

# **SESSION 16: FRIENDS AND LOVERS**

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. Participants will determine what they are looking for in new people and what they like about men or women.
2. Participants will become more comfortable meeting new people.
3. Participants will increase their abilities to handle rejections that occur when meeting new people.
4. Participants will increase their ability to switch to positive thoughts in situations involved with meeting new people.
5. Participants will increase their ability to use open-ended questions in maintaining a conversation.
6. Participants will increase their ability to listen actively.
7. Participants will increase their comfort in sharing personal information in an intimate manner.
8. Participants will increase their ability to deal with typical situations involving new friends and lovers.
9. Participants will increase their ability to handle typical relationship issues.

## **RATIONALE**

Adolescence is generally considered a time of experimentation with social-sexual roles. Most boys and girls learn how to meet, maintain relationships and socialize with members of the opposite sex. Furthermore they learn how to attract and keep opposite-sex sexual partners. The new learning may or may not lead to effective performance, but the movement from child to young man or woman is a dominant developmental task undertaken during the adolescent period.

Experimentation and observation are critical ways to learn the sexual-social transition to adulthood. Due to society's prejudice toward people with same-sex orientations, gays and lesbians cannot openly be themselves. Nor can gay and lesbian adolescents observe healthy adult models. Therefore these young people are deprived of the opportunities to work on tasks related to intimacy. Without addressing these developmental steps, instruction in safer sex will be far less meaningful. For example, it is difficult to worry about negotiating condom and dental dam use when the teenager doesn't know how to date in the first place.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. Introduction of group members and the day's topic.
2. Checking Feeling Thermometer readings.
3. Review of successes that occurred between sessions and homework.
4. Giving out of tokens.
5. Divide group into separate sessions for females and males.
6. Determine what is liked about same-sex group and what is looked for in meeting someone.

7. Practice meeting members of the larger group and then relaxing afterwards.
8. Deal with rejection when trying to meet someone.
8. Practice changing negative thoughts that interfere with effectively meeting new people.
9. Discriminate between open ended and closed questions for keeping a conversation going.
10. Practice active listening.
11. Practice sharing some intimate information with another person.
12. Role play typical difficult situations that arise in meeting new people.
13. Practice helping someone solve a relationship issue around situations that frequently occur.

## **MATERIALS**

Tokens  
 Feeling Thermometers  
 Pencils  
 Blank index cards  
 Cards on Negative Thoughts During Meeting Someone New  
 Dear Abby Letters

### **Exercise 1: Introducing Each Other and the Session**

GROUP LEADER SAYS

Welcome back. Today's session is about having friends and lovers.

We are going to practice how to do that in the most successful way possible.

Meeting and making friends and lovers can generate all kinds of feelings.

Speaking of "feeling," how do you feel now on the Feeling Thermometer?

OBTAIN READINGS.

First, I want us to make sure we know who is in the group.

As we go around, please tell us your first name and tells us why people like you.

To start things off, I'll go first.

I'm your group leader, and my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and people like me because \_\_\_\_\_.

HAVE EACH PERSON GIVE HIS/HER NAME WHY PEOPLE LIKE HIM OR HER.HAVE THE CO-GROUP LEADER GO LAST.

Here are some tokens for you to pass out to other group members during this session.

Every time you appreciate what another person said or did or even simply their being here, give them a token.

PASS OUT TOKENS TO GROUP MEMBERS.

Show me the condoms and dental dams that you carry with you.

HAVE PARTICIPANTS SHOW THEIR CONDOMS AND DENTAL DAMS. GIVE STROKES.

Now let's take a few minutes and tell us what you did between sessions that kept you away from HIV or that made your life a little bit better.

GO AROUND AND HEAR REPORTS. GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Those were really good reports!

Also, at the last session you were asked to see how many times your friends put pressure on you to use drugs or alcohol.

What did you come up with?

ENCOURAGE RESPONSES AND DISCUSS.

As I said earlier, today we'll deal with meeting and developing friends and lovers.

As you know, the goal of all these sessions is to help you reduce your exposure to HIV.

If you already are HIV positive, then the goal is to help you live a high quality life and to learn how to keep from spreading the virus.

Today's objective is to be skilled at meeting new people and getting to know them better.

During adolescence young people experiment with how to approach other youth, how to date, how to keep a relationship going, how to set limits, how to be a friend or a lover, and how to get out of a relationship.

From this experimentation, adolescents learn how to handle relationships.

The problem is that because society is so negative toward gays and lesbians, teenaged gays and lesbians are cut off from positive role models, from other teenagers, and from their own feelings.

They don't have the chance to meet people openly, try out ways of forming relationships, and see how all this feels.

In the time that we have together today, we can't make up for all that lost time, but we will do the best we can to help you feel comfortable and improve your skills.

Knowing how to have friends and lovers is very important to feeling good about yourself, gaining support from others, and practicing safer sex.

Without friendship skills, a person is forced into lots of risky situations and choices.

Today, there will be separate sessions for young men and young women.

TAKE ONE OF THE GROUPS TO A DIFFERENT ROOM.

## **FOR LESBIAN TEENAGERS**

### **Exercise 2: What's Appealing About Young Women?**

WHEN REPEATING THE PHRASE "YOUNG WOMEN" IN THE NEXT SENTENCE, SAY EACH "YOUNG WOMEN" IN A DIFFERENT WAY.

What words come to your mind when you hear "young women," "young women," "young women"?

Write what comes to your mind on these cards.

PASS OUT BLANK CARDS AND PENCILS. AFTER A FEW MINUTES, COLLECT THE CARDS AND SHUFFLE THEM.

Will someone read the cards out to me, please?

AS THE CARDS ARE READ, WRITE THE RESPONSES UP ON NEWSPRINT WITHOUT DUPLICATING THEM. RESPONSES MIGHT INCLUDE: MOTHER, SISTER, SEX, FRIEND, LOVER, ATHLETE, BUTCH, FEM.

This time I want you write on the cards what you like about young women.

PASS OUT NEW CARDS. ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE GROUP TO WRITE RESPONSES, THEN COLLECT AND SHUFFLE THEM.

Who will help me and read out the cards as I write them on newsprint?

AS THE CARDS ARE READ, PUT THEM ON ANOTHER PIECE OF NEWSPRINT WITHOUT DUPLICATING THEM. RESPONSES MIGHT INCLUDE: BODIES, LOOKS, FEEL, LAUGHTER, SOFT SKIN, TASTE, BREASTS, CLITORIS. FEEL FREE TO STIMULATE OTHERS BY ASKING, "WHAT ABOUT....."

As you can see, there are lots of different ideas about what you like.

Now please write down what you are looking for when you want to meet another young woman.

PASS OUT BLANK CARDS. ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE GROUP TO WRITE RESPONSES. COLLECT THE CARDS AND SHUFFLE THEM.

Who will help me by reading the cards?

WRITE THE RESPONSES UP ON NEWSPRINT WITHOUT DUPLICATION. RESPONSES MIGHT INCLUDE: FRIEND, LOVER, COMPANION, PARTNER, SOMEONE TO FALL IN LOVE WITH, SOMEONE TO HAVE SEX WITH.

When you look at these three lists, what do they tell you?

ENCOURAGE RESPONSES. DISCUSS THE VARIETY OF NEEDS AND VIEWS.

What the lists say to me is that each person looks for different things from young women.

You need to figure out what you want and how to express it.

Knowing what you don't want and how to set limits is also important.

### **Exercise 3: Meeting New People**

Now we will start practicing meeting someone new.

Look around the room at the girls here.

Pick out two that you want to know better.

Introduce yourself to them and give each one of them a compliment.

It is just like we have been doing when giving each other strokes.

For example, you could compliment someone on her smile, the ways she's dressed, or something she did that was thoughtful.

So, get up and introduce yourself to two other young women in the room.

ALLOW TIME FOR INTRODUCTIONS. THEN HAVE GROUP MEMBERS RETURN TO THEIR SEATS.

Let's go around the group.

Please tell us how you felt on the Feeling Thermometer, what you liked about your introductions, and what you would do differently if you had the chance to do it again.

GO AROUND THE ROOM AND HAVE EACH PERSON GIVE A FEELING THERMOMETER READING, A COMMENT ON WHAT THEY LIKED AND WOULD DO DIFFERENTLY. GIVE OUT TOKENS.

What were some of the opening lines that people used?

ENCOURAGE SHARING OF OPENING LINES.

Thank you. Those were some good ways to start.

#### **Exercise 4: Dealing with Rejection**

To introduce the next issue I would like two people to volunteer to read the two parts in a brief scene.

Who will read Pia and who will read Nan?

SELECT VOLUNTEERS AND GIVE THEM THE SCRIPTS. HAVE THEM START READING.

##### Pia and Nan

PIA: Hi.

NAN: Hi.

PIA: Nice party.

NAN: It's great.

PIA: My name is Pia.

NAN: That's an interesting name.

PIA: Oh! Thank you. What's your name?

NAN: Nan.

PIA: Do you know a lot of people here?

NAN: Just a couple.

PIA: I don't know a soul. It's kind of intimidating.

NAN: I know what you mean.

PIA: Do you want to dance?

NAN: No thanks.

PIA: You don't like to dance?

NAN: I love it, but not now.

PIA: Nan, I'm sorry.

NAN: Look Pia. Don't apologize. I see someone over there I need to talk to. See you around.

THE END

How did the two of you feel reading those parts?

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

Did you feel rejected or rejecting?

ENCOURAGE SHARING.

How many different reasons can you think of for why Nan did not want to dance and walked away?

ENCOURAGE ANSWERS. MAKE A LIST. MAKE SURE THE LIST INCLUDES LOTS OF REASONS THAT HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH PIA: WASN'T FEELING WELL. HAS A JEALOUS LOVER. DOESN'T WANT TO BECOME ATTACHED. ETC.

If you wanted to avoid talking with someone who introduced themselves to you, what would you do?

ENCOURAGE SHARING OF IDEAS. GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Now let's look at it from Pia's point of view.

DIVIDE THE CLASS INTO PAIRS.

Take a few minutes and brainstorm what you could say or do if you were Pia to help feel better about this experience.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES OF BRAINSTORMING. THEN ASK EACH PAIR TO SHARE THEIR IDEAS. GIVE OUT TOKENS AND DISCUSS.

Sometimes people are very anxious before meeting a new person and when they start to talk.

Also, if they perceive being rejected, they can be upset as well.

A little relaxation can help.

Breathe out deeply.

PAUSE

Breathe out deeply again.

PAUSE

Breathe out deeply one more time.

PAUSE

Can you feel the warm air flowing out, and the cool air coming in?

PAUSE

Tighten up your shoulders and neck.

Bring your shoulders up to your ears.

Hold it!

PAUSE

Now let your shoulders drop, your neck flop forward, and all the tension drain away.

PAUSE

Stretch and yawn.

Stretch and yawn again.

That's all it takes.

### **Exercise 5: Dealing with Difficult Thoughts**

Sometimes, a person is inhibited because of her thoughts.

For example, if you were thinking, "What if she wants sex from me? I don't think I'm ready for that," meeting her might be awkward.

What we tell ourselves can make things easier or make things more difficult.

I'm going to pass out a card to each of you.

The card will have a thought on it.

Pass the card as instructed, and the person who gets it will read you a thought.

You tell us what you could say to yourself to counteract that thought.

For example, if the thought was, "I'm so nervous meeting this girl," my self talk might be "take a few deep breaths."

PASS OUT THE CARDS ONE AT A TIME. WAIT UNTIL THE PERSON HAS RESPONDED BEFORE GOING ON TO THE NEXT CARD.

## MEETING SOMEONE SELF-TALK CARDS

FRONT, CARD 1, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SATIN SHEETS

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO HER.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 1

EXAMPLE: RELAX. SOME THING WILL COME TO YOU. IF NOT, TELL HER YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

FRONT, CARD 2, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF PEACH SKIN

WHAT IF SHE DOESN'T LIKE ME?

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 2

EXAMPLE: I'M O.K. IF SHE DOESN'T LIKE ME, THAT'S HER PROBLEM.

FRONT, CARD 3, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SWEAT PANTS

I KNOW I'M GOING TO MESS THIS UP.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 3

EXAMPLE: STOP BEING SO NEGATIVE. I CAN HANDLE THIS.

FRONT, CARD 4, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF WARM WATER

MAYBE I SHOULDN'T INTRODUCE MYSELF BECAUSE SHE MIGHT BE HIV POSITIVE.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 4

EXAMPLE: WHEN THE TIME COMES, I CAN ASK HER. IF WE WANT SEX, WE'LL PRACTICE SAFER SEX.

FRONT, CARD 5, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SANDPAPER

WHAT IF SHE WANTS SEX AND I DON'T? THEN WHAT WILL I DO?

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 5

EXAMPLE: I'LL SAY "NO" IF I'M NOT READY. IF SHE INSISTS, I'LL FIND SOMEONE ELSE.

FRONT, CARD 6, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF LEATHER

SHE DOESN'T LOOK TRUSTWORTHY.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 6

EXAMPLE: YOU CAN'T TELL BY LOOKING. WHAT DO I HAVE TO LOSE BY INTRODUCING MYSELF?

FRONT, CARD 7, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SILK

MAYBE SHE IS NOT ABLE TO KEEP A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 7

EXAMPLE: I REALLY JUST WANT TO DATE. I'M JUMPING WAY AHEAD OF MYSELF. ONE STEP AT A TIME. I DON'T EVEN KNOW HER OR IF I WANT A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP.

FRONT, CARD 8, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF MARBLE

I WANT SOMEONE WHO ENJOYS SEX. SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE MAY BE PRUDISH.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 8

EXAMPLE: I'LL NEVER KNOW UNTIL I TRY IT. I THINK I'M MAKING EXCUSES.

That was very good.

You can see both how what we think can make introducing yourself even harder and how to fix that.

### **Exercise 6: Open Ended Questions**

One way to start a conversation is by using open-ended questions.

An open-ended question is one that can not be answered by saying either yes or no.

An open-ended question forces the other person to open up and talk.

It keeps the conversation going.

Open-ended questions often start with these words: Why....? How....? What about ....?

Why do you think Paula left New York?

How did you find a place to live?

What about that new rap group?

We'll go around the room, and I will ask you a question.

You tell me if it is open ended.

ASK EACH PERSON A QUESTION AND SEE IF THEY CAN PICK OUT WHETHER IT IS OPEN OR CLOSED.  
GIVE OUT TOKENS.

### **OPEN OR CLOSED QUESTIONS**

1. Are you going to the party tonight? (closed)
2. What kind of music do you like? (open)
3. Do you have a lover? (closed)
4. When you look for a friend, what qualities are most important to you? (open)
5. When you meet someone new, what kind of thoughts go through your head? (open)
6. How do you feel about practicing safer sex? (open)
7. The first time we met were you nervous? (closed)
8. What kinds of things really turn you on sexually? (open)

That was great.

Now let's look at the most important skill in meeting new people.

### **Exercise 7: Active Listening**

People really respond to someone who gives them their attention and communicates that they got their message.

The message usually has two parts to it.

First, there is the content or what the person said.

Second, there are the feelings behind it.

Your posture is important in actively listening to another person.

Sit in front of the person.

Maintain eye contact.

Lean forward.

To show that you heard the other person, you need to tell them what they felt and what they said.

For example, if the other person said, "I am sick and tired of being alone all the time."

You might respond by saying, "You feel upset because you have no friends."

Who will help me demonstrate how you do it?

SELECT A VOLUNTEER.

Thank you.

PUT TWO CHAIRS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM. YOU SIT IN ONE OF THEM. ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO SIT IN THE OTHER. HAVE HER TELL YOU HOW SHE FELT AND WHY WHEN SHE DID THE INTRODUCTIONS EARLIER IN THE SESSION. MODEL THE CORRECT POSTURE. THEN MODEL ACTIVE LISTENING BY SAYING "YOU FELT \_\_\_\_\_ BECAUSE \_\_\_\_\_."

Sit here and tell me how you felt when you introduced yourself to a couple of other girls earlier in the session and why you felt that way.

RESPOND TO HER STATEMENT WITH BOTH FEELING AND CONTENT IDENTIFIED. ALSO DON'T PARROT THE OTHER PERSONS EXACT WORDS. PARAPHRASE INSTEAD.

Ok, now I'll sit here and each of you come forward, get in the right listening posture and respond to what I tell you.

HAVE EACH PERSON COME UP ONE AT A TIME. SHE SHOULD SIT IN THE CHAIR YOU HAVE PLACED IN FRONT OF YOU. TURN THE CHAIR A LITTLE OFF CENTER AND SEE IF PEOPLE SET IT UP SO THAT IT IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU AGAIN. READ THEM A STATEMENT FROM THE LIST BELOW AND HAVE HER RESPOND. FEEL FREE TO COACH PEOPLE SO THAT THEY GET THE IDEA AND CAN DEMONSTRATE IT.

### **ACTIVE LISTENING STATEMENTS**

1. I wanted to introduce myself to this new girl, Lisa, but I'm afraid that she won't like me. She's very athletic, and I'm not big into sports.
2. It is embarrassing. Every time I think of Mary, I start to feel sexually stimulated. I hope no one can tell.
3. My goal in life is to become a physician, but I'll never make it. I haven't got the money to go to school.
4. I hate living on the streets, but I won't go back home. My parents threw me out when I told them I was a lesbian.

5. I love hanging out in the park. But that's the way I am. A nature lover. Flowers, plants, animals—they really interest me.
6. I wish I wasn't so awkward. I'm really clumsy. That's why Maria and I won't hit it off. She's a dancer.
7. I'm so moody. No one can stand being around me. I wish I could be happier.
8. I feel so guilty that I stood Joyce up. I just didn't have the heart to tell her that I liked Barbara.

You all really worked on that one.

How do you feel now on the Feeling Thermometer?

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

### **Exercise 8: Sharing an Intimacy**

Now I want you to practice sharing something personal so that you can feel comfortable doing that with another person.

First, get a partner.

HELP THE GROUP PAIR UP.

Now stand about 4 feet from your partner.

Imagine yourself at a party where there are lots of other lesbian teenagers.

PAUSE

Now stand like you would if you were trying to attract somebody.

PAUSE

Freeze the pose.

It is all right to laugh or giggle if you feel like it.

PAUSE

Look at your partner.

What name would you give to the pose she is holding?

PAUSE

What name would you give to your pose?

PAUSE

Remember those names.

Now take a deep breath.

Think of standing undressed in front of a mirror.

Look at yourself.

PAUSE

What part of your body are you happy with?

Take a deep breath and walk toward your partner.

Tell her what part of yourself you are pleased with.

WAIT FOR PARTICIPANTS TO TALK TO EACH OTHER.

If you wish, you can tell her the name you gave to your own pose.

PAUSE

Tell us how you felt sharing something intimate with a stranger and tell us if you were surprised by anything that happened or that you noticed.

GO AROUND THE ROOM AND HAVE EACH PERSON SHARE HER FEELINGS AND OBSERVATIONS.  
GIVE OUT TOKENS.

### **Exercise 9: Typical Situations With New People**

You have been learning some new tools to help in meeting and getting to know young women.

Now we want to practice applying those skills to typical situations that come up when meeting new people.

Everyone will have a chance at role playing one of these situations.

So, who will play Alison and who will play Benita?

SELECT VOLUNTEERS. READ THE SCENE TO THE VOLUNTEERS.

#### **Alison and Benita**

Benita, recently a girl in your math class passed you a note. It said, "I'm a lesbian. Are you?" The note was signed "Alison." You were really surprised. You have not met a lesbian teenager before. Also you wondered how she could tell that you were a lesbian too. Afterwards, you smiled at her, and she smiled back. You haven't spoken to her since then, but you would like to arrange a time when you could meet in private and get to know each other.

Role play Benita's asking Alison to meet some place in private.

The rest of the group will be observers with specific tasks.

ASSIGN OBSERVATIONAL TASKS.

You watch for their .....facial expressions  
voice tones  
postures  
words  
gestures  
voice levels

eye contact

Let's get started.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE ROLE PLAY.

That was great!

GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Will Alison and Benita tell us how you felt, what you liked about what you did, and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

Let's hear from the observers.

Tell us what you observed, what you liked and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES AND DISCUSS.

We'll try another one.

Who will be Cora and who will be Dawn?

SELECT VOLUNTEERS AND READ THE SCENE BELOW.

Cora and Dawn

Cora, you met Dawn about two weeks ago. Since that time, the two of you have walked around and talked quite a bit. Tonight you were watching TV together at Dawn's apartment. The movie is just about ending. Cora, you realize that you would like to have Dawn as a friend—not a lover. Dawn, Cora really turns you on. There is something very sexy about her. You want a relationship with her badly.

Role play this situation.

The rest of the group will be observers with specific tasks.

ASSIGN OBSERVATIONAL TASKS.

You watch for their .....facial expressions  
voice tones  
postures  
words  
gestures  
voice levels  
eye contact

Let's get started.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE ROLE PLAY.

That was great!

GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Will Cora and Dawn tell us how you felt, what you liked about what you did, and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

Let's hear from the observers.

Tell us what you observed, what you liked and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES AND DISCUSS.

We'll try another one.

Who will be Eileen and who will be Fanny?

SELECT VOLUNTEERS AND READ THE SCENE BELOW.

Eileen and Fanny

Eileen is twenty and Fanny is fifteen. Fanny, Eileen is the first lesbian you have ever met. You are really attracted to Eileen—so much so that it almost scares you. Fanny, you want to move in with Eileen and have her totally to yourself, night and day. Eileen, you like a young lover for a little variety, but you prize your freedom and your privacy. You won't make commitments to anybody.

Role play Fanny asking Eileen to move in with her.

The rest of the group will be observers with specific tasks.

ASSIGN OBSERVATIONAL TASKS.

You watch for their .....facial expressions

voice tones

postures

words

gestures

voice levels

eye contact

Let's get started.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE ROLE PLAY.

That was great!

GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Will Eileen and Fanny tell us how you felt, what you liked about what you did, and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

Let's hear from the observers.

Tell us what you observed, what you liked and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES AND DISCUSS.

We'll try one more.

Who will play Gladys and who will play Holly?

SELECT THE VOLUNTEERS AND READ THE SCENE BELOW TO THEM.

Gladys and Holly

Gladys, Holly excites you. All week long you have thought about making love with her. At last here the two of you are kissing and caressing each other. All of Holly's clothes are off except her panties. Gladys, you start to remove Holly's panties, and she says, "Please don't touch them. This is as far as I go." Gladys, you are shocked. This isn't what you had been dreaming about. Holly, you want a much deeper relationship before more intense sex takes place.

Role play this scene.

The rest of the group will be observers with specific tasks.

ASSIGN OBSERVATIONAL TASKS.

You watch for their .....facial expressions  
voice tones  
postures  
words  
gestures  
voice levels  
eye contact

Let's get started.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE ROLE PLAY.

That was great!

GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Will Gladys and Holly tell us how you felt, what you liked about what you did, and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

Let's hear from the observers.

Tell us what you observed, what you liked and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES AND DISCUSS.

**Exercise 10: Dealing with Relationship Issues**

After you have met someone and gotten to know them a little better, your relationship grows, maybe changes.

What are some of the ways people handle the issues that come up?

How do you share with your friend or partner what you want while at the same time respecting what the other person's needs are?

Is there a "right way" to date, express feelings, turn the relationship toward sex, and end the relationship?

Are there social standards and expectations that we need to be aware of?

This topic is a good place to learn from each other.

We are going to have a chance to help a lesbian teenager.

This teenager has written to Dear Abby about a problem she is having.

I'm going to ask you to meet in small groups and write out a response to the letter and its questions.

Then we will get back together again and share the letters to Dear Abby and our responses to them.

DIVIDE THE GROUP INTO SMALL GROUPS OF THREE PEOPLE. GIVE EACH GROUP A DIFFERENT DEAR ABBY LETTER. THERE MAY BE MORE LETTERS THAN THERE ARE GROUPS. DETERMINE WHICH LETTERS ARE MOST RELEVANT FOR THE PARTICIPANTS. ALLOW TEN MINUTES FOR EACH GROUP TO WRITE OUT A RESPONSE. THEN HAVE THEM COME BACK TOGETHER AGAIN AND SHARE THE "DEAR ABBY" LETTER AND THEIR ANSWER TO IT. DISCUSS THE SMALL GROUPS' RESPONSE AND GET RESPONSES FROM THE OTHER SMALL GROUPS. THEN MOVE ON TO THE NEXT SMALL GROUP'S LETTER.

### **DEAR ABBY LETTERS**

Dear Abby,

Finally I have met a bunch of girls who are lesbians like me. The prettiest in the group is Irene. We all kid a lot and have a great time, but Irene is something special. I would love to get her alone so we could become closer. What should I look for to see if Irene would like me to approach her? What kind of hints do I drop and how? I'm new at this. How do you ask somebody out?

Scared Sharon

Dear Abby,

I am 16 and have never dated. I have always preferred other girls. I went to a teen center for gays and lesbians recently. I want to know if there is a right way to date another girl. I can't find any books that tell me how it should be done.

In the Dark Deidre

Dear Abby,

I met Jessie about two months ago, and we have become good friends. Recently it became clear to me that my feelings for her have become passionate. At her birthday party last night I kissed her and she held it more than a friend might. I wonder if her feelings are changing too. How do I know if she wants me like I want her? What will happen if I bring sex into our relationship? Is it the wrong move? Help! What do I do now?

Confused Clarissa

Dear Abby,

I have been going out with Karen for a month. She is my first lesbian lover, and because she is older than I am she can teach me a great deal. But I can't get her out of my mind. And I am so jealous. I wait for her after work, follow

her around. I just can't get enough of her. She tells me to see other lesbian girls my age and have some friends, but I can't do it. Is there something wrong with me? How can I have Karen all to myself? Could my jealousy drive her away? Please, please help. What in the world am I to do?

Dependent Daphne

Dear Abby,

There is no question that I am a lesbian, even though I have not come out. I have a question, but don't know who to talk to. I am not into sex that much, but I would die for some friends. I read somewhere that lesbian women have more sex than straight women. Is it possible to have lesbian friends without getting all sexual?

Chaste Charlene

Dear Abby,

Lena and I went out over the weekend for the first time, and it was terrific. I liked her, and she liked me—I know. She said she'd call me on Monday to set up another date. It is Wednesday, and she hasn't called. Should I call her? Will she think I am too forward? I really want this relationship to go. Could I drive her away by being too overeager? I'm new at this, Abby. Give me a hand.

Overeager Olive

Dear Abby,

Monica and I have been very close for three months. We were both very much in love. I guess it is my fault, but after awhile her beauty and wit weren't enough. She started to seem self-centered to me. I still like Monica and don't want to hurt her, but I want to go out with other people. What should I do? Are there some signals I should start giving her? How can I drop her as a lover so that she doesn't get damaged in some way? Isn't there some easy, "right" way to do this?

Guilty Gwen

Dear Abby,

Nadine and I are going steady. I care deeply about her. Lately Nadine tells me she has to stay late for work. Once her friend from Chicago came, and Nadine said that we all three couldn't go out together. Only Nadine and her friend went. It is little things like these that have me worried. Is Nadine telling me something? What should I look for to see if she is growing away? Should I just ask her if she is getting tired of me? Is it all in my head? What should I do?

Rejected Rosita

Dear Abby,

I am 17 and hang out in the lesbian crowd. That's where I am most comfortable and can be myself. Recently I have wondered what it would be like to go out with a boy and, if he were nice, sleep with him. My friends think I am crazy. I guess it is an off the wall idea, but should I try it?

Curious Carole

Dear Abby,

I am attracted to an older woman. Marsha is thirty-five. I know she's very attracted to me. Should I let the age difference get in the way of a promising relationship. I am 16. My friends say I'm jailbait. What should I do?

Risky Rita

Those were very good discussions of some really tricky issues.

How are you feeling right now on the Feeling Thermometer?

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

For homework I want you to select a friend and practice active listening with that friend, really hearing what is being said.

We are at the end of today's session.

Let's take a few minutes and go around, giving appreciation to each other for people's presence and participation.

GIVE STROKES TO EACH OTHER. MAKE SURE EVERYONE GETS SOME TOKENS.

Thank you for your hard work today.

We will meet next time at \_\_\_\_\_ (time) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

THE END OF SESSION 16

## **FOR GAY TEENAGERS**

### **Exercise 2: What's Appealing About Young Men?**

WHEN REPEATING THE PHRASE "YOUNG MEN" IN THE NEXT SENTENCE, SAY EACH "YOUNG MEN" IN A DIFFERENT WAY.

What words come to your mind when you hear "young men," "young men," "young men?"

Write what comes to your mind on these cards.

Don't put your name on the cards, so you can write whatever you want.

PASS OUT BLANK CARDS AND PENCILS. AFTER A FEW MINUTES, COLLECT THE CARDS AND SHUFFLE THEM.

Will someone read the cards out to me, please?

AS THE CARDS ARE READ, WRITE THE RESPONSES UP ON NEWSPRINT WITHOUT DUPLICATING THEM. RESPONSES MIGHT INCLUDE: FATHER, BROTHER, SEX, FRIEND, LOVER, ATHLETE.

This time I want you write on the cards what you like about young men.

PASS OUT NEW CARDS. ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE GROUP TO WRITE RESPONSES, THEN COLLECT AND SHUFFLE THEM.

Who will help me and read out the cards as I write them on newsprint?

AS THE CARDS ARE READ, PUT THEM ON ANOTHER PIECE OF NEWSPRINT WITHOUT DUPLICATING THEM. RESPONSES MIGHT INCLUDE: BODIES, LOOKS, FEEL, LAUGHTER, JUST A LITTLE HAIR, TASTE, COCKS. FEEL FREE TO STIMULATE OTHERS BY ASKING, "WHAT ABOUT....."

As you can see, there are lots of different ideas about what you like.

Now please write down what you are looking for when you want to meet another young man.

PASS OUT BLANK CARDS. ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE GROUP TO WRITE RESPONSES. COLLECT THE CARDS AND SHUFFLE THEM.

Who will help me by reading the cards?

WRITE THE RESPONSES UP ON NEWSPRINT WITHOUT DUPLICATION. RESPONSES MIGHT INCLUDE: FRIEND, LOVER, BUDDY, PARTNER, SOMEONE TO FALL IN LOVE WITH, SOMEONE TO HAVE SEX WITH.

When you look at these three lists, what do they tell you?

ENCOURAGE RESPONSES. DISCUSS THE VARIETY OF NEEDS AND VIEWS.

What the lists say to me is that each person looks for different things from young men.

You need to figure out what you want and how to express it.

Knowing what you don't want and how to set limits is also important.

### **Exercise 3: Meeting New People**

Now we will start practicing meeting someone new.

Look around the room at the guys here.

Pick out two that you want to know better.

Introduce yourself to them and give each one of them a compliment.

It is just like we have been doing when giving each other strokes.

For example, you could compliment someone on his smile, the ways he's dressed, or something you observed earlier.

So, get up and introduce yourself to two other young men in the room.

ALLOW TIME FOR INTRODUCTIONS. THEN HAVE GROUP MEMBERS RETURN TO THEIR SEATS.

Let's go around the group.

Please tell us how you felt on the Feeling Thermometer, what you liked about your introductions, and what you would do differently if you had the chance to do it again.

GO AROUND THE ROOM AND HAVE EACH PERSON GIVE A FEELING THERMOMETER READING, A COMMENT ON WHAT THEY LIKED AND WOULD DO DIFFERENTLY. GIVE OUT TOKENS.

What were some of the opening lines that people used?

ENCOURAGE SHARING OF OPENING LINES.

Thank you. Those were some good ways to start.

### **Exercise 4: Dealing with Rejection**

Would two people please volunteer to read this brief scene?

Who will read Ezra and who will read Gus?

SELECT TWO VOLUNTEERS. GIVE THEM THE SCRIPTS AND HAVE THEM READ.

#### **Ezra and Gus**

EZRA: Excuse me.

GUS: Yeah?

EZRA: How far down the beach is it to Cherry Grove?

GUS: About a twenty minute walk. See where the houses stop down there.

EZRA: There's an open space.

GUS: Now you see where they start up again. That's the grove.

EZRA: That's closer than I thought.

GUS: The beach distorts distances.

EZRA: My name is Ezra.

GUS: I'm Gus.

EZRA: You have a place out here?

GUS: I share a house with 5 other guys.

EZRA: I'm just visiting for the weekend.

GUS: Your first time at Fire Island?

EZRA: Yes. It's great! Would you like to take a walk down to Cherry Grove?

GUS: No thanks. Have a nice walk.

THE END

Thanks that was great.

GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Would the two of you please tell us how you experienced that scene?

ENCOURAGE SHARING.

What are as many reasons as you can think of for why Gus did not go on a walk with Ezra?

MAKE A LIST. SHOW HOW MANY OF THE REASONS HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH EZRA.

If you had to reject someone's initial attempts to strike up a relationship, how would you go about doing it so that you were true to yourself but not hurtful to the other person?

ENCOURAGE SHARING AND DISCUSSION.

Divide the group into pairs.

If you had been Ezra, how would you have dealt with Gus's rejection so that you still felt good about yourself?

ALLOW TIME FOR THINKING ABOUT RESPONSES. THEN BRING THE GROUP BACK TOGETHER AND ASK EACH PAIR FOR THEIR IDEAS.

Those were some very useful ideas.

Sometimes people are very anxious before meeting a new person and when they start to talk.

A little relaxation can help.

Breathe out deeply.

PAUSE

Breathe out deeply again.

PAUSE

Breathe out deeply one more time.

PAUSE

Can you feel the warm air flowing out, and the cool air coming in?

PAUSE

Tighten up your shoulders and neck.

Bring your shoulders up to your ears.

Hold it!

PAUSE

Now let your shoulders drop, your neck flop forward, and all the tension drain away.

PAUSE

Stretch and yawn.

Stretch and yawn again.

That's all it takes.

### **Exercise 5: Dealing with Difficult Thoughts**

Sometimes a person is inhibited because of his thoughts.

For example, if you were thinking, "What if this guy wants sex from me? I don't think I'm ready for that," meeting him might be awkward.

What we tell ourselves can make things easier or make things more difficult.

I'm going to pass out a card to each of you.

The card will have a thought on it.

Pass the card as instructed, and the person who gets it will read you a thought.

You tell us what you could say to yourself to counteract that thought.

For example, if the thought was, "I'm so nervous meeting this guy," my self talk might be "take a few deep breaths."

**PASS OUT THE CARDS ONE AT A TIME. WAIT UNTIL THE PERSON HAS RESPONDED BEFORE GOING ON TO THE NEXT CARD.**

## MEETING SOMEONE SELF-TALK CARDS

FRONT, CARD 1, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SATIN SHEETS

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO HIM.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 1

EXAMPLE: RELAX. SOME THING WILL COME TO YOU. IF NOT, TELL HIM YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

FRONT, CARD 2, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF PEACH SKIN

WHAT IF HE DOESN'T LIKE ME?

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 2

EXAMPLE: I'M O.K. IF HE DOESN'T LIKE ME, THAT'S HIS PROBLEM.

FRONT, CARD 3, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SWEAT PANTS

I KNOW I'M GOING TO MESS THIS UP.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 3

EXAMPLE: STOP BEING SO NEGATIVE. I CAN HANDLE THIS.

FRONT, CARD 4, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF WARM WATER

MAYBE I SHOULDN'T INTRODUCE MYSELF BECAUSE HE MIGHT BE HIV POSITIVE.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 4

EXAMPLE: WHEN THE TIME COMES, I CAN ASK HIM. IF WE WANT SEX, WE'LL PRACTICE SAFER SEX.

FRONT, CARD 5, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SANDPAPER

WHAT IF HE WANTS SEX AND I DON'T? THEN WHAT WILL I DO?

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 5

EXAMPLE: I'LL SAY "NO" IF I'M NOT READY. IF HE INSISTS, I'LL FIND SOMEONE ELSE.

FRONT, CARD 6, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF LEATHER

HE DOESN'T LOOK TRUSTWORTHY.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 6

EXAMPLE: YOU CAN'T TELL BY LOOKING. WHAT DO I HAVE TO LOSE BY INTRODUCING MYSELF?

FRONT, CARD 7, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SILK

MAYBE HE IS NOT ABLE TO KEEP A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 7

EXAMPLE: I'M JUMPING WAY AHEAD OF MYSELF. ONE STEP AT A TIME. I DON'T EVEN KNOW HIM OR IF I WANT A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP.

FRONT, CARD 8, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF MARBLE

I WANT SOMEONE WHO LIKES HOT SEX. HE LOOKS TOO COOL.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 8

EXAMPLE: I'LL NEVER KNOW UNTIL I TRY IT. I THINK I'M MAKING EXCUSES.

That was very good.

You can see both how what we think can make introducing yourself even harder and how to fix that.

### **Exercise 6: Open Ended Questions**

One way to start a conversation is through using open-ended questions.

An open-ended question is one that can not be answered by saying either yes or no.

An open-ended question forces the other person to open up and talk.

It keeps the conversation going.

Open-ended questions often start with these words: Why....? How....? What about ....?

Why do you think Paul left New York?

How did you find a place to live?

What about that new rap group?

We'll go around the room, and I will ask you a question.

You tell me if it is open ended.

ASK EACH PERSON A QUESTION AND SEE IF THEY CAN PICK OUT WHETHER IT IS OPEN OR CLOSED.  
GIVE OUT TOKENS.

### **OPEN OR CLOSED QUESTIONS**

1. Are you going to the party tonight? (closed)
2. What kind of music do you like? (open)
3. Do you have a lover? (closed)
4. When you look for a friend, what qualities are most important to you? (open)
5. When you meet someone new, what kind of thoughts go through your head? (open)
6. How do you feel about practicing safer sex? (open)
7. The first time we met, were you nervous? (closed)
8. What kinds of things really turn you on sexually? (open)

That was great.

Now let's look at the most important skill in meeting new people.

### **Exercise 7: Active Listening**

People really respond to someone who gives them their attention and communicates that they got their message.

The message usually has two parts to it.

First, there is the content or what the person said.

Second, there are the feelings behind it.

Your posture is important in actively listening to another person.

Sit in front of the person.

Maintain eye contact.

Lean forward.

To show that you heard the other person, you need to tell them what they felt and what they said.

For example, if the other person said, "I am sick and tired of being alone all the time."

You might respond by saying, "You feel upset because you have no friends."

Who will help me demonstrate how you do it?

SELECT A VOLUNTEER.

Thank you.

PUT TWO CHAIRS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM. YOU SIT IN ONE OF THEM. ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO SIT IN THE OTHER. HAVE THEM TELL YOU HOW THEY FELT AND WHY WHEN THEY DID THE INTRODUCTIONS EARLIER IN THE SESSION. MODEL THE CORRECT POSTURE. THEN MODEL ACTIVE LISTENING BY SAYING "YOU FELT \_\_\_\_\_ BECAUSE \_\_\_\_\_."

Sit here and tell me how you felt when you introduced yourself to a couple of other guys earlier in the session and why you felt that way.

RESPOND TO HIS STATEMENT WITH BOTH FEELING AND CONTENT IDENTIFIED. ALSO DON'T PARROT THE OTHER PERSONS EXACT WORDS. PARAPHRASE INSTEAD.

Ok, now I'll sit here and each of you come forward, get in the right listening posture and respond to what I tell you.

HAVE EACH PERSON COME UP ONE AT A TIME. THEY SHOULD SIT IN THE CHAIR YOU HAVE PLACED IN FRONT OF YOU. TURN THE CHAIR A LITTLE OFF CENTER AND SEE IF PEOPLE SET IT UP SO THAT IT IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU AGAIN. READ THEM A STATEMENT FROM THE LIST BELOW AND HAVE THEM RESPOND. FEEL FREE TO COACH PEOPLE SO THAT THEY GET THE IDEA AND CAN DEMONSTRATE IT.

### **ACTIVE LISTENING STATEMENTS**

1. I wanted to introduce myself to this new guy, Bill, but I'm afraid that he won't like me. He's an athlete, and I'm not big into sports.
2. It is embarrassing. Every time I think of Jack, I start to feel aroused. It happens in public too.

3. My goal in life is to become an architect, but I'll never make it. I haven't got the money to go to school.
4. I hate living on the streets, but I won't go back home. They threw me out when I told them I was gay.
5. I love hanging out in the park. But that's the way I am. A nature lover. Plants, animals—they really interest me.
6. I wish I could dance better. I'm so clumsy. That's why Steve and I won't hit it off.
7. I'm so moody. No one can stand being around me. I wish I could be happier.
8. I feel so guilty that I stood Fred up. I just didn't have the heart to tell him that I liked Bobby.

You all really worked on that one.

How do you feel now on the Feeling Thermometer?

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

### **Exercise 8: Sharing an Intimacy**

Now I want you to practice sharing something personal so that you can feel comfortable doing that with another person.

First, get a partner.

HELP THE GROUP PAIR UP.

Now stand about 4 feet from your partner.

Imagine yourself in a place where you have gone to meet another gay teenager.

PAUSE

Now stand like you would if you were trying to attract somebody.

PAUSE

Freeze the pose.

It is all right to laugh if you feel like it.

PAUSE

Look at your partner.

What name would you give to the pose he is holding?

PAUSE

What name would you give to your pose?

PAUSE

Remember those names.

Think of standing naked in front of a mirror.

Look at yourself.

What part of your body are you happy with?

Take a deep breath and walk toward your partner.

Tell him what part of yourself you are pleased with.

Now tell each other what name you gave to the pose that your partner held and what name you gave to your own pose.

Take a few deep breaths and return to your seat.

That was a hard exercise to do.

Tell us how you felt sharing something intimate with a stranger and tell us if you were surprised by anything that happened or that you noticed.

GO AROUND THE ROOM AND HAVE EACH PERSON SHARE HIS FEELINGS AND OBSERVATIONS. GIVE OUT TOKENS.

### **Exercise 9: Typical Situations With New People**

You have been learning some new tools to help in meeting and getting to know young men.

Now we want to practice applying those skills to typical situations that come up when meeting new people.

Everyone will have a chance at role playing one of these situations.

So, who will play Raul and who will play Peter?

SELECT VOLUNTEERS. READ THE SCENE TO THE VOLUNTEERS.

#### **Raul and Peter**

Raul, you have never really come in contact with other gay youth before. Recently you went to a center for gay and lesbian teenagers. You noticed Peter there and have spoken to him briefly. You helped out on a dance where he was in charge of the work crew. He seems very attractive. You want to ask him for a date so that you can get to know him better. Peter, you are active in the center for gay and lesbian teenagers. You have no one that you are going with currently. Raul, who is new to the center, has spoken to you several times and seems like a friendly person.

Role play Raul's asking Peter for a date.

The rest of the group will be observers with specific tasks.

ASSIGN OBSERVATIONAL TASKS.

You watch for their .....facial expressions  
voice tones  
postures  
words

gestures  
voice levels  
eye contact

Let's get started.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE ROLE PLAY.

That was great!

GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Will Peter and Raul tell us how you felt, what you liked about what you did, and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

Let's hear from the observers.

Tell us what you observed, what you liked and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES AND DISCUSS.

We'll try another one.

Who will be Arthur and who will be Greg?

SELECT VOLUNTEERS AND READ THE SCENE BELOW.

Arthur and Greg

Arthur and Greg, you have just recently met. You decided to go to the zoo together to get to know each other a little better. The sun is setting and the afternoon is ending. And Arthur decides that he wants Greg as a friend—not as a lover. Greg, you are really turned on by Arthur. You would love to hold him and see him again and again.

Role play this situation.

The rest of the group will be observers with specific tasks.

ASSIGN OBSERVATIONAL TASKS.

You watch for their .....facial expressions  
voice tones  
postures  
words  
gestures  
voice levels  
eye contact

Let's get started.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE ROLE PLAY.

That was great!

GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Will Arthur and Greg tell us how you felt, what you liked about what you did, and what you would do differently?

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

Let's hear from the observers.

Tell us what you observed, what you liked and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES AND DISCUSS.

We'll try another one.

Who will be Wesley and who will be Steven?

SELECT VOLUNTEERS AND READ THE SCENE BELOW.

Wesley and Steven

Wesley, you were just hanging out on the street the first time that Steven came by and asked for directions. He showed up several times more, and you got to talking. The two of you seem to have a great deal in common. Wesley, you could like Steven a lot, but he's never said anything to let you know if he was gay. You told him that you were. Wesley, you want to know if Steven is gay before getting more attached to him. Steven, you are not sure what you are and try to avoid thinking about it.

Role play this scene.

The rest of the group will be observers with specific tasks.

ASSIGN OBSERVATIONAL TASKS.

You watch for their .....facial expressions  
voice tones  
postures  
words  
gestures  
voice levels  
eye contact

Let's get started.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE ROLE PLAY.

That was great!

GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Will Wesley and Steven tell us how you felt, what you liked about what you did, and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

Let's hear from the observers.

Tell us what you observed, what you liked and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES AND DISCUSS.

We'll try one more.

Who will play Luis and who will play James?

SELECT THE VOLUNTEERS AND READ THE SCENE BELOW TO THEM.

Luis and James

Luis and James, you recently met, like each other a great deal, and are having your first sexual experience. You are both undressed and turned on. So far, it has been all kissing, holding and caressing. Luis, you are getting ready to suck James cock. James says to you, "Leave my body alone. This is as far as I go." Luis, you are very surprised. You feel real hot and had expected more than this. Steven you want to play it very safe. Also Steven doesn't think he knows Luis well enough.

Role play this scene.

The rest of the group will be observers with specific tasks.

ASSIGN OBSERVATIONAL TASKS.

You watch for their .....facial expressions  
voice tones  
postures  
words  
gestures  
voice levels  
eye contact

Let's get started.

ALLOW A FEW MINUTES FOR THE ROLE PLAY.

That was great!

GIVE OUT TOKENS.

Will Luis and James tell us how you felt, what you liked about what you did, and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

Let's hear from the observers.

Tell us what you observed, what you liked and what you would do differently.

OBTAIN RESPONSES AND DISCUSS.

**Exercise 10: Dealing with Relationship Issues**

After you have met someone and got to know them a little better, your relationship grows, maybe changes.

What are some of the ways people handle the issues that come up?

How do you share with your friend or partner what you want while at the same time respecting what the other person's needs are?

Is there a "right way" to date, express feelings, turn the relationship toward sex, and end the relationship?

Are there social standards and expectations that we need to be aware of?

This topic is a good place to learn from each other.

We are going to have a chance to help a gay teenager.

This teenager has written to Dear Abby about a problem he is having.

I'm going to ask you to meet in small groups and write out a response to the letter and its questions.

Then we will get back together again and share the letters to Dear Abby and our responses to them.

DIVIDE THE GROUP INTO SMALL GROUPS OF THREE PEOPLE. GIVE EACH GROUP A DIFFERENT DEAR ABBY LETTER. THERE MAY BE MORE LETTERS THAN THERE ARE GROUPS. DETERMINE WHICH LETTERS ARE MOST RELEVANT FOR THE PARTICIPANTS. ALLOW TEN MINUTES FOR EACH GROUP TO WRITE OUT A RESPONSE. THEN HAVE THEM COME BACK TOGETHER AGAIN AND SHARE THE "DEAR ABBY" LETTER AND THEIR ANSWER TO IT. DISCUSS THE SMALL GROUP'S RESPONSE AND GET RESPONSES FROM THE OTHER SMALL GROUPS. THEN MOVE ON TO THE NEXT SMALL GROUP'S LETTER.

### **DEAR ABBY LETTERS**

Dear Abby,

A month ago Robert and I started doing things as friends. Then we became really close friends. But there may be a change coming on. Some times our hands touch, and we don't pull them away. Is our relationship moving toward romance? I hope so. We haven't said anything to each other. I want the change to come soon, but how can I be sure that he wants it too? Am I going too fast? Will becoming sexual ruin what we have? Please tell me what to do.

Cautious Carl

Dear Abby,

Saturday night I went out with Ralph, and we had a wonderful time. He's all I can think about. We talked about going out again this next weekend, and he said he'd give me a call. It is now Tuesday, and I've not heard from him. What should I do? Is it forward to call him? How long should I wait? Do you think I could frighten him off by taking the lead?

Eager Ed

Dear Abby,

Jose sits next to me in English class. He is a doll. We had an assignment to write some poetry, and his was wonderful. I would like to ask him out. What should I do to show him I am interested? What signs do I look for that tell me he is willing? I have never asked another guy out for a date before. Isn't a box of chocolate hearts a little silly?

Shy Sherwood

Dear Abby,

Ferdinand and I met on the street one night and were attracted to each other like animals—sex at first sight. It has been going on now for a month. The passion is still hot, but I cannot live on sex alone. Ferd is becoming a little boring. I like Ferd and don't want to hurt him. Is there a nice way to break it off? Should I be dropping subtle hints? What signals do I send to him? Please tell me how to cut Ferd loose gently.

Bored Barry

Dear Abby,

George is my first lover, and he is still the same wonderful boy that he was when we first met. Recently he has been spending more time away from me. Is it all in my mind or are there are other little signs that he may be growing distant? How do I find out his true feelings? What should I do to keep him? Should I cry a lot?

Worried Will

Dear Abby,

I am 17 and gay. I know almost no one my age who is gay, but I recently learned of a teen center for gays and lesbians. I am not that big on sex. I just want some friends, but I read that gay men are into much more sex than straight men. Is it possible to meet gay teenagers who want to be friends and not have sex? I won't go to the center if it is just sex.

Abstinent Allen

Dear Abby,

I have met a man who is very, very attractive to me. He feels the same way about me. He can't keep his hands off me. Sinclair is 35, and I am 15. Should I let the age difference get in the way of what could turn into a beautiful relationship? My friends tell me I am going to get Sinclair sent up the river. What should I do?

Risky Richard

Dear Abby,

The only place I know to meet other gay teenagers is at the Pier. We go there just to hang out. The last three times I have been there some older guy comes up and offers me money for sex. I don't want to stop going there. I want to meet some guy my age that I like, but I hate the hassle of getting rid of these older men. How can I meet someone and get these older guys out of my face?

Annoyed Arnie

Those were very good discussions of some really tricky issues.

How are you feeling right now on the Feeling Thermometer?

OBTAIN RESPONSES.

For homework, I would like you to select a friend and practice really listening to that friend.

Take a conversation and make sure you give your attention to that friend and hear what is being said.

We are at the end of today's session.

Let's take a few minutes and go around, giving appreciation to each other for people's presence and participation.

GIVE STROKES TO EACH OTHER. MAKE SURE EVERYONE GETS SOME TOKENS.

Thank you for your hard work today.

We will meet next time at \_\_\_\_\_ (time) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

THE END OF SESSION 16

Pia and Nan

PIA: Hi.

NAN: Hi.

PIA: Nice party.

NAN: It's great.

PIA: My name is Pia.

NAN: That's an interesting name.

PIA: Oh! Thank you. What's your name?

NAN: Nan.

PIA: Do you know a lot of people here?

NAN: Just a couple.

PIA: I don't know a soul. It's kind of intimidating.

NAN: I know what you mean.

PIA: Do you want to dance?

NAN: No thanks.

PIA: You don't like to dance?

NAN: I love it, but not now.

PIA: Nan, I'm sorry.

NAN: Look Pia. Don't apologize. I see someone over there I need to talk to. See you around.

THE END

MEETING SOMEONE SELF-TALK CARDS

FRONT, CARD 1, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SATIN SHEETS

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO HER.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

FRONT, CARD 2, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF PEACH SKIN

WHAT IF SHE DOESN'T LIKE ME?

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 1

EXAMPLE: RELAX. SOME THING WILL COME TO YOU. IF NOT, TELL HER YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

BACK, CARD 2

EXAMPLE: I'M O.K. IF SHE DOESN'T LIKE ME, THAT'S HER PROBLEM.

FRONT, CARD 3, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SWEAT PANTS

I KNOW I'M GOING TO MESS THIS UP.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

FRONT, CARD 4, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF WARM WATER

MAYBE I SHOULDN'T INTRODUCE MYSELF BECAUSE SHE MIGHT BE HIV POSITIVE.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 3

EXAMPLE: STOP BEING SO NEGATIVE. I CAN HANDLE THIS.

BACK, CARD 4

EXAMPLE: WHEN THE TIME COMES, I CAN ASK HER. IF WE WANT SEX, WE'LL PRACTICE SAFER SEX.

FRONT, CARD 5, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SANDPAPER

WHAT IF SHE WANTS SEX AND I DON'T? THEN WHAT WILL I DO?

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

FRONT, CARD 6, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF LEATHER

SHE DOESN'T LOOK TRUSTWORTHY.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 5

EXAMPLE: I'LL SAY "NO" IF I'M NOT READY. IF SHE INSISTS, I'LL FIND SOMEONE ELSE.

BACK, CARD 6

EXAMPLE: YOU CAN'T TELL BY LOOKING. WHAT DO I HAVE TO LOSE BY INTRODUCING MYSELF?

FRONT, CARD 7, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SILK

MAYBE SHE IS NOT ABLE TO KEEP A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

FRONT, CARD 8, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF MARBLE

I WANT SOMEONE WHO ENJOYS SEX. SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE MAY BE PRUDISH.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 7

EXAMPLE: I REALLY JUST WANT TO DATE. I'M JUMPING WAY AHEAD OF MYSELF. ONE STEP AT A TIME. I DON'T EVEN KNOW HER OR IF I WANT A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP.

BACK, CARD 8

EXAMPLE: I'LL NEVER KNOW UNTIL I TRY IT. I THINK I'M MAKING EXCUSES.

Dear Abby,

Finally I have met a bunch of girls who are lesbians like me. The prettiest in the group is Irene. We all kid a lot and have a great time, but Irene is something special. I would love to get her alone so we could become closer. What should I look for to see if Irene would like me to approach her? What kind of hints do I drop and how? I'm new at this. How do you ask somebody out?

Scared Sharon

Dear Abby,

I am 16 and have never dated. I have always preferred other girls. I went to a teen center for gays and lesbians recently. I want to know if there is a right way to date another girl. I can't find any books that tell me how it should be done.

In the Dark Deidre

Dear Abby,

I met Jessie about two months ago, and we have become good friends. Recently it became clear to me that my feelings for her have become passionate. At her birthday party last night I kissed her and she held it more than a friend might. I wonder if her feelings are changing too. How do I know if she wants me like I want her? What will happen if I bring sex into our relationship? Is it the wrong move? Help! What do I do now?

Confused Clarissa

Dear Abby,

I have been going out with Karen for a month. She is my first lesbian lover, and because she is older than I am she can teach me a great deal. But I can't get her out of my mind. And I am so jealous. I wait for her after work, follow her around. I just can't get enough of her. She tells me to see other lesbian girls my age and have some friends, but I can't do it. Is there something wrong with me? How can I have Karen all to myself? Could my jealousy drive her away? Please, please help. What in the world am I to do?

Dependent Daphne

Dear Abby,

There is no question that I am a lesbian, even though I have not come out. I have a question, but don't know to whom to talk. I am not into sex that much, but I would die for some friends. I read somewhere that lesbian women have more sex than straight women. Is it possible to have lesbian friends without getting all sexual?

Chaste Charlene

Dear Abby,

Lena and I went out over the weekend for the first time, and it was terrific. I liked her, and she liked me—I know. She said she'd call me on Monday to set up another date. It is Wednesday, and she hasn't called. Should I call her? Will she think I am too forward? I really want this relationship to go. Could I drive her away by being too overeager? I'm new at this, Abby. Give me a hand.

Overeager Olive

Dear Abby,

Monica and I have been very close for three months. We were both very much in love. I guess it is my fault, but after awhile her beauty and wit weren't enough. She started to seem self-centered to me. I still like Monica and don't want to hurt her, but I want to go out with other people. What should I do? Are there some signals I should start giving her? How can I drop her as a lover so that she doesn't get damaged in some way? Isn't there some easy, "right" way to do this?

Guilty Gwen

Dear Abby,

Nadine and I are going steady. I care deeply about her. Lately Nadine tells me she has to stay late for work. Once her friend from Chicago came, and Nadine said that we all three couldn't go out together. Only Nadine and her friend went. It is little things like these that have me worried. Is Nadine telling me something? What should I look for to see if she is growing away? Should I just ask her if she is getting tired of me? Is it all in my head? What should I do?

Rejected Rosita

Dear Abby,

I am 17 and hang out in the lesbian crowd. That's where I am most comfortable and can be myself. Recently I have wondered what it would be like to go out with a boy and, if he were nice, sleep with him. My friends think I am crazy. I guess it is an off the wall idea, but should I try it?

Curious Carole

Dear Abby,

I am attracted to an older woman. Marsha is thirty-five. I know she's very attracted to me. Should I let the age difference get in the way of a promising relationship. I am 16. My friends say I'm jailbait. What should I do?

Risky Rita

Ezra and Gus

EZRA: Excuse me.

GUS: Yeah?

EZRA: How far down the beach is it to Cherry Grove?

GUS: About a twenty minute walk. See where the houses stop down there.

EZRA: There's an open space.

GUS: Now you see where they start up again. That's the grove.

EZRA: That's closer than I thought.

GUS: The beach distorts distances.

EZRA: My name is Ezra.

GUS: I'm Gus.

EZRA: You have a place out here?

GUS: I share a house with 5 other guys.

EZRA: I'm just visiting for the weekend.

GUS: Your first time at Fire Island?

EZRA: Yes. It's great! Would you like to take a walk down to Cherry Grove?

GUS: No thanks. Have a nice walk.

THE END

FRONT, CARD 1, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SATIN SHEETS

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO HIM.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

FRONT, CARD 2, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF PEACH SKIN

WHAT IF HE DOESN'T LIKE ME?

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 1

EXAMPLE: RELAX. SOME THING WILL COME TO YOU. IF NOT, TELL HIM YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

BACK, CARD 2

EXAMPLE: I'M O.K. IF HE DOESN'T LIKE ME, THAT'S HIS PROBLEM.

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PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF SILK

MAYBE HE IS NOT ABLE TO KEEP A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

FRONT, CARD 8, S

PASS TO THE PERSON WHO LIKES THE FEEL OF MARBLE

I WANT SOMEONE WHO LIKES HOT SEX. HE LOOKS TOO COOL.

HOW WOULD YOU TALK BACK TO THAT THOUGHT?

BACK, CARD 7

EXAMPLE: I'M JUMPING WAY AHEAD OF MYSELF. ONE STEP AT A TIME. I DON'T EVEN KNOW HIM OR IF I WANT A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP.

BACK, CARD 8

EXAMPLE: I'LL NEVER KNOW UNTIL I TRY IT. I THINK I'M MAKING EXCUSES.

Dear Abby,

A month ago Robert and I started doing things as friends. Then we became really close friends. But there may be a change coming on. Sometimes our hands touch, and we don't pull them away. Is our relationship moving toward romance? I hope so. We haven't said anything to each other. I want the change to come soon, but how can I be sure that he wants it too? Am I going too fast? Will becoming sexual ruin what we have? Please tell me what to do.

Cautious Carl

Dear Abby,

Saturday night I went out with Ralph, and we had a wonderful time. He's all I can think about. We talked about going out again this next weekend, and he said he'd give me a call. It is now Tuesday, and I've not heard from him. What should I do? Is it forward to call him? How long should I wait? Do you think I could frighten him off by taking the lead?

Eager Ed

Dear Abby,

Jose sits next to me in English class. He is a doll. We had an assignment to write some poetry, and his was wonderful. I would like to ask him out. What should I do to show him I am interested? What signs do I look for that tell me he is willing? I have never asked another guy out for a date before. Isn't a box of chocolate hearts a little silly?

Shy Sherwood

Dear Abby,

Ferdinand and I met on the street one night and were attracted to each other like animals—sex at first sight. It has been going on now for a month. The passion is still hot, but I cannot live on sex alone. Ferd is becoming a little boring. I like Ferd and don't want to hurt him. Is there a nice way to break it off? Should I be dropping subtle hints? What signals do I send to him? Please tell me how to cut Ferd loose gently.

Bored Barry

Dear Abby,

George is my first lover, and he is still the same wonderful boy that he was when we first met. Recently he has been spending more time away from me. Is it all in my mind or are there are other little signs that he may be growing distant? How do I find out his true feelings? What should I do to keep him? Should I cry a lot?

Worried Will

Dear Abby,

I am 17 and gay. I know almost no one my age who is gay, but I recently learned of a teen center for gays and lesbians. I am not that big on sex. I just want some friends, but I read that gay men are into much more sex than straight men. Is it possible to meet gay teenagers who want to be friends and not have sex? I won't go to the center if it is just sex.

Abstinent Allen

Dear Abby,

I have met a man who is very, very attractive to me. He feels the same way about me. He can't keep his hands off me. Sinclair is 35, and I am 15. Should I let the age difference get in the way of what could turn into a beautiful relationship? My friends tell me I am going to get Sinclair sent up the river. What should I do?

Risky Richard

Dear Abby,

The only place I know to meet other gay teenagers is at the Pier. We go there to just hang out. The last three times I have been there some older guy comes up and offers me money for sex. I don't want to stop going there. I want to meet some guy my age that I like, but I hate the hassle of getting rid of these older men. How can I meet someone and get these older guys out of my face?

Annoyed Arnie