunately our confidence in the impact of literature-based curriculum outweighed our trepidation. A 1992 evaluation report based on four years of field testing with 10,000 students in urban, suburban, and rural schools confirmed the project's success.

The complete title of the text component is The Art of Loving Well: A Character Education Curriculum. It is designed to help equip students' with the inclination and ability to make careful, wise, moral choices. Each of the activities accompanying the [40 selections](#) helps students understand Erich Fromm's conclusion that all healthy relationships include basic elements of care, respect, responsibility, and knowledge (Fromm, 1956). "Growth" was added to Fromm's list as a fifth essential ingredient.

Literature-based education addresses life's complexities

Rich literature is an effective antidote to the intrinsic impulsiveness of adolescents, especially in an electronic era. If it is true that the medium is often the message, curricula that depend on careful reading and thoughtful conversation are powerful models for the responsible, informed, respectful communication essential to all healthy human relationships. In addition, literature-based education shows students that art is not an irrelevant pastime typically reserved for Sunday afternoons. On the contrary, fine literature etches life's complexities clearly and when well taught inspires us to discover wisdom for our own lives.

Too often literature has been taught as autopsy. The corpus put on the table, bright lights turned on, the blood drained, and the cold dissection continued until the remains are buried. We advocate teaching literature in ways that are not so clinical and bloodless but that are enlivening and vital ([see sample activity](#)). Good teachers first urge students to react to the selections intuitively, emotionally, vigorously, to note the appealing and appalling traits of the characters, the nuances of conflicts, and the consequences of decisions and actions. They then encourage students to go beyond their initial impressions, to revisit and refine their insights, to respect differing opinions, and to appreciate life's ambiguities. An important axiom of The Loving Well Project is that haste is an archenemy of wisdom.

Finally and most importantly, good teachers connect ideas in literature to choices in real life. Conversations begun in the classroom but expanded to include parents, other adults, and friends who are not classmates help teenagers come to appreciate the value of collective wisdom. It also helps them realize that we continue to grapple with the intricacies of relationships throughout adulthood and that the potential rewards are worth the effort. As students consider the connections to their own lives, the story can remain a sanctuary. Talking about fictional characters and events affords a measure of safety but can address very personal issues.

Although not every discussion will have immediate connections to every student's life, we believe in the squirrel theory of knowledge. Students will accumulate literary referents or nuggets of wisdom to store away until they need them sometime in the future. In any event, the school will have promoted the principle that slowing down, observing carefully, reflecting and deliberating are sound habits for making important decisions and building healthy relationships.

The three Vs: Vexing, vivid, and vicarious

The first, and perhaps most consequential, step in developing the Loving Well program required the selection of engaging stories, poems, essays, folk tales, and myths. Each literary selection needed to vex the students a bit, to be vivid enough to engage the students, and to provide a vicarious experience that would encourage students' thinking about relationships.

An author's artful use of language shapes the reader's imagination and understanding often by the choice of a single word or phrase. Therefore, in order to understand a story fully, readers must slow down, or "text crawl." No more needs to be said about the divergent backgrounds of two

classmates in Robert Cormier's "President Cleveland, Where Are You?" than that Jerry lives in a tenement while Rollie Tremaine lives in "a big white birthday cake of a house." The images and implications merit a thoughtful lingering and contribute importantly to character development.

In the same story, eleven-year-old Jerry is completely vexed by his fifteen-year-old brother who has become so Romantically bewitched that he loses interest in baseball and writes letters he never intends to send. Jerry's sense of family loyalty is strong enough that he eventually sacrifices a coveted "Official Imitation Major League Baseball Glove" in the interest of the romance, but his ambivalence is captured in three simple words, "Love, I muttered."

Another virtue of good literature is that it allows students to identify with characters most like themselves. The range of developmental differences is so broad in a typical eighth grade classroom that both Jerry's and his brother's feelings are likely to resonate.

When our eighth grader in Williamstown spoke of relationships as rivaling computers in complexity, he was beginning to understand how quality relationships demand more than merely impulsive exchanges. In a most basic sense, *Loving Well* is an anti-impulse curriculum. The characters, their problems, their feelings, and their relationships, are interesting enough that the reader wants to slow down and revisit various moments of the story for a more complete understanding. Skilled teachers reinforce this habit of reflection and sense of detail as essential to resolving each story's problems.

Vivid literature entices readers to become involved vicariously, to care about the characters and their fate. The situations are believable and relevant. It has been remarked that if we see a movie one night and involuntarily think about it the next day, then it is a film. These involuntary reflections suggest that it was a form of art, its impact beyond simple entertainment. The 40 selections in the hardcover *Art of Loving Well* anthology were selected to have a similar impact. The collection evolved over three editions and now reflects quite inclusively the cultural and ethnic diversity of our student audience.

Highly animated classroom discussions attest to the intensity with which students take the characters, the stories, and the issues to heart and allow their fictional experiences to inform their daily lives. As one student put it, "My favorite stories were 'Appointment with Love' and beauty and the Beast' because one of my weakest points is judging people by the way they look. Or that was my weakest point anyway." Clearly, this young woman has developed some meaningful literary referents to guide her future thinking and behavior.

Not only the 13-year-old in Dudley but older brothers and sisters of many *Loving Well* students comment poignantly that they wish they'd been better prepared in order to avoid the pain and sometimes tragic mistakes of early romantic encounters. Vicarious literary experiences, well taught, enable a student to enter subsequent real-life situations as an experienced person. Awash in the insecurities typical of their age, adolescents entering their teenage years tend to think confusion and uncertainty uniquely theirs. In the words of Parr (1992), an authority in the field of character education,

"...literature has the ability to break into the sense of individual isolation that so often induces moral apathy and me-ism. By giving students an awareness that they are part of a larger community, it reassures them that they alone do not carry the burden of certain thoughts, ideas and feelings" (p. 19).

The varied literary settings, the times and places near and far, underscore the universality of the literary themes and underscore the value of collective wisdom.

From time to time teachers have expressed concern that the reading level of some selections might be too difficult especially for some of the chronic low achievers who most need the curriculum. Throughout the field testing it became evident that the inherent interest level motivated students to rise to the challenge. In short, they understand far more about the stories and the issues than we would have expected. In those few cases where actual learning disabilities present obstacles to independent reading, we still contend that students should not be denied access to first rate literature. We urge teachers to read some selections aloud if need be. Perhaps some of the better readers could read the selection in a "readers' theatre" format to the class.

It is a pleasure to remind students after a vigorous, productive class discussion that all the heat and light was generated by a few printed pages not by a high-action, color enhanced, stereophonic video.

Good literature is interdisciplinary

Good literature, like life, is not only complex, it is thoroughly interdisciplinary. Its richness enables much flexibility in the classroom. Even a minor point in a story can become a major point of classroom discussion. For example, in Elizabeth Enright's "A Distant Bell," 11-year-old Susie notes a change in her father. "He looked greatly refreshed, and there was a whiff of something about him: a whiff of something to drink, I thought. I was glad. If he felt better, then I felt better, too." This observation is only one of many indications of an uneasy father-daughter relationship. Though his drinking is never mentioned again, Susie's statement can serve as a point of departure for an important discussion about uses and abuses of alcohol and its impact on relationships

Though field tested primarily in language arts classes, the Loving Well program has been adopted by many health teachers who see one of their primary goals as empowering students to build happy, productive, responsible relationships. And schools that have instituted regular advisory or guidance periods find many of these short literary selections suitable for single session discussions. It is ideal when one good story becomes the topic of the day in lunchrooms, hallways, locker rooms, and in regular classes; then the school has gone a long way toward developing the school's sense of community and commitment to character education. In describing the impact of the Loving Well curriculum on his teachers and students, John D'Auria, principal of Wellesley Middle School in suburban Boston, attests to the potential interdisciplinary impact of literature-based programs:

It grounds the quest for intimacy in thoughtful reflection; it stretches students to look beyond themselves and find what is important in friendship, family, and love. This is learning which enriches the individual and strengthens the bonds we have with each other.

The report card

No part of The Loving Well Project was more daunting than the evaluation required under our federal grant. Admittedly more inclined to the poetic and narrative than to the statistical, those of us in the Loving Well office were both grateful for and apprehensive about the grant stipulation that the formal, quantitative evaluation come from a source external to Boston University. The research evaluator hailed from Boston College.

Finding test sites was initially difficult because the questionnaire designed to evaluate changes in eighth graders' attitudes and behavior was intrusive and sexually explicit. Schools and parents who protested had a legitimate complaint. It was also unfortunate that this questionnaire administered at the outset and conclusion of the Loving Well unit set an inappropriate tone for the program, which is far more than a sex education program and does not contain sexually explicit language. However, as the Loving Well Project became known in the field test states of Massachusetts, Maine, and eventually South Carolina, schools were willing to overcome their objections in order to be included.

Another problem, albeit a gratifying one, had to do with control groups. In an attempt to establish a more rigorous evaluation standard than most other research based pregnancy prevention programs, we required teachers who taught Loving Well to use one of their classes as a control group (a group that did not study the curriculum). By giving pretests and post tests to both experimental and control groups and comparing the differences, we could more reliably determine any changes in attitudes or behavior that resulted from the curriculum. Once familiar with Loving Well, however, schools were reluctant to deny the curriculum to any eighth grade class and some only complied with our control group requirement under protest. Furthermore, the literature and discussions were so engaging that teenagers naturally wanted to talk about them with all their friends. It required significant commitment on the part of both faculty and students to minimize casual conversations about the substance of the curriculum outside the classroom in order to avoid inadvertently contaminating the control group.

Throughout the field testing, the anecdotal, or qualitative, evaluation was uniformly enthusiastic. Project staff who observed classes regularly and held periodic teacher workshops heard uniformly glowing reports from students, teachers, and those parents who could be enticed to participate. Among the most memorable was the comment from one teacher who reported that her experiences teaching The Art of Loving Well had reminded her why she had gone into education in the first place. Another claimed that "Loving Well is one of the most exciting places of discovery that I have experienced in sixteen years of teaching." And many in lauding the teacher training sessions expressed gratitude for the opportunity to contemplate good literature and discuss life and love with colleagues. Teachers were energized in ways that were evident to their students, and closer, more trusting relationships were forged in Loving Well classrooms.

The enthusiasm of parents was very much a relief. Boston University attorneys had been alerted to expect some of the controversy usually associated with sexuality education programs, but there was virtually none. Initial apprehensions were almost always allayed by close scrutiny of the book and Teacher Guide.

When it came to a statistical evaluation of the project, however, developers remained skeptical. And if the truth be known, some still wonder about the reliability of eighth graders' self-reports on sexual attitudes and behavior. However, the project evaluator found significant statistical corroboration of the positive impact of The Loving Well Project. When control group attitudes toward issues of sexuality were compared to attitudes of the experimental group, students involved in Loving Well developed a clearer understanding of both the short term and long term consequences of premature sexual activity. In higher proportions they also felt that people should not be pressured into having sex, and they did not intend to have sex while young teenagers.

This result was confirmed by another dramatic finding that focused on students who had never had sexual relations when they entered eighth grade. Those who participated in the Loving Well program were three times more likely to continue to abstain throughout the course of the eighth grade than were their control group peers. A disturbing 28% of the control group became sexually active during that year; in the experimental group that number was only 8%.

A more detailed summary of the evaluation report can be obtained by writing The Loving Well Project, School of Education, Boston University, Boston, MA 02215, or call 617-353-4088. However, nothing in the 34 pages of formal evaluation says it as well as one 15-year-old young man in Lynn, Massachusetts: "It sounds like a stupid title, but it teaches you a lot of things about life."

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