



**Title: Romantic and Loving Relationships: How do you make a relationship work?**

**Level:** Fourth

**Code:** 4.1.3

**Links to Curriculum for Excellence**

Experiences/Outcomes

- I understand the importance of being cared for and caring for others in relationships and can explain why. HWB 4-44a
- I understand and can explain the importance of, and need for, commitment, trust and respect in loving and sexual relationships. I understand the different contexts of such relationships including marriage. HWB 4-44c
- I recognise that power can exist within relationships and can be used positively as well as negatively. HWB 4-45a

Benchmarks

- Justifies why commitment, trust and respect are central to being cared for and caring for others.
- Explains the importance of shared values and goals in sustaining a loving and sexual relationships, for example, mutual respect, agreement on sex.
- Distinguishes between a balance of power and abuse of power in relationships, for example, respect, trust, coercion, consent.

**About this activity**

In this activity, the young people will consider what is needed to make a relationship work. They will be introduced to the idea that a good relationship needs honesty, trust and communication. Having considered the options of living together, marriage and civil partnerships in the previous session they will consider what questions/issues a couple should explore before they live together. While much of this activity is about communication in broad terms, research tells us that communication matters greatly when it comes to supporting young people to negotiate and maintain sexual communication that leads to positive decisions about safer sex and contraception, topics we will return to later.

**Resources to support this activity**

- Communication game handouts
- Slides
- Prop: Things couples should talk about before they live together

## Activity

1. Introduce the activities along these lines: Today we will be thinking about how to make a relationship work. There are 3 big things we will consider: Communication + Honesty + Trust. First, a communication game.
2. **Communication game:** Working in pairs, partner one gets the first list. Partner two must not see it. Partner one must describe each of the 10 words, one at a time without using the actual word and keep trying until their partner guesses it. When they have achieved all ten, they shout DONE! Everyone keeps going until they finish. Then swap and partner two uses their secret list (see prop).
3. Thinking about communication, ask the class, **how do we communicate what we think, feel or want?** After some input from the young people, use the slide that says *research about how people communicate tells us that:*
  - 7% of what we communicate is by the words we use.
  - 38% of what we communicate is done by our tone of voice.
  - 55% of what we communicate is done by our facial expressions and other body language.
4. Play a game: **Feelings charades.**
  - a. The young people will know 'charades' or you may have played something similar. If not, explain that on each card there is a 'feeling' and the idea is that someone comes up front and does a charade/mime/act of the feeling *to communicate it to others*, but focusing on the facial expressions and body language, without any words, and the others guess what it is.
  - b. There are some cards suggested/add as you see fit. Do the first card to explain if necessary. (*Suggestions: happy/sad/excited/worried/angry/confused/nervous/not bothered/proud/determined/in love/surprised/tired/scared/bored/confident*)
5. To explore all aspects of communication further, ask the class these questions. In each, pull out what is being communicated by **words, tone of voice** or **body language** in each response. So, thinking about how humans communicate:
  - How do you know when a baby is happy?
  - How do you know when a friend is either happy or a bit upset with you?
  - How do you know when someone at home is unhappy about something you have done?
  - Who do you know that's really good at communicating by just facial expressions or body language?
  - What do you think you use most when you are communicating *your* feelings?
6. Moving on, acknowledge that we have been thinking about communication, and that it's clear that this matters in all the relationships we have. We'll come back to it later and think more about how couples communicate. But now, move the class on to think about **honesty** and **trust**.
7. Introduce the activity along these lines/use slide: Research with young people in Scotland asked **what do you need to make a relationship good?** As well as **good communication**, the top answers were **honesty** and **trust**. So, why are honesty or trust so important? Here are some things they said: (As you work through the slides ask the group what they think: Does this ring true? Do they

disagree? How do they feel hearing this from other young people? Do they agree honesty and trust matter so much?)

*Trust gets in the way of everything, doesn't matter even what kind of relationship you are in, trust is like the one thing that just gets between people all the time. If you don't trust them, then you might as well just not bother. (male, 16)*

*If you don't, it's not healthy – you'd be paranoid they're going with someone else behind your back. You'd be worried. Like honesty, it goes both ways, you need both. (female, 15)*

*Loyal, honest, caring, patient is what trust should mean in sex and relationships. (male 16)*

*I have only had one boyfriend who I trusted. Anyone else I would be scared they would tell their mates about me and worried about what they thought and what they would say. (female 15)*

8. Introduce the next activity: **Things couples should talk about before they live together**. So, back to communication and relationships. Explain that there are 10 questions that couples might want to communicate about – but how important do you think they are? What would be important to you if you were considering living with a partner? To be undertaken in small groups. Each group should be given the activity with the prompt sheet to help them prioritise, and the 10 associated questions cut out for placing on the prop. The questions are (check understanding of language including 'monogamous'):
- How will we handle money?
  - Where will we live?
  - Who will tidy up and do the cleaning?
  - Do we want the same thing from sex?
  - Will we have children?
  - Is this a monogamous relationship?
  - How involved will our parents/families be in this relationship?
  - What food do we like?
  - Will we have pets?
  - If we have a problem with each other, how will we sort it?

After some small group discussion/prioritisation, explore through feedback what young people prioritise, what not, and why. Acknowledge differences and similarities in responses; and where issues of *communication, honesty* and *trust* have come up.

9. Remind young people that relationships can make you feel amazing, but they can also leave you feeling stressed out and upset. Remind them that it's always best to get advice if you are having problems with relationships. They can speak to a teacher or other trusted adult, or get good advice online at [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### Additional ideas

- The young people's research, which informs this activity involved young people aged 15 to 21 living in Tayside. It is published at <https://makeitgoodtayside.org/>.
- Talking Point provides information on children's communication <http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/>

### Connecting with home

- Learning Activity 4.1.1 has a short paragraph that could be used to communicate with home about this block of learning on romantic and loving relationships.
- This link takes parents/carers to some good information on ‘good relationships’ published by Hands On Scotland, a toolkit about emotional wellbeing:  
[http://www.handsonscotland.co.uk/page\\_pdfs/flourishing/good\\_relationships\\_0.pdf](http://www.handsonscotland.co.uk/page_pdfs/flourishing/good_relationships_0.pdf)

### Further learning activities are available that connect to this RSHP curriculum content

- 4.1.1 Love
- 4.1.2 Living together, Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- 4.1.4 Qualities of a partner and talking about relationships

### Practitioner Notes