

# Topic 4 — What to do when you think you like someone

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## Introduction

This lesson reflects on what a respectful and ethical romance 'looks' like. We start by investigating 'how do I get to know someone?' and present the answer in terms the following attitudes:

- We are of equal value
- I can be kind to myself and to the other person
- When I take a risk sometimes I will be rejected. It happens to everyone at some time. It is normal to feel sad and hurt but I will recover (to try again);

And skills:

- Listening
- Starting a conversation

Of course, many students are not ready for romantic relationships and we do not want them to feel they have to suddenly 'create' friendships or romance to have a more fulfilled life. We encourage students to value their own qualities, and identify some social skills for making connections.



## Time

50 minutes

## Activities

- 1: What to do when you think you like someone.
- 2: How to listen

## Handouts

- H1: Getting to know you

## Video

- *What to do when you think you like someone*

## Background information

- Video transcript: *What to do when you think you like someone*

# ACTIVITY 1: WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU THINK YOU LIKE SOMEONE.

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Overview:** How to begin a relationship is something many young people struggle with, but identifying some specific social skills can make a difference. These skills could as readily apply to friendships as well as potential romantic relationships. Through this activity we also talk about gendered expectations in romantic relationships. The activity starts off in a fun way by imagining conversation starters between two potential love interests.

## Key Messages

- You can get better at friendship and starting new relationships by practicing some social skills.
- Starting new friendships and romantic relationships is a risk for rejection, but you can survive it.
- Gendered expectations create unfair double standards for young women and young men when it comes to forming romantic relationships.

## Preparation and Materials

- Video - 'What to do when you think you like someone'.
- Copies of H1: Getting to know you, 1 per student
- LARGE post-it notes and textas

## Method

1. Watch the video 'What to do when you think you like someone'.
2. Ask:
  - *What kind of advice is the video offering? (Answers might include: ways of letting someone know that you like them; how to get to know them; that you want to go on a date with them).*
  - *Do you think some of the advice could apply to making new friends as well?*

- *What was the conversation starter Courageous Mouse used with the other mouse? (Answer...Ears). Point out that the topic of conversation may not have been earth shattering, sometimes all it takes is saying 'hello'.*
3. Organise the students into pairs or small groups. Distribute Post-it notes to everyone and tell the students that they are going to come up with some conversation starters, ways to get talking to someone that they fancy/are attracted to. You might need to paint a picture for them (and you might need the students' help to add the current popular adjectives):
    - *Chris has had their eye on Sam for a long time...they totally think they're nice/hot/gorgeous etc. Finally they are standing next to each other and Chris decides to take a big chance. Chris takes a deep breath and says.....*
  4. Allow time for the students to talk together and come up with some ideas. There may be some rude suggestions, that's ok as we are going to parse the responses later. When they have had enough time, invite them to stick the notes on the wall and study everyone's contributions.
  5. Next, the students have to divide the Post-it notes into two categories: 'useful' and 'not useful'.
    - Useful – will it attract the person, will it make them feel good, how will it make you look?
    - Not Useful – is it offensive, will it turn the person away, is it confusing, will it make them feel bad, is it only about sex, how will it make you look?
  6. Next, invite the students to rearrange the notes into a 'Boys' and 'Girls' lists. That is, which of these conversation starters would boys say, and which of these would girls say?

Ask:

- *Do girls ever start conversations with someone they are attracted to?*
- *Assuming a girl is attracted to a boy, should girls start conversations or let a boy know that she is attracted to him? Or should they leave it to the boys?*
- *Some families teach their children that girls should not ask*

*boys out. That it is 'unattractive' for a girl to do the 'chasing'. Can you think of any effects this might have on girls' and boys' relationships? (Answers might include: boys feel pressured to do all the asking; boys feel resentful that they have to take the risks; girls have to wait instead of being in charge of what they want; girls are judged for being 'forward and not allowed the same freedoms as boys).*

- *Do you think some people are not frightened of rejection? (Point: accepting that rejection will happen, at least once in your life can make it a bit easier to manage).*
- *How does rejection feel? (Answers might include: anger, humiliation, resentment, shame, sad, lonely, worthless).*
- *Is it worth the risk?*
- *What tips did the video suggest to the person who is turning someone down?*

7. Handout H1: *Getting to know you*, 1 per student.

## ACTIVITY 2: HOW TO LISTEN

**Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Overview:** Not all of us feel comfortable to begin conversations, nor do we necessarily want to be centre stage. But everybody needs connections. An essential 'connection-making' skill is listening, which is great news for the shy students in your class.

### Key Messages

- People are more likely to like you if you pay attention to what they are telling you.
- You can signal to them that you care about what they are saying through your body language.
- Listening is an often overlooked but really important skill in making friends and being seen as a trustworthy person.

### Method

1. Tell the students that you are going to practice talking to each other. Do not tell them that this activity is about listening skills.
2. Divide the class into two groups, A and B, standing in two lines facing each other. One line (Group A) is to leave the room or be out of earshot of Group B.
  - Tell Group A: each of them have think of a story to tell to their partner when they return to the room, something like The Best Time In Their Life, or some other really exciting or special, important event.
  - Tell Group B: when Group A returns, they are to listen to their stories with real enthusiasm. Show the Group A person that you are totally engrossed in their story. Ask the students for a few examples of how they would demonstrate their total interest in the Group A person's story (eg eye contact, leaning forward)...THEN tell Group B when you (the teacher) give the signal (begin walking to the end of the line) they must stop listening to their partner's story. Group B must actively show disinterest. Ask students for a couple of quick examples of how they would do this (eg eyes down, get their phones out).

3. Get Group A back in the room to begin their stories. Don't allow too long before you give the signal to Group B to look disinterested. When the room goes quiet (as it will) stop everything and debrief.

#### DISCUSSION:

- Ask Group A:
  - What did you notice when you first came in and started telling your stories? (Answers: they were really listening)
  - How could you tell they were listening?
  - Then what happened? (they stopped listening)
  - What did you do?
  - What did you notice? (The room went quiet. We all stopped talking).
  - How did you feel towards the person when they were showing you they were listening? How did you feel towards them when they stopped showing you they were listening?
  - How did it feel for the group when they were listening?
  - How did it feel for you to stop listening to the person?

Sum up on the board the following:

- *Why do you want to listen? (apart from being respectful, nice people)*
  - People are more likely to like you more
  - They feel greater trust in you
  - You can help your friends
  - You learn something about the other person and make a connection
  - Being able to listen to someone is part of the 'give and take' of a relationship
- *What are the main points about showing you are listening?*
  - eye contact (if culturally appropriate)
  - leaning forward
  - nodding
  - don't interrupt

## Extension Activity

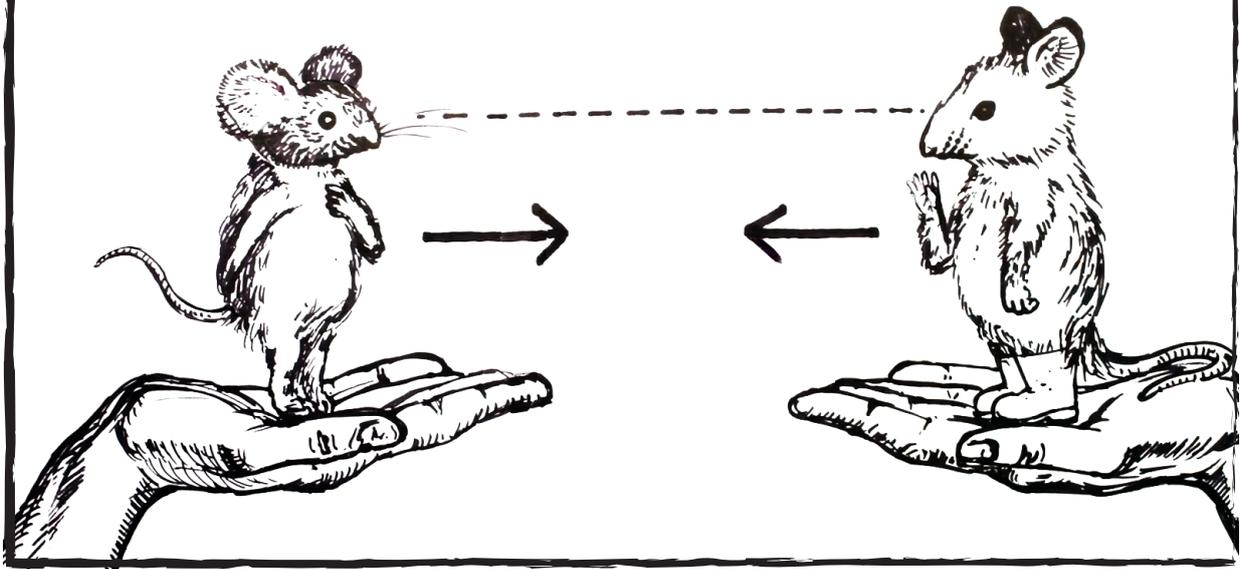
This is a fun demonstration of the effect of body language on signaling our willingness to talk to people.

Tell the students to stand in a circle. First, ask the students to move into the centre of the circle as if they were getting into a lift. Most likely they will be reserved with their eyes down, and voices quiet.

Next, have them move back to the larger circle. Then they must re-enter the circle as if they were walking into a party where they are reuniting with friends and family that they haven't seen in a long time. Note the change in body language – smiles, eye contact, questions, enthusiasm.

This is a great discussion starter — seeing how people's behaviour changes in different settings.

# GETTING TO KNOW YOU



You've got a hint, a feeling that you've got something in common. You'd like to talk more. Here are some tips on getting a conversation started.

- If you have no idea what the other person is interested in then it's a good idea to comment on a shared situation, such as if you are both waiting for the bus (its late again) or you have a stack of homework to finish.
- If you do start talking, only share safe thoughts to start with. That is, don't tell them the really personal stuff or what you're private worries are until you know each other better. It might scare them off, or you may not be able to trust them with that stuff yet.
- Avoid saying cruel things about other people, otherwise they might think you would say mean things about them too.
- Don't brag.
- Don't talk about yourself too much and then be disinterested when they start talking about themselves. Relationships are about give and take.
- If you get the chance it is a good idea to hang out in groups of girls and boys together. Then you get the chance to learn a bit more about what everyone is into.
- Without wanting you to become a clone, it is a good idea if you know something that other people are interested in, as it gives you something in common to talk about.
- Small talk is good because it is helping you build a bridge to each other. It gets you out of a bubble of isolation and makes you feel happier by being connected.

<http://au.reachout.com/wellbeing/friends-and-family/friendships>

Learn how to work through bad friendships, maintain your good friends and deal with the tough times.

<https://www.kidshelpline.com.au/teens/get-info/hot-topics/making-friends.php>

<https://minus18.org.au>

Online support for gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans\* youth.

<https://esafety.gov.au/esafety-information/esafety-issues/social-networking>

Online social networking

## B1: VIDEO TRANSCRIPT, WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU THINK YOU LIKE SOMEONE

You fancy someone

What do you do?

You do nothing.

You can just like them and not do anything about it.

Plenty of people choose not to do anything until they finish school.

You're alright if you choose this.

You are not weird (you are probably weird in some other way but *this* does not make you weird).

Or you could fancy someone and do something.

What?

What to do?

You look at them.

Maybe you could smile.

Look at them, now look away, now look again, oh they looked back, look away, look away, look away.

Flick something at them.

What?

Flick something at them, like a rolled up bit of paper.

Maybe you get up and go with a group of your friends and you...

Stand near them, and then you....

Walk past them.

I know!...yell at them across the street.

You could send a message through your friends.

Frank said Akira said that Spiro said Mohammed said Oliver said Arunta said Bazza likes Rhani

Well, Kim said Caitlan said Mila said Maddison said Gina said that Rhani doesn't want a bar of Bazza, she likes Tara.

Well Tara said...

No but seriously sometimes things get done this way.

Or you go up to the person

And say -

Hi, I find you really attractive and I was wondering if you would like to spend some time together. We could walk together and talk. I'd really like to know more about you. Because I think... I think... I think

Bzzzt

It's a robot!

It's a robot. Real people have a much harder time being so open and clear.

It's vulnerable.

It's scary.

But, in the end if you want to make a connection with someone, you probably have to summon your courage and go up to them and speak to them.

(Clear throat nervously) ..Ears

Yes.

I see you have some ears there.

Um yes, I've got two of them..

They look like good ones.

You've got some too..

Yes.

One either side.

Yes I was born with them.

Ok, this is going well

Its not necessarily important what the conversation is about,

What's important is, these two are showing interest in each other.

How to show interest.

So you're facing towards them

You're looking at them

Making eye contact

You're asking questions about what they are saying

Which shows you've been listening to what they've been saying

And thinking about it

And that makes them feel good

And now you might be ready to take a chance

You might want to pick the right time to do this bit,

Like, not in front of everyone

To roll the dice

You might be ready to ask the first kind of 'would you'.

And it goes something like this...

*We're all heading down to the pool*

*To the park*

*To the milk bar*

*Would you?*

*Would I?*

*Would you?.. And Kim, and Caitlan and Mila and Maddison and Gina, umm like to come too?*

That's a fine would you to begin with

You get a chance to spend some time with them

Get to know them a bit

But its in a group, so..

Not so much pressure.

There's another would you.

There's the 'do you want to go somewhere together just the two of us would

you?'

Bit more pressure.

Granted.

Once again you might want to pick the right time to do this bit,

Like, not in front of everyone.

You want to have a clear idea -

Where you want to go,

What you want to do.

Something like this..

*Would you like to .. Go with me.. To the ... fish and chip shop..*

Maybe they say 'yes'

Victory dance kerching

Or maybe they say 'no'

Uh oh

It didn't work out.

That doesn't mean you're a loser.

Well it does actually, literally it does, you tried, you lost, you're a loo-  
(cutting off) Nup nup nup. You tried this time, you lost this time, that's this  
time.

It's not for all time?

No, and think about it,

As you try and pull yourself together

You don't know why they said no.

They might like someone else,

They might only think of you as a friend.

It might have nothing to do with you.

They might be too shy, or embarrassed about something

Maybe they have a tail

But.. They've said no

That's probably going to hurt

A lot.

That's normal.

In that moment it's a good idea

To have an exit strategy in your back pocket

Like this: *would you go out with me?*

*Go out with you? No!*

*Oh well, I was just joking, I don't like you anyway, you stink, I wouldn't go out  
with you if you were the last human hiding in the last car with petrol in it in the  
last free city in the the world overrun by zombies... you are a ..*

Hang on, hang on, hang on, that is a bad exit strategy.

Here's some exit strategies:

*Go out with you? No!*

*Well, it was worth a try*

Or how about: Alright well I'd better go, I'm catching up with friends (cos I'm actually very popular)  
Or 'ok, seeya I've got practice now (soccer, chess, piano, knitting, zumba, flight school, fork bending, dolphin riding, gold mining, extreme ironing)  
What?  
Doesn't matter  
Also helps to have a wingman,  
Or a wing woman.  
A wing man-woman?  
Someone at your side  
Who understands the risk you're taking  
And who can be around to distract you from the pain  
By taking you shopping  
Or some other pointless activity  
Yes being rejected can hurt like hell  
It's humiliating  
But, being too afraid of being rejected can mean you stop trying to get the things you want..  
And learning to survive rejection  
Not allowing it to beat you  
Builds inner strength  
Just like brussel spouts  
It sucks  
But its good for you  
But back to the pain  
Of someone saying no  
If you happen to be the askee  
The person being asked  
And you want to say no  
Here's a tip  
Be kind.  
Maybe something like this:  
Would you like to go out with me?  
I'm not really doing the dating thing yet  
Or thanks but i like someone else  
Or i just want to be your friend, i hope that's ok  
The worst thing you can do is string them along  
Don't leave them thinking they might still be in with a chance when they're not  
Also  
Don't be a bigmouth about it  
If they ask you on Facebook  
Don't take a screen shot  
And share it with your friends  
And laugh and laugh  
Its actually flattering to be asked out  
Respect the risk they've taken  
Because...it's a brave thing that they've done.