

## Relationship Game – Instructions

This game is best played with a smaller group (4 – 12 participants), but variations of it can be played with larger groups. It is meant to be played with participants in grades 7, 8 and high school, but can also be played with adults. Variations of the game can also be played with younger students.

Depending on the population you are working with, you can take cards out of the deck that you do not think are appropriate or that you do not want to discuss at that time. It is always best if the facilitator is the dealer of the cards. That way you can look at the cards before you flip them over and make the decision to pass on certain cards. Sometimes cards contradict one another. When this happens simply give them a new card.

**You will need:** The deck of relationship cards.

### **Small group variations:**

Each card has a characteristic/quality of a person on it. Participants sit in a circle and for each participant you flip over 3 cards. Flip the cards for one participant at a time to avoid distractions. Read the cards out loud or ask the participant to read the cards out loud. Ask the participant, "Judging from these three qualities do you think you would like to date this person, get to know them better, be their friend or none of these?" If the participant cannot decide, the entire group can help them. If they decide to date or get to know the person better they keep the cards in front of them. If they do not want to see the person again you take the cards away. If you choose you can ask the entire group their thoughts.

As you flip through the cards and the participants make decisions ask them questions about why they are making the decisions they make. There is often debate between participants about whether a quality is positive or negative. Friendly and constructive debate can benefit participants and open their minds to new ideas and feelings.

Be sensitive about gender and sexual orientation. Do not assume a person is heterosexual or assume what gender they are. Use the words person or individual, instead of him/her or he/she. For example, "This person brags a lot", instead of "He/She brags a lot."

You may have to define a term for the group. If you are unsure whether everyone knows the definition of a word you can ask the group, "Does anyone know what

\_\_\_\_\_ means?" Terms that often need defining are pessimistic, feminist, questioning, trans, transphobic, abstinence, recreational, virgin, empathetic, compassionate, homophobic, bisexual, anti-choice, pro-choice, pro-life, queer, sexting, gender identity and open relationship. It is good to have positive conversations about these terms.

Once everyone has had a turn you can stop here or you can continue with another round. If the participant has no cards in front of them flip over three new cards and ask the same 3 questions. If they have cards in front of them ask them to read them out loud and then add three new cards to the pile. Ask them the same 3 questions again and they must base their answer on all 6 cards this time. You can do as many rounds as you like until the cards are all used up.

Once you are finished playing you can ask all participants if there were any qualities that were not discussed, but that they think are important.

With any variation of the game you can discuss breaking up. What you would say if you wanted to break up with someone, how you would do it, would you do it in person or in a text message, etc. You should also discuss what you could/would do if someone broke up with you.

### **Superhero characteristics:**

The last three pages of cards have a superhero quality on them. These cards can be included if you like. They often make for interesting conversation and often make the game more appealing and interesting to youth, especially if you are working with a group where the game has been played in the past.

### **Other variations:**

- For younger groups: take all cards to do with sexuality and intimate relationships out of the deck. Play the game the same way but ask, "Would you want to be friends with this person?" Discuss what it means to be a good friend and why friends are important.
- Second variation for younger groups: take all cards to do with sexuality and intimate relationships out of the deck. Flip over each card one at a time and put them on one of 3 piles – yes I would like to be their friend, no I would not like to be their friend or I am not sure if I would like to be their friend. Discuss each

quality as you go through the deck. Discuss what it means to be a good friend and why friends are important.

- Instead of flipping over 3 cards for each participant, flip over 5 cards and allow them to trade 1, 2 or 3 cards for new cards. They do not have to trade if they do not want to. Everything else remains the same.
- Flip over 3 - 5 cards for each participant. These cards represent the person they are dating. They do not have a chance to get rid of or trade their cards. For each participant discuss as a group whether this person is in a healthy or unhealthy relationship and why. If they are in an unhealthy relationship discuss as a group what you can do to support this person. This variation of the game may be more realistic and can provide important skills to the participants.
- Begin the game by talking about on-line dating. The pros, cons and safety factors surrounding it. Ask the participants to pretend they have decided to meet someone in person that they have been talking to online. Discuss how this can be done safely and discuss where you would meet this person. Flip over 3 cards for each individual and ask the same 3 questions as in the original variation. Ask the group to give examples of what they would say to the person they have met if they wanted to date the person, get to know them better, or never see them again.

### **Large group variations:**

- Break the large group into smaller groups to play as described above. This only works if you have multiple facilitators who can deal the cards.
- Stand at the front of the room and flip over each card one at a time and ask the participants to raise their hand if they think the characteristic is positive. Ask them why they think it is positive, or why they think it is negative. This often leads to debates about certain characteristics. If you have red and green flags, these can be used. Green = go, yes/red = stop, no
- Pass out 3 cards to each participant and go around the room and ask each person to read their cards out loud and say whether they think the characteristics are positive or negative, healthy or unhealthy. The larger group can have a chance to comment and agree or disagree.

Is of a different race than you	Spends ALL of their free time with you
Is popular	Criticizes what you wear and do
Forces you to do things sexually that you do not want to do	Becomes angry or violent when using alcohol and/or drugs
Gets jealous easily	Tells you that you are fat, weak, and stupid

Becomes angry very easily	Likes to make all the decisions in your relationship
Always expects you to pay when you go places	Will not let you talk to other people, even your friends
Never thinks that you are right	Braggs a lot
Puts your friends down	Likes to embarrass you in front of others

Is honest	Is flexible about plans
Asks you what you are comfortable with (e.g. holding hands, kissing, touching etc.)	Is someone that you find good looking
Is considerate of you and others	Can laugh with you
Accepts that sometimes you may be tired or moody	Is easy to talk to

Their family is rich	Is a good friend
Can talk to you about things that are bothering them	Spends time with you and time with their own friends and family
Accepts that neither of you is perfect	Is trustworthy
Has a body that you find attractive	Shares some of the same interests as you

Respects abstinence as a choice	Accepts that you may not always agree
Shares many of the same values as you	Smokes cigarettes
Uses drugs and/or alcohol recreationally	Practices a different religion than you
Is an only child	Is a virgin



Is good at sports	Is someone you find intelligent
Always wants to know where you are and who you are with	Has very different interests than you
Wants to get married in the future	Wants to have children in the future
Has their own car	Has parents/guardians that don't not set rules for them

Is a good cook	Is fun to be with
Is interested in learning more about you	Is romantic
Does nice things for you	Discusses their personal life with their family
Is empathic and compassionate	Is a feminist

Is confident	Likes their body
Is able to express their feelings in a respectful way	Has a disability
Cannot read	Is five years older than you
Is five years younger than you	Is a coworker

Does not want children	Loves animals
Is a vegetarian	Has a part-time job
Has been known to cheat on their partners	Has been honest and told you they have an STI
Is talkative	Has been in jail

Tries to control certain aspects of your life (e.g. who you can hang out with, what you can do)	Is assertive
Is bossy	Is racist
Is homophobic	Practices safer sex
Is over weight	Has acne

Has an eating disorder	Has a beautiful smile
Will not use protection (e.g. condoms, dental dams)	Has bad breath
Is a good kisser	Makes you feel good about yourself
Is a good dancer	Texts you more than you want them to

Identifies as bisexual	Is shorter than you
Is taller than you	Has a chronic illness
Has a child	Was adopted
Is transphobic	Has been diagnosed with depression

Is always smiling and happy	Complains often
Is always on their phone when they are with you	Smokes marijuana every day
Has multiple tattoos and piercings	Has dropped out of school
English is their second language	Is a twin



Always wants the two of you to hang out with their family	Comes from a large family
Is shy	Is funny
Wants to travel	Loves outdoor activities
Does not wear deodorant	Is closed minded

Loves school and learning	Is in the chess club
Is someone you find to have great style	Lives with a grandparent
Likes to party	Does a lot of volunteer work
Is the class clown	Has a unique or edgy hairstyle

Wears glasses	Does not want to have sex until they are married
Has strong religious beliefs	Does not have many long term goals for their future
Is pessimistic	Interrupts people when they are speaking
Is indecisive	Does not like to spend money and is always saving

Thinks they are better than everyone else	Loves to eat
Does not pay a lot of attention to how their actions impact others	Is anti-choice
Lies often	Is never on time
Is neat and tidy	Is messy

Is able to take your concerns seriously	Has high self esteem
Has low self esteem	Cannot keep a secret
Is often anxious	Exercises excessively
Is homeschooled	Is missing a limb

Has a criminal record	Shoplifts
Is someone that you find smells good	Has previous sexual experience
Has strict parents/guardians	Likes to hold your hand in public
Drives a motorcycle	Is a flirt

Is creative	Is not very physically active
Is a gamer	Is in a band
Lives on their own	Is an environmentalist
Is an activist	Is really good friends with their ex-partner

Likes to slap your bum in public	Sets goals for their future
Is pro-choice	Discusses their personal life with their family and friends
Sends you naked pictures of themselves	Is questioning their gender identity
Identifies as queer	Is into sexting



Does not have, or want, a cell phone	Often talks negatively about others
Often wears clothing you do not think matches their gender identity	Will not meet your family or friends
Will not hang out with your friends	Has attempted suicide
Identifies as Trans	Is questioning their sexual orientation

Does whatever you want them to	Is respectful
Threatens to hit or hurt you	Tells you no one else would ever date you
Has a rich family	Has ALL the same interests as you
Posts information about your relationship online	Is respectful of your need for space

Is a bully	Would like to have a threesome
Is insensitive	Would like to be in an open relationship
Makes jokes at the expense of others	Asks to borrow money
Shares their feelings	Is in a wheelchair

Is vegan	Will not get tested for STIs
Avoids conversations about your relationship	Identifies as gender fluid/non-binary
Will not touch you in public	Feels that doing well in school is very important to them
Likes to kiss you in public	Often screenshots your snaps

Does not reply to your texts as quickly as you would like them to	Does not want to get married in the future
Does not want to share anything about your relationship online	Does not use, or want to use, social media
Is forgetful	Asks you to send naked pictures of yourself
Is rude	Is controlling

Is serious	Is shorter than you
Is a snob	Pro-life
Always asks before hugging or kissing you	Never asks before hugging and kissing you
Is sexist	Is a sex worker

Respects your personal bubble	Has many pets
Hates all holidays	Hates animals
Plays Holiday music all year round	Masturbates every day
Does not have the same taste in movies and shows	Vapes

Has ex-ray vision	Can become invisible
Can fly	Has super human strength
Can read minds	Can change into any animal
Is as fast as the speed of light	Can move things with their mind



Can change the weather	Is ultra-flexible and has stretchy limbs
Has laser eye power	Can time travel
Can stop time	Can defy gravity
Can walk on water	Can generate force fields

Can control animals	Can communicate with animals
Can breathe fire	Can manipulate the elements (i.e. fire, water, metal, air)
Can see into the future	Can make people fall in love with them
Can heal other peoples' injuries and illnesses	Is immortal