



Dating and Relationships Grade 8

Unit Overview

Duration: Up to 12 periods (480 minutes)

1. “What Does Love Have To Do With It?”
2. “Expectations in a Relationship”
3. Building Effective Communication Skills
4. Accomplishing Assertiveness & Refusal Skills

Description:

- This unit is designed to lead students to gain a deeper understanding of the true meaning of Dating and Healthy Relationships.
- Students investigate the various aspects of love relationships, focusing on the difference between love and infatuation.
- Students can generate, reflect and understand reasons why they date and how to recognize, avoid and prevent bullying and/or sexual harassment in a dating relationship. This unit will assist the students in building and maintaining healthy relationships by empowering them with essential Effective Communication skills.
- This unit will enforce the idea that ‘Assertive attitudes’ and behaviours are at the heart of effective communication

Background Information

Many teenagers consider genital sexual activity, including intercourse, to be acceptable behaviour, a "right" of sorts, even outside the context of marriage. The Church affirm once again "that genital sexual intimacy, particularly intercourse, is a right and privilege reserved for those who have committed themselves for life in marriage" (*Human Sexuality*, 61).

All those who work with young adults must stress sexual abstinence prior to marriage. Abstinence needs to be seen as a positive choice; not just "going without" or “not going all the way”. Abstinence is more than a "no" to genital sex. It is a "yes" to the future, to one's own inner potential and to one's future spouse. (*Human Sexuality*, 61).

Adolescents, moreover, need to be assured that God understands them, knows the temptations they face and will never abandon them. Prayer, self-discipline and participation in the sacraments and life of the Church can assist one in living a chaste life. At the same time, "it is important to keep mistakes in perspective" (*Human Sexuality*, 61). We must always be ready to forgive ourselves, to welcome God's

forgiveness and begin again. "Growing up is never a straight line—it is far worse to lose our values than it is to make a mistake" (*Human Sexuality*, 62).

Chastity "truly consists in the long-term integration of one's thoughts, feelings and actions in a way that values, esteems and respects the dignity of oneself and others" (*Human Sexuality*, 19).

Overall Learning Expectation(s):

The students will:

- deepen their understanding of the human person as a reflection of God
- explore intimacy, choice, and quality as significant aspects of relationships
- be encouraged to accept the changing nature of their relationship as they approach adolescence.
- identify qualities that are essential for real friendship
- deepen their understanding of the influence of friendship
- deepen their understanding of the family
- be encouraged to appreciate the value of good communication and flexibility in family relationships
- identify qualities that are essential for real friendship
- deepen their understanding of the meaning of commitment
- explore the changing nature of commitments during adolescence
- explore the meaning of the commitment to be true to themselves
- be encouraged to accept themselves as changing, growing, and maturing individuals
- be encouraged to appreciate the value of good communication and flexibility in family relationships
- identify qualities that are essential for real friendship
- explore the meaning of individual and social justice
- deepen their understanding of their responsibility to participate in building a loving and just society

Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations

Expectation

Learning Expectation(s):

Code:

- CGE2a -listens actively and critically to understand and learn in light of gospel values;
- CGE3a -recognizes there is more grace in our world than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges;
- CGE3c -thinks reflectively and creatively to evaluate situations and solve problems;
- CGE3d -makes decisions in light of gospel values with an informed moral conscience;
- CGE4a -demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others;
- CGE6b -recognizes human intimacy and sexuality as God given gifts, to be used as the creator intended;
- CGE7a -acts morally and legally as a person formed in Catholic traditions;

CGE7b -accepts accountability for one's own actions;

Assessment Opportunities: Suggestions for assessing expectations

Performance assessment, rubrics, paper and pencil test.

Notes to Teacher:

Clarify to the class that this discussion is to be taken seriously and therefore calls for maturity and respect. Inform them that the discussion will focus on 'relationships and dating'. Be aware that there may be some students in your class whom are dating or have been dating and this may be a sensitive issue with some.

BLMs:

Lesson # 1:

BLM 1 A – Greek Words for Love

BLM 1 B – “Love is...” Worksheet

BLM 1 C – “Love vs. Infatuation” Worksheet

BLM 1 D – “Love vs. Infatuation” Worksheet (Answers)

BLM 1 E – Chastity Handout/overhead

Lesson #2:

BLM 2A “Life Scenarios”

BLM 2B – “Healthy vs Hurtful Relationships”

BLM 2C “In Healthy Dating Relationships”

BLM 2D Dating Relationships

Lesson # 3:

BLM 3 A – “Healthy Relationships” (overhead)

BLM 3 B – “Unhealthy Relationships” (overhead)

BLM 3 C – “Effective Communication” (handout)

Lesson # 4:

BLM 4 A – “Assertiveness Skills” (overhead/handout)

BLM 4 B – “Tips for Being Assertive” (overhead/handout)

BLM 4 C – “I-Statements” (overhead/handout)

BLM 4 D – “Refusal Skills” (overhead/handout)

Sources:

Educational Guidance in Human Love, Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome, 1983.

Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI

The Pontifical Council For The Family. *The Truth And Meaning Of Human Sexuality. Guidelines for Education within the Family.* Vatican City, November 21, 1995

Publications:

Boyle, Joseph M. Catholic Sexual Ethics: A Summary, Explanation & Defense By William E. May, Our Sunday Visitor Publishing. (1998).

Collins, Raymond F. *Sexual Ethics and The New Testament: Behavior and Belief.* New York: The Crossroad Publishing Co., 2000.

Harrington, Daniel, S.J. and Keenan, James, S.J. *Jesus and Virtue Ethics: Building*

Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology. Chicago, IL: Sheed & Ward, 2002.

Holder, D. W., Durant, R. H., Harris, T. L., Daniel, J. H., Obeidallah, D., & Goodman, E. (2000). The Association Between Adolescent Spirituality and Voluntary Sexual Activity. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 26*, 295-302.

Lawler, Ronald et al. *Catholic Sexual Ethics*. Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, (1985)

Recommended: *Intimacy and Sexualit: A Letter to Catholic Secondary Students in Ontario* from the Roman Catholic Bishops of Ontario, Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1994.

'Wonderful Gift' and 'Awesome Responsibility' by *Richard Sparks, C.S.P.* An overview of Church teaching based on the U.S. bishops' 1990 document, *Human Sexuality: A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning*
Whitehead, B. D., Wilcox, B. L., & Rostosky, S. S. (2001).
Religion and Faith Communities in Preventing Teen

Websites:

www.catholic.com

www.occb.on.ca/english/SexualMorality.html

www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a6.htm

www.catholicparents.org

www.catholicmediacoalition.org

www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/nfp/cathteach.shtml

<http://www.priestsforlife.org/magisterium/PCF/truthandmeaning.htm>

Dating and Healthy Relationships Grade 8

Lesson One

“What Does Love Have To Do With It?”

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Description:

This activity is designed to lead students to gain a deeper understanding of the true meaning of ‘love’. Dating relationships, as covenants are the theme of this activity. Students investigate the various aspects of love relationships, focusing on the difference between **love** and **infatuation**. This lesson will use 1 Corinthians 13 to help the student truly inform and shape their decisions as they grow and mature in healthy dating relationships. Students will learn how to build and shape true friendships with the same and opposite sex without the pressures of dating. Students will refer to Scripture to complete their handout on ‘Love’.

Materials:

- Overhead & screen
- Bibles
- Handouts - BLM 1 A – Greek Words for Love
BLM 1 B – “Love is” Worksheet
BLM 1 C – “Love vs. Infatuation” Worksheet
BLM 1 D – “Love vs. Infatuation” Worksheet (**Answers**)
BLM 1 E – Chastity : Catechism of the Catholic Church

Notes To Teacher:

Emphasise to the students the idea that God’s love for us is based on ‘free will’, that is, the idea that we are free to accept or reject His love for us. ‘Free will’ means humans have the freedom to do the right thing. Because we are free, we are also responsible for our acts. According to Scripture, we cannot be truly free if we are not living a chaste life. For one to really practice ‘chastity’, then one must be in ‘full control of his or her actions, especially as they relate to sexual activity’.

The virtue of modesty will help them preserve their ‘personal integrity’. People need to avoid immodest images, people, and things. It is always sinful to use pornography, whether in pictures, magazines, or the internet. Explain to them that even television, movies, and music which contain immoral themes can be an occasion of sin. Instead, people need to view movies and TV shows with wholesome, moral themes.

It is always a sin to physically, emotionally, or sexually abuse anyone, or to treat them in

a degrading manner. Even if the person is your ‘date’, it is never permitted. If this happens, get out of the relationship and tell a parent or an adult you can trust.

Begin by explaining to the class that this discussion is to be taken seriously and therefore calls for maturity and respect. Inform them that the discussion will focus on ‘relationships and dating’. Be aware that there may be some students in your class whom are dating or have been dating and this may be a sensitive issue with some.

Overall Learning Expectation(s):

The students will:

- deepen their understanding of the human person as a reflection of God
- explore intimacy, choice, and quality as significant aspects of relationships
- be encouraged to accept the changing mature of their relationship as the approach adolescence.
- identify qualities that are essential for real friendship
- deepen their understanding of the influence of friendship

Expectation Code:	Specific Expectations
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Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations

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| CGE3a | -recognizes there is more grace in our world than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges; |
| CGE3b | -creates, adapts, evaluates new ideas in light of the common good; |
| CGE3c | -thinks reflectively and creatively to evaluate situations and solve problems; |
| CGE3d | -makes decisions in light of gospel values with an informed moral conscience; |
| CGE4a | -demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others; |
| CGE4g | -examines and reflects on one’s personal values, abilities and aspirations influencing life’s choices and opportunities; |
| CGE6b | -recognizes human intimacy and sexuality as God given gifts, to be used as the creator intended; |
| CGE7d | -promotes the sacredness of life; |

Assessment Opportunities: Suggestions for assessing expectations

Assessment may be made in part by a teacher prepared quiz and the ‘Wanted Poster’ using the rubric as your guide.

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

1. Whole Class: Begin by first copying the overhead BLM 1 A – “Greek Words for Love”. Next give each student a Bible copy of BLM 1 B “Love is...”. If there are not sufficient Bibles to go around then have students pair/group share or you may elect to simply read the Scripture passage, **1 Corinthians 13: 1-13**, aloud as they listen.
2. Whole Class: Students should keep your Bible open to **1 Corinthians 13: 1-13** as they complete this worksheet. For each ‘love reference’ they are to think of a person’s name who models that example. For example, you can tell them that for the example “Love is patient” ... you may think of your Mother, so you would write her name in the box labelled, “Person’s Name”. Have them continue doing that until they have completed the worksheet.
3. Individual: Provide each student with a copy of BLM 1C “Love vs. Infatuation”. Allow them to work individually for about 10-15 minutes as they work to place as many words/phrases as you can think of that you would associate with that category in their chart.
4. Whole Class: After students have attempted to fill in their chart. Place BLM 1C – Answer Sheet on the overhead for them to compare to their chart. Spend some time discussing any similarities and/or differences.
5. Whole Class: Write the word – Chastity on the board. Have students working in small groups brainstorm words/phrases (must be appropriate) that they associate with Chastity. Encourage them to use their charts from Love vs Infatuation, ensuring they use the terms under the ‘Love’ column, as this is supposed to be an positive exercise on building healthy relationships.
6. Using the references to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* on Chastity, BLM 1 F, explain/discuss their significance/meaning. Engage in a meaningful discussion and ask the students for their thoughts on the examples discussed. (Note: Teachers may find it easier to review the ‘Compendium of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops prior to this lesson)

Optional Activities:

Students with special needs may work on similar version of the ‘Wanted Poster’. They may verbally describe their ideal date to a peer helper or their Educational Assistant.

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Greek Words for Love

There are many different Greek words for [love](#), three of these main words are given below:

- [Storge](#) (Affection) is fondness through familiarity, especially between family members or people who have otherwise found themselves together by chance. It is described as the most natural, form of loves, in that it is present so freely and spontaneously. This affection, however, is often taken for granted .
- [Eros](#): This reflects a type love based on ‘physical desire’. The Modern Greek word "*erotas*" translates to mean "(romantic) love". Eros is not necessarily ‘sexual’ in nature. It can be interpreted as a love for someone who you love ‘more than just friends’. Eros generally applies to dating relationships but is best kept for the seriousness of a marriage relationship.
- [Philia](#) : This reflects a type of love based more on ‘friendship’. It includes a ‘loyalty’ to your friends, family, and community, and requires virtue, equality and familiarity with the other person. It is a type of love that describes the ‘love’ between family, between friends. It also describes the ‘love’, desire or enjoyment of an activity. Philia can also include the ‘love’ between individuals in a long term, committed married relationship. It is interesting to note that Philia is the only other word for "love" used in the ancient text of the [New Testament](#) besides *agape*.
- [Agapē](#) : This means "love" in modern day Greek. The term "*s'agapo*" literally means "I love you" in Greek. The word "*agapo*" is the verb "I love". Agape is more of an ‘affection’ rather than an ‘attraction’ like in an "*eros*" type love. *Agape* was used in ancient texts to express feelings for one's children or spouse. It can be described as the feeling of being comfortable or at ease. Agape can also be used to refer to a person whom you really ‘respect’ and ‘admire’. In the New Testament, it is used to describe, for example, the relationship between [Jesus](#) and His [beloved disciples](#).

**“LOVE IS...”
WORKSHEET**

[Based on 1 Corinthians 13: 1-13]

Students must first locate and read the following scripture passage:

1 Corinthians 13: 1-13. Students should keep your bible open to this passage as you complete this worksheet.

For each ‘love reference’, think of a person who models that example. For example, “Love is patient” ... you may think of your Mother, so write *Mother* in the box labelled, “Person’s Name”. Then, in the box below, indicate ‘why’ you feel that person ‘models’ that example: *My Mother is always patient with me when I forget to make my bed. No matter how many times I forget, she always asks me nicely, over and over again without getting mad.*

Bible Passage: Love is patient	Person’s Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: love is kind	Person’s Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It does not envy	Person’s Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It does not boast	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It is not proud	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It is not rude	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It is not self-seeking	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It is not easily angered	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It keeps no record of wrongs	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It always protects	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It always trusts	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It always hopes	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: It always perseveres	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Bible Passage: Love never fails	Person's Name:
Reason for choosing this person:	

Love vs. Infatuation

In the chart below, place as many words/phrases as you can think of that you would associate with that category:

Love	Infatuation

**Love vs. Infatuation
(ANSWERS)**

In the chart below, place as many words/phrases as you can think of that you would associate with that category:

These are only a few suggestions....

Love	Infatuation
<p>Feel affection for Adore / Adoration Worship Be in love with Be devoted to / Devotion Care for Find irresistible Be keen on Be fond of / Fondness Affection Friendship Feeling Tenderness Real Honest</p>	<p>Obsession / obsessed Craze / crazed Passion / irrational passion for Fascination Lovesick Taken Smitten Preoccupied with Foolishly in love with Utterly captivated Empty Shallow Immature Crush Fixation Rapture Enchantment</p>

Teacher Resource:

BLM 1 E

Chastity: Catechism of the Catholic Church

2337 Chastity means the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being. Sexuality, in which man's belonging to the bodily and biological world is expressed, becomes personal and truly human when it is integrated into the relationship of one person to another, in the complete and lifelong mutual gift of a man and a woman.

2341 The virtue of chastity comes under the cardinal virtue of *temperance*, which seeks to permeate the passions and appetites of the senses with reason.

2342 Self-mastery is a *long and exacting work*. One can never consider it acquired once and for all. It presupposes renewed effort at all stages of life. The effort required can be more intense in certain periods, such as when the personality is being formed during childhood and adolescence.

2343 Chastity has *laws of growth* which progress through stages marked by imperfection and too often by sin. "Man . . . day by day builds himself up through his many free decisions; and so he knows, loves, and accomplishes moral good by stages of growth."

2344 Chastity represents an eminently personal task; it also involves a *cultural effort*, for there is "an interdependence between personal betterment and the improvement of society." Chastity presupposes respect for the rights of the person, in particular the right to receive information and an education that respect the moral and spiritual dimensions of human life.

2345 Chastity is a moral virtue. It is also a gift from God, a *grace*, a fruit of spiritual effort. The Holy Spirit enables one whom the water of Baptism has regenerated to imitate the purity of Christ.

2347 The virtue of **chastity** blossoms in friendship. It shows the disciple how to follow and imitate him who has chosen us as his friends, who has given himself totally to us and allows us to participate in his divine estate. Chastity is a promise of immortality. Chastity is expressed notably in friendship with one's neighbour. Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all. It leads to spiritual communion.

Dating and Healthy Relationships Grade 8

Lesson Two

“Expectations in a Relationship”

[top](#)

Description:

This activity will examine strategies of dealing with life situations that are quite common for students in grade 8. It will also provide educational guidance for assessing future relationships.

Materials:

- Overhead
- Handouts - Black Line Master 2A – Life Scenarios
Black Line Master 2B – Healthy vs Hurtful Relationships

Notes To Teacher:

Most students at this age will not be dating. This lesson however, helps them to anticipate life scenarios and prepare for good responses. As well, they will be educated in distinguishing a healthy from a hurtful dating relationship.

Overall Expectations:

- be encouraged to accept the changing nature of their relationships as the approach adolescence.
- be encouraged to appreciate the value of good communication and flexibility in relationships
- identify qualities that are essential for healthy relationship
- identify signs of a hurtful relationship

Expectation Learning Expectation(s):

Code:

CGE3c -thinks reflectively and creatively to evaluate situations and solve problems;

CGE3d -makes decisions in light of gospel values with an informed moral conscience;

CGE5e -respects the rights, responsibilities and contributions of self and others;

CGE6b -recognizes human intimacy and sexuality as God given gifts, to be used as the creator intended;

CGE7b -accepts accountability for one’s own actions;

Assessment Opportunities: Suggestions for assessing expectations

Assess work done on BLM 2A or BLM 2B

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

Part 1. Divide class into groups of six or so, and put out the following questions: Ask them to discuss and then each person to write down what they consider to be their best advice for the following life scenarios or distribute and collect BLM 2A. Indicate that you will be collecting their work for assessment.

1. I was invited to a party. I heard stories about some bad things going on at these things, but I want to be part of this group.
What do I do?
2. **I was at a party and somebody pulled out alcohol, or cigarettes or pot and offered it to me. What should I do?**
3. **I am at a party and this guy/girl asks me to go to a bedroom. The parents are not home.**
4. When should I start dating?
5. **I like to go out with a group of my friends, and sometimes we meet up with other people of the opposite sex. Is that dating?**
6. What about “going steady” or just going out with one person?
7. What do I say if a person invites me out on a date and I don’t feel comfortable?
8. Who are the best people to turn to for advice?

Share responses in whole group. Students may modify their response during discussion.

Collect their written work.

A teacher script is provided to help you with responses.

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Life Scenarios

BLM 2A

Give your best advice to these life scenarios:

- 1. I was invited to a party. I heard stories about some bad things going on at these things, but I want to be part of this group. What do I do?**
- 2. I was at a party and somebody pulled out alcohol, or cigarettes or pot and offered it to me. What should I do?**
- 3. I am at a party and this guy/girl asks me to go to a bedroom. The parents are not home.**
- 4. When should I start dating?**
- 5. I like to go out with a group of my friends, and sometimes we meet up with other people of the opposite sex. Is that dating?**
- 6. What about “going steady” or just going out with one person?**
- 7. What do I say if a person invites me out on a date and I don’t feel comfortable?**
- 8. Who are some of the best people to turn to for advice?**
- 9. What does the expression “trust your gut” mean?**

Teacher’s Script

Life Scenarios

I was invited to a party. I heard stories about some bad things going on at these things, but I want to be part of this group.

What do I do?

If you feel uncomfortable about the party, listen to your instincts. Say you have to ask your parents. Then you can always blame them saying that your parents won’t allow you to go to the party.

I was at a party and somebody pulled out alcohol, or cigarettes or pot and offered it to me. What should I do?

Stand your ground. Say politely, confidently, and with a smile “Thanks, but I don’t drink. Thanks, but I don’t smoke. Thanks, but I don’t do drugs.” Then look for an opportunity to leave. Since you now what this group is up to, you can avoid their parties in the future.

I am at a party and this guy/girl asks me to go to a bedroom. The parents are not home.

You are in a very risky situation. You may be put in a position where you might be pressured or even forced to do something that you do not want to do. You need to send out a polite but very firm, “No”, turn away , and then move on to other people.

Always maintain respect for yourself by honouring your sexuality. Don’t do something that you will regret in the future.

When should I start dating?

There is no rush to get into a one on one relationship with anyone. Most people start dating in their mid high school years.

I like to go out with a group of my friends, and sometimes we meet up with other people of the opposite sex. Is that dating?

This kind of group get together is probably the best and healthiest alternative for people your age. There is a safety in numbers, and you get to meet and know a number of different people. Your social network and your social skills grow and that’s a good thing.

What about “going steady” or just going out with one person?

Many students do not start dating just one person until mid to late high school. Many say that this works quite well for them. It gives them more time to grow and mature without the pressure of a committed relationship.

What do I say if a person invites me out on a date and I don’t feel comfortable?

Thank the person for the invitation, but say that you are not ready to go out with him or her at this time. “Maybe next year”. You should not feel pressured to get involved in something that you are not ready for.

Who are some of the best people to turn to for advice?

It is often difficult for your friends to give you good advice on situations like this. Turn to a trusted adult, a parent, a teacher, a relative for advice. Most adults have been there, and seen these kinds of situations. They are more likely to give you good advice.

What does the expression “trust your gut” mean?

Your “gut” is another way of saying your “instinct”. The expression came about because when you are nervous, your stomach can get upset, hence the expression.

Often in life situations you get a bad feeling. Trust that feeling. Your brain might be telling you one thing, but at deeper part of you is reacting to some very subtle signs that you might be trying to put out of your mind. Sometimes things just don’t feel right. Trust your instinct, and act on it. Get yourself out of a bad situation before it gets work. Act.

Note to Teacher : **Further information on assertiveness and refusal skills are found in lesson 4.**

Part 2 Healthy Relationships/Hurtful Relationships.

1. In groups, respond to the items in BLM 1 (one copy, one recorder per group):

Sometime in the future, you might have a boyfriend or girlfriend.

consider the signs of a hurtful relationship. (BLM 2B)

For each of the sign, discuss and come up with a signs of a healthy relationship.
Give an explanation.

2. Discuss these signs as a class.

2. Teacher Script:

Teacher can read, then post BLM 2C as a summary of above discussion.

Teacher can read and comment on BLM 2D, posting it as well.

Final script:

“If you are in a hurtful dating relationship, it will very probably only get worse. Some people end up in a relationship that leads to emotional and physical abuse. This could lead to dating violence. If you are slapped or punched, break off the relationship **immediately**. If you have doubts and questions, talk to a trusted adult.”

NOTE to Teacher Further material on this topic will be found in Lesson Three.

Healthy vs Hurtful Relationships

BLM 2B

Healthy Relationship	Hurtful Relationship
	they do not treat their parents with respect
	they seem jealous or even forbid you to spend time with your friends
	they rely heavily on drugs or alcohol to solve problems
	they are easily angered often without any logical reason
	they insult you, criticise you, especially in front of others
	they blame you or others for all their problems
	they always try to limit your social activities to the two of you
	they want to move the relationship along too quickly
	they pressure you to have sex
	they threaten to injure selves/others if you even talk about a possible break up
	they threaten to break up with you or accuse you of planning to break up
	they have ‘roller-coaster type’ mood swings: unhappy or angry one minute, then happy and caring the next.

Adapted from the [National Teen Dating Violence Prevention Initiative](#) American Bar Association (2006).

BLM 2C

IN HEALTHY DATING RELATIONSHIPS, PEOPLE:

- Listen to each other
- Consider each other's feelings and ideas
 - Enjoy spending time together
 - Spend time alone or with other friends
- Respect and support each other in reaching goals
 - Respect each other's point of view
 - Value and take care of themselves
 - Trust each other enough not to be jealous
- Respect the little things that are important to each other
 - Respect each other's culture and religion

IN AN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP, SOMEONE MAY:

- Be jealous and very possessive
- Want to make all of the decisions
 - Rarely listen to your opinion
 - Get too serious too fast
- Blame you usually for his/her bad mood
- Try to control you by giving orders
 - Lose his/her temper easily
 - Be verbally abusive
 - Pressure you for sex
 - Threaten you
- Have a history of bad relationships
 - Be physically violent

TEACHER SCRIPT:**BLM 2D****DATING RELATIONSHIPS**

Whenever a person is in a dating relationship, he/she always deserves to be in a healthy, equal and safe relationship. If, for example, someone in a dating relationship answers yes to any of the following questions, he or she should ask for advice/help from a trusted adult.

- You can't talk to anyone else because your boy/girlfriend is so jealous.
- You are afraid to disagree with your boy/girlfriend.
- Your boy/girlfriend demands to know who you are with at all times.
- Your boy/girlfriend constantly criticizes your friends.
- You continually apologize for your boy/girlfriend's behaviour.
- Your boy/girl friend gives you constant criticism about how you look, how you act and what you do.
- Your boy/girlfriend frequently puts you down either when you are alone or when you are in front of others.
- You are frightened of your boy/girlfriend's temper.
- You get the blame when your boy/girlfriend is angry.
- You are secretive or ashamed of your relationship.

Dating and Healthy Relationships Grade 8

Lesson Three

Building Effective Communication Skills

[top](#)

Description:

Belonging and friendships are especially important during the adolescent years. As young teens become less dependent on their family groups, they start to rely on their peers for such things as sharing their emotions, ideas and new roles in life.

Some relationships will be formed with family members, some with friends and some will grow into love relationships. Each relationship however will be different, and all relationships change over time as the people within them mature and develop. Most relationships contain a combination of healthy and unhealthy characteristics.

This lesson will assist the students in building and maintaining healthy relationships by empowering them with Effective Communication skills.

Materials:

- Overhead projector
- Overhead sheets and handouts – Refer to Black Line Masters
- Pencils (1 per pair of students) & 8^{1/2} x 11 copier paper (enough for each student to have 2 pieces)

Notes To Teacher:

It is important that you begin by defining what a truly ‘Healthy Relationship’ should include. Each section of the lesson will focus on a specific ‘Skill’. By following the series of overhead sheets and/or handouts and allowing adequate time for note taking and discussion, the students should be empowered, by the end of this lesson, to build effective and healthy relationships.

Overall Expectations:

The students will:

- deepen their understanding of the meaning of commitment
- explore the changing nature of commitments during adolescence
- explore the meaning of the commitment to be true to themselves
- be encouraged to accept themselves as changing, growing, and maturing individuals

Expectation

Learning Expectation(s):

Code:

CGE3b -creates, adapts, evaluates new ideas in light of the common good;

- CGE3c** -thinks reflectively and creatively to evaluate situations and solve problems;
- CGE3d** -makes decisions in light of gospel values with an informed moral conscience;
- CGE3e** -adopts a holistic approach to life by integrating learning from various subject areas and experience;
- CGE4a** -demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others;
- CGE4d** -responds to, manages and constructively influences change in a discerning manner;
- CGE4e** -sets appropriate goals and priorities in school, work and personal life;
- CGE4f** -applies effective communication, decision-making, problem-solving, time and resource management skills;
- CGE4g** -examines and reflects on one's personal values, abilities and aspirations influencing life's choices and opportunities;
- CGE5e** -respects the rights, responsibilities and contributions of self and others;
- CGE7a** -acts morally and legally as a person formed in Catholic traditions;
- CGE7b** -accepts accountability for one's own actions;

Assessment Opportunities: Suggestions for assessing expectations

Students should conclude in their discussions that effective communication requires cooperation, honest listening, clear instructions, respect for one another, clarifying questions, proper feedback, and openness to divergent opinions.

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TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

1. Whole Class: Start class with a prayer. Encourage spontaneous “prayers” if possible.
 [Scripture references can assist in setting the tone for prayer: [John 14:23](#)
Jesus replied, "If anyone **loves** me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.]
2. Whole Class: Brainstorm characteristics of Healthy Relationships. Have students recall examples of Jesus in healthy relationships with others, ie family, friends, apostles, strangers, etc.
3. Whole Class: Place Black Line Master 3 A – “Healthy Relationships” on the overhead. Allow time to copy. Discuss the various characteristics listed on the sheet. Have students attempt to think of a personal example from their lives, of each example listed. Discuss the importance of the last 6 points (bullets) on the sheet. Why are they so important?
4. Whole Class: Place Black Line Master 3 B – “Unhealthy Relationships” on the overhead. Allow time to copy. Discuss the various characteristics listed on the sheet. Have students attempt to think of a personal example from their lives, of each example listed.
5. Whole Class: Handout Black Line Master 3 C – “Effective Communication”. Allow time to read. Discuss the various characteristics listed on the sheet. Brainstorm various ‘public figures’ that fit each of the three characteristics. Discuss which characteristics suit certain individuals/occupations. Discuss, “why do you supposed this is”? Conclude by asking them, “Which characteristic of ‘Effective Communication’ would be used by Jesus? Why?”
6. In Pairs Activity: Divide the class into even pairs of students. [If an odd number leaves a student w/o a partner have them be the ‘clock watcher’ – this will save you from watching/timing the event].
 - a. This activity is excellent for developing students' communication skills; it demonstrates the importance of listening and asking the right questions (inquiry skills).
 - b. Arrange students into pairs. Have each pair of students sit at their desks back-to-back, with the writing surfaces of their desks in front of them. Tell students that one of them will be Student "A" and the other will be Student "B." Have students in each pair choose one of the letters.
 - c. After students have chosen their letters, ask each student to write his or her letter in the top corner of a blank sheet of paper. Next, instruct all "A's" to spend two minutes drawing something on their papers. Students need not

be good at drawing; even stick drawings will suffice for this activity. (Partners may not look at or talk to each other during this part of the activity.) While "A's" are drawing, "B's" should remain in their seats. At the end of the two-minute drawing period, instruct "A's" to put down their pens/pencils.

- d. Next, tell "B's" to pick up their pens/pencils. Instruct "A's" to give a clear description of their drawings to their respective partners. Instruct "B's" to *listen only* to their partners' instructions. Each "B" will use the oral instructions to try to re-create his or her partner's drawing. Allow five minutes for this next step. Remember: The only means of communication is for each "A" to provide description of the drawing to his or her partner. "B's" can only listen and draw. Partners should remain sitting back-to-back at all times during this part of the activity. At the end of the five-minute time period, instruct "B's" to put down their pens/pencils.
- e. Allow a few minutes for partners to show each other their drawings and discuss the results.
- f. For the next part of the activity, instruct partners to resume their back-to-back positions. Provide each student with a clean sheet of drawing paper and tell students that the second part of the activity will be different from the first part. Then have "B's" spend three minutes drawing on their papers. Students should use the entire three minutes to draw something beyond a simple shape or two. When the three minutes are up, "B's" should put down their pens/pencils.
- g. Remind all pairs to remain seated back-to-back. Instruct all "A's" to prepare to draw. Tell students that this time the "A's" are going to reproduce their partners' drawings, but the only way they can obtain information about those drawings is by asking yes or no questions. Emphasize that *only* questions that can be answered yes or no are allowed! Allow students five minutes to complete this part of the activity. When time is up, have partners compare their drawings.

Take time to discuss the difficulties or successes experienced by the pairs. Ask which exercise was more difficult and why. Discuss what they learned about the need for effective communication.

“Healthy Relationships”

Healthy Relationships Characteristics :

For a relationship to be truly ‘Healthy’, it must contain specific characteristics:

- **Each individual within the relationship must be able to feel ‘complete’, without the other person, even though both individuals enjoy being together.**
- **Each person in the partnership must be able to communicate effectively and honestly with each other.**
- **In a healthy relationship, both partners accept the other’s strengths and weaknesses. There must not be any unrealistic expectations or efforts to change or control the other person.**
- **In healthy relationships, both partners recognize and appreciate change, as long as it is for the best.**
- **Both individuals must act as real ‘partners’, who need to establish healthy, comfortable limits based on their own set of standards. It is important that there exists a balance between being ‘together’ or ‘individuals as a couple’ and owning their unique separate lives as a ‘couple of individuals’.**
- **A quality, healthy foundation for any solid relationship should possess the following ‘key features’:**
 - **Trustworthy**
 - **Loyalty**
 - **Understanding**
 - **Honesty**
 - **Empathy**
 - **Reliable**

“Unhealthy Relationships”

Unhealthy Relationships Characteristics :

A relationship may become ‘unhealthy’ due to the presence of the following characteristics:

- **Either or both of the individuals may exhibit an unnatural sense of ‘dependence’ on their partner. This causes undue stress and tension between the pair.**
- **Either or both parties may try to ‘dominate’ the other person and the relationship.**
- **Either or both parties may become ‘jealous’ of the other. A relationship built on ‘trust’ need not ever worry about jealousy.**
- **Either or both parties may become ‘selfish’, thinking only of their own wants and needs and placing their partners wants and needs low on their list of priorities.**
- **Either or both parties may become ‘abusive’ towards the other person.**

When any of the above ‘unhealthy characteristics’ become evident within a relationship, the pair should attempt to at least try to work toward making their relationship healthier. It is important that each person be ‘open’ to honest and sincere efforts to eliminate any unhealthy characteristics of their relationship. Interested couples can seek help through many possibly avenues and agencies. Counselling services within schools, parishes and local communities may offer the help that families and couples need to strengthen their relationships.

It is also important to realize that sometimes, it may be in the best interest of one or both individuals, to remove themselves from the relationship. It is never good to remain in an unhealthy relationship that shows no possible signs of improvement.

“Effective Communication”

Styles of Communication:

Today adolescents may not be able to express their feelings in an appropriate format, without having adequate communication skills.

Basically, there are three “Styles of Communication” :

- **Actively Assertive**
- **Passively Permissive**
- **Aggressively Overbearing**

Actively Assertive individuals will be able to exhibit a confidence in themselves that will not allow them to be ‘ignored’ or ‘misunderstood’. Actively Assertive individuals will ‘speak their mind’ and be able to say exactly what they think and will always be strong enough to stand up for their personal beliefs without insulting or ignoring others. This type of person will ‘put their words into action’ and ensure that these actions always consider the ‘common good’.

Passively Permissive individuals do not have the ability or confidence to openly express or defend their personal thoughts or feelings. These type of individuals tend to simply do something they would rather not do or make up an excuse rather than say what they think or how they really feel. By not acting (or being ‘passive’) on their feelings they are allowing (or ‘permitting’) someone else to take control. This becomes very stressful since the passively permissive individual feels they know a better way or could have the correct solution to a problem.

Aggressively Overbearing individuals tend to always overreact and blame or criticize others when they do not agree with their opinion. Aggressively Overbearing individuals will bully, intimidate or perhaps even injure another person if it seems that their opinion is not taken seriously. These type of individuals do not or will not consider the ‘common good’.

Dating and Healthy Relationships Grade 8

Lesson Four

Accomplishing Assertiveness & Refusal Skills

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Description

A person with an ‘assertive attitude’ recognizes that each individual has rights. These rights include not only legal rights but also rights to individuality, to have and express personal preferences, feelings and opinions. The ‘assertive’ individual not only believes in his or her rights but is committed to preserving those rights. An assertive attitude is important in recognizing that rights are being violated. The passive person is so concerned with being liked and accepted that he or she may never recognize the need to advocate. The assertive person clearly expresses his or her rights or needs. They tend to face problems promptly and they focus on solutions rather than problems. The following lesson will develop and enhance the student’s assertiveness skills.

Materials

- Overhead
- Overhead notes
- Handouts - Black Line Master 4 A
Black Line Master 4 B
Black Line Master 4 C

Notes To Teacher

Assertiveness is a way of thinking and behaving that allows a person to stand up for his or her rights while at the same time respecting the rights of others. Non-assertive people may be ‘passive’ or ‘aggressive’. ‘Passive’ individuals are not committed to their own rights and are more likely to allow others to infringe on their rights than to stand up and speak out. On the other hand, ‘aggressive’ persons are very likely to defend their own rights and work to achieve their own goals but are also likely to disregard the rights of others. Additionally, aggressive individuals insist that their feelings and needs are more important than other people's. They also tend to blame others for problems instead of offering solutions.

Overall Expectations

The student will:

- be encouraged to appreciate the value of good communication and flexibility in family relationships
- identify qualities that are essential for real friendship
- deepen their understanding of the influence of friendship
- explore the meaning of individual and social justice

- deepen their understanding of their responsibility to participate in building a loving and just society

Catholic Graduate Expectations

CGE2a -listens actively and critically to understand and learn in light of gospel values;

CGE2b -reads, understands and uses written materials effectively;

CGE2c -presents information and ideas clearly and honestly and with sensitivity to others;

CGE2e -uses and integrates the Catholic faith tradition, in the critical analysis of the arts, media, technology and information systems to enhance the quality of life.

CGE3c -thinks reflectively and creatively to evaluate situations and solve problems;

CGE3d -makes decisions in light of gospel values with an informed moral conscience;

CGE4f -applies effective communication, decision-making, problem-solving, time and resource management skills;

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

1. Whole Group: Start the lesson with a prayer. You may elect to use the following prayer for ‘Empowerment’:

The Empowerment Prayer

"God Our Heavenly father and Creator, great spirit which flows through all living things, love, which surrounds me, word, which fills me, breath, which breathes through me, I ask you to enter my life and I surrender my will to your will for my life. I'm not sure how everything works, but I put absolutely trust and faith in you to guide my life. I give you every part of my emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual being. I offer you every bit of myself that I can muster upon rising each day. I will live every moment of my life for your greater glory and the common good, living in unconditional love and giving that unconditional love back to the world around me. You have all of me... my spirit, my life, my breath. I thank you and praise you. Amen."

2. Whole Group: Write the word ‘Assertive(ness)’ on the board. Brainstorm different ‘characteristics that evolve from being assertive. Add these words to the board in a chart or mind mapping format. Discuss ‘why’ these qualities are desirable for many people. Discuss ‘how’ people can ‘attain’ these qualities. Put the overhead Black Line Master 4 A – “Assertiveness Skills” on the overhead for the students to follow. Provide them with a copy as well. Have the students go through each characteristic and then add either the word ‘yes’ or ‘no’ after each quality. If they believe they currently have this quality, then they are to put ‘yes’. If they do not believe they yet have this quality, then they can put ‘no’ after it.
3. In Pairs: Once they have completed the entire list, have them break into pairs and share their results, (if they feel comfortable).
4. Whole Group: Encourage students to focus on their positive qualities and strive to change their ‘no’ answers into ‘yes’ answers.
5. Small Groups: Provide students with handout Black Line Master 4 B – “Tips for Being Assertive” [place copy on overhead for viewing]. Divide class into groups of 4-5. Using the handout Black Line Master 4 B – “Tips for Being Assertive”, they are to role play a “Before & After” scenario. Students will each take turns in their groups reading a pre-selected scripture passage/story/nursery rhyme/poem, etc. The selection should be at least a solid paragraph in length.
 - i. First they are to simply read the passage to their group ensuring they do NOT employ/use any of the “Tips for Being Assertive”.
 - ii. Next, they are to re-read the selection ensuring they USE all the “Tips for Being Assertive” from their handout.
 - iii. Discuss how using the ‘tips’ made the passage more effective.

- iv. Encourage the students to use these tips in their daily interactions with other people.
6. **Small Groups:** Provide students with handout Black Line Master 4 C – “I-Statements”. [place copy on overhead for viewing]. Using the same groups as in the previous activity, ask students to create short scenarios involving situations of ‘conflict’. They should reflect a situation that teenagers may commonly encounter, (ie arguments with siblings, parents, friends, boy/girl friend, adults, etc). The scenarios should only involve 2-3 people and should provide enough information to allow those ‘role playing’ the situations, to properly ‘assume’ the role(s). Be sure to provide a brief character description of each character, as well as the situation in which they are in disagreement. See the following example for a guide:

Scenario # 1 – A 13 year old boy/girl who wishes to try out for the school basketball team informs his/her parent(s) that he/she needs to remain after school for an hour to practice for the team. The parent(s) insist that he/she needs to be home right after school to baby-sit for his/her younger 2 year old sibling. Both parent have meetings after school and can not get out of them. As they are new to the area, they do not have know anyone else to baby-sit at the last minute. It is the morning before school as everyone is heading out the door.

Use ‘I-Statements’ to effectively communicate to each other your needs and feelings. Be sure to include all six Tips for Using I-Statements Effectively, (bottom of Black Line Master 4 C – “I-Statements” handout).
 7. **Small Groups:** Provide students with handout Black Line Master 4 D – “Refusal Skills”. [place copy on overhead for viewing]. Using the same groups as in the previous activity, ask students to create new short scenarios involving situations of ‘conflict’. These scenarios should be more related to ‘peer pressure’, (ie a student wants you to take drugs or smoke or drink or basically do something you know is wrong). Spend time making a few scenarios in your group. When they are ready, collect the scenarios and read them to yourself (ensure they are safe to use in the class). Provide each group with a different ‘scenario’ then the one they created. Next, using the Black Line Master 4 D – “Refusal Skills” handout, write an appropriate ending to the scenario they are given. Then invite each group to role-play their completed scenario.
 8. **Whole Group:** Discuss the positive effects of using ‘Refusal Skills’ in everyday situations.

Optional Activities

If time does not permit role playing for both # 6 & # 7, then decide which one you would rather focus on and simply ‘discuss’ the remaining skill sets.

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BLM 4 A

“Assertiveness Skills”

The following are considered some key characteristics for being ‘**assertive**’ :

- ✓ Able to make ‘positive and effective’ choices
- ✓ Not afraid to disagree or use the word ‘No’
- ✓ Able to ‘ask for help’ without feeling ‘dependent’
- ✓ Possesses a strong sense of self worth and self-respect
- ✓ Ensures their needs are met in a ‘fair and reasonable’ fashion
- ✓ Not afraid to ‘ask questions’ if they are unclear on something
- ✓ Not afraid to be a ‘leader’ without ‘taking over’
- ✓ Possesses a positive and confident self-image that is not arrogant or boastful
- ✓ Not intimidated, yet respectful
- ✓ Takes responsibility for their own behaviour and actions
- ✓ Will not accept blame for another’s actions
- ✓ Will not accept responsibility or feel guilty for things that are out of their control
- ✓ Appears energetic yet relaxed
- ✓ Clearly expresses their own rights or needs and is dedicated to preserving their rights
- ✓ Ensures small problems don't become big ones
- ✓ Offers ‘solutions’ to problems

Tips for Being Assertive

TIPS FOR BEING ASSERTIVE

- **MAINTAIN A CONFIDENT BODY POSTURE** – Make every effort to face the person. Stand upright or sit up tall.
- **MAINTAIN A COMFORTABLE DISTANCE** – You should attempt to stay about an arms length apart from the other person. This will allow both individuals to have their ‘personal space’. You do not want to come across as too controlling or intimidating.
- **APPROPRIATE & EFFECTIVE HAND GESTURES** – You can use hand gestures to compliment what you are saying. Do not make them ‘unnecessary’ or ‘distracting’. Remember to keep them out of the other person’s ‘comfort zone’.
- **APPROPRIATE & EFFECTIVE FACIAL EXPRESSIONS** – Your face should compliment your emotion and what it is that you are saying. You need to let the other person know you are listening to them and you can do this by showing appropriate facial expressions.
- **MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT** – Look at the person most of the time. Remember that it is not a ‘staring contest’. Rather, look at them and watch their facial expressions. It is fine to glance away, from time to time. Just be sure you are not ‘constantly looking at other things’, this suggests you are not paying attention.
- **APPROPRIATE & EFFECTIVE VOICE** – When you are making an assertive message, remember that it is important to be heard. Therefore, you have to pay attention to:
 - the ‘volume of your voice’ (quiet, soft, loud, scream).
 - the ‘inflection of your voice’ (stress the syllables for important words),
 - the ‘tone of your voice’ (calm, happy, upset, concerned)
- **GOOD TIMING** – If you are expressing a powerful or important thought or requesting something urgent from someone, ‘good timing’ is especially important. Do not wait too long to react. Do it at the time, if appropriate, to make your reaction/request most effective.
- **CO-OPERATIVE LISTENING** – An important part of assertiveness is ensuring that a conversation ‘flows’ smoothly. If you are making appropriate statements or reactions that express your real feelings, be sure not to ‘infringe’ on the rights of others. Be sure to allow the other person a chance to respond.

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“I-STATEMENTS”

I-Statements are a very effective way to express your own thoughts and feelings while still being sensitive and caring to others.

I-Statements focus on the ‘speaker’ without ‘blaming’ or ‘intimidating’ the other person.

By using effective “I-Statements”, it allows the speaker and listener, both, to focus on the ‘message’ and keep personal feelings, reactions and emotions under control. This ‘communication skill’ is crucial when important thoughts or strong feelings need to be discussed.

An “I-Statement” will allow both individuals to ‘realize’ the ‘big picture’. Both persons are therefore able to be open, honest and fully understand how each other ‘feel’ and exactly ‘why’ they feel that way.

“I-Statements” build cooperation, connect people, build trust, and create healthier, more open and honest relationships.

EXAMPLES OF “I-STATEMENTS” :

“I do not like when you yell at me when I come home a bit late. It makes me feel scared and guilty”.

I really do not want to go to that movie guys, there is too much violence and swearing in it and my parents do not like me seeing those kinds of movies. I agree with them.

I like camping because it is great to be out in nature.

When you tell mean jokes, I am uncomfortable.

Tips for Using I-Statements Effectively:

1. Include your feelings, not simply your thoughts
2. Be specific
3. Avoid words like "ought" and "should"
4. Avoid labels
5. include ‘suggestions for possible improvement’ in your statements
6. Avoid being too passive or too persuasive – be honest and sincere

REFUSAL SKILLS

When you are looking to develop ‘positive self-esteem’, then understanding the importance of ‘Refusal Skills’ is very important. You know who you are and what you like and dislike in life! You can deal with anything if you are confident or ask for help when necessary.

Building self-esteem means thinking positively, praising yourself, accepting your strengths and weaknesses and honestly ‘loving’ yourself. To make and keep good friends, you need to be a dependable person, who can clearly communicate, accept and value others. You do not always have to agree or say ‘yes’, to be accepted. You need to be comfortable saying, ‘No’, when appropriate.

Remember, how you say ‘No’ is equally as important as what and how you say it. You need to let others know what your decision is. It is helpful to use “I” statements, effective and appropriate body language, while being firm.

It is important to practice saying ‘No’, in different situations. Always remember to respect yourself, first and foremost. If you ever are in a difficult situation, where you feel ‘tempted’ or ‘dared’ or ‘pressured’ into doing something you know is against your values, you could try the following techniques:

- Walk away
- Use an excuse
- Change the topic
- Use humour
- Clarify the issues and state possible ‘consequences’
- Think of another idea or something else to do
- Challenge the other person to ‘justify’ their reasoning
- Try to ignore them
- Be polite

You should try to always remember, it easier to say NO once you know and understand what works best for you.