

High School Health

Lesson #11: Dealing with Difficult Relationships

Objectives:

- In this lesson you will...
 1. Evaluate strategies for dealing with difficult relationships with family, peers and boyfriends or girlfriends
 2. Evaluate when to end an unhealthy friendship or dating relationship
 3. Demonstrate communication skills to end relationships in healthy way
 4. Summarize ways to cope with feelings when a relationship ends

Vocabulary

• Abuse- _____

• Jealousy- _____

• Overdependence- _____

Name: _____

Student Journal

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Health terms

abuse
jealousy
overdependence

Journal entry

Write about a problem or difficulty you've experienced in a relationship with a family member or friend. Briefly describe the issue, how you felt about it, and what you and the other person did to resolve it.

Ending a Relationship

If you decide you want to end a relationship, here are some guidelines:

Make the decision. _____

Be prepared to feel uncomfortable. _____

Do it in person. _____

Choose a place. _____

(continued)

Student Journal

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(continued)

Ending a Relationship *(continued)*

Explain your reasons. _____

Use "I-messages." _____

Mean it. _____

Make the end final. _____

Coping When a Relationship Ends

Practice thought stopping.

Think realistically. _____

Build your self-esteem. _____

Develop other relationships. _____

(continued)

Student Journal

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(continued)

Coping When a Relationship Ends *(continued)*

Look ahead. _____

Spend time with people you trust. _____

Take good care of yourself. _____

Cry if you need to. _____

Class discussion notes

How Does It End?

Directions: Read the situation. Then create a roleplay that shows how Terry can end the relationship in a healthy way. Explain where the characters are when Terry begins the conversation. Write the lines for both Terry and Jess. Be sure that Terry uses I-messages, explains the reasons for the decision, means it and communicates clearly.

► Situation

Terry and Jess have been dating for 3 months. They go out on weekends and several nights during the week. A few times, Terry has made plans to spend time with other friends and hasn't included Jess. Jess has felt upset about this. Terry tried to explain that the other friendships were important too, but Jess got angry and refused to listen.

Terry recently made plans to attend a concert with a few other people without inviting Jess. Jess found out and refused to speak to Terry for 2 days. At this point, Terry has decided to end the relationship.

► Roleplay

Where does the conversation take place? _____

Terry: _____

Jess: _____

Terry: _____

Jess: _____

Terry: _____

Jess: _____

Terry: _____

Jess: _____

Terry: _____

Jess: _____

Self-Check

We wrote lines for Terry that:

- Use I-messages.
- Explain the reasons for the decision.
- Show that he/she means it.
- Communicate clearly.

Should It End?

Directions: Analyze the case studies and answer all of the questions.

► Case Study 1 Jerome and Liz

Jerome and Liz have been dating for 2 years. They really like each other and have had fun together. Now that they're seniors, some things have been changing. Jerome hopes to win an academic scholarship to an out-of-state university. Liz really enjoys sports and having a good time with her friends. Liz studies enough to pass, but school isn't a big priority for her. She wants to get a job in town after she graduates, to be near her family and friends.

Lately, Jerome and Liz have been fighting. Liz thinks Jerome should spend less time studying and more time with her and their friends. Jerome can't understand why Liz doesn't apply to college too. Liz thinks they'll work things out, but some days Jerome doesn't call Liz or answer the phone because he doesn't want to argue with her.

Last night they had another argument about going to college versus spending time with friends.

1 What warning signs show the relationship could be in trouble?

2 Describe at least 1 strategy Jeremy and Liz could use to deal with the difficulties in their relationship.

3 Do you think this relationship should end? Why or why not?

► Case Study 2 Marta and David

Marta and David have been seeing each other for a year. Marta is still in high school. David is a few years older. They see each other mostly on weekends. Marta met David, a friend of her older brother, at a family event. They've always found interesting things to talk about, despite their age difference. Marta thinks David is really attractive, and David is always telling Marta how great she is and how much he likes her.

Marta had a great time with David at first. Lately, though, she's been feeling uncomfortable. David told Marta that he's getting tired of hearing about high school and her friends, and sometimes he hints about getting married.

Marta has begun spending more time with a guy in her class. She thinks they have much more in common than she and David do. Marta knows David cares about her, and she doesn't want to

(continued)

Should It End? *(continued)*

hurt his feelings or lose him as a friend. But she wants to spend time being a teenager while she still can. She also knows her parents would be happier if she were dating someone her own age.

1 What warning signs show the relationship could be in trouble?

2 Describe at least 1 strategy Marta and David could use to deal with the difficulties in their relationship.

3 Do you think this relationship should end? Why or why not?

► **Case Study 3** Juanita and Dee

Juanita and Dee have been friends for as long as they can remember. They've always had fun together and told each other everything. But this past year, things have been changing. Dee decided to start a band with some other kids from music class, and they practice nearly every day after school, which is time that Dee used to spend with Juanita. Juanita asked Dee if they could find some other times to get together. Dee agreed, but now Juanita feels annoyed because Dee always decides where they're going, what they're going to do, and who's going to come along. Juanita feels pressured to do what Dee wants to do if they're going to spend any time together at all.

1 What warning signs show the relationship could be in trouble?

2 Describe at least 1 strategy Juanita and Dee could use to deal with the difficulties in their relationship.

3 Do you think this relationship should end? Why or why not?

Should It End? *(continued)*

► Case Study 4 Cory and Max

When Cory and Max first started dating, Max said he wanted Cory all to himself. So Cory spent more and more time with Max. After a while Cory's other friends stopped calling.

One day, Cory met an old friend from elementary school and had a fun conversation with him. Max became very jealous. For weeks he accused Cory of secretly meeting this guy, and even read Cory's e-mail. One day Max screamed at Cory and punched the wall.

Cory told Max they shouldn't see each other for a while. Max became very upset and said he couldn't live without Cory. He started following Cory everywhere and calling or texting all the time. Finally, Cory agreed to get back together. But a few months later, Max got jealous again. Cory thinks about breaking up with Max a lot, but is scared of how he'll react.

1 What warning signs show the relationship could be in trouble?

2 Do you think this relationship should end? Why or why not?

For Case Study 1, 2 or 3, write what one of the people could say and do to end the relationship in a healthy way. Be specific and follow the guidelines you learned in class.

For that same case study, describe at least 3 strategies the other person could use to cope with his or her feelings if the relationship ends.

Self-Check

- I identified warning signs in each relationship case study.
- I described 1 strategy the people in the first 3 case studies could use to deal with the difficulties.
- I explained whether I thought each relationship should end and why.
- I wrote what the person in Case Study 1, 2 or 3 could say and do to end the relationship in a healthy way.
- I described 3 strategies the other person could use to cope after the relationship ends.