



INTERNATIONAL
MUSEUM OF WOMEN

Me, Myself, and I: Positive Relationships with Yourself & Others

Objective: Using movie clips and small group discussion, this workshop will highlight sensitive relational issues and develop social skills needed to build and maintain positive relationships. The objective of this workshop is to identify and celebrate choices that lead to positive relationships.

Estimated Time: 90 minutes

Equipment: Television and VCR or DVD player

Materials:

- Two (2) Movies One international and one domestic
- Additional background facts/map
- Movie questionnaire (see End Notes)
- Markers, pens/pencils, paper, glue, scissors
- Chart pad
- Name tags
- Copy of article: 'Deciding to marry myself' by Aya de Leon
http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1264/is_n2_v28/ai_19439438

Ground Rules:

1. Please use positive language/no put downs
2. Be respectful and listen to others when they are talking
3. Please do not talk while others are talking
4. Please turn off cell phones
5. Let's agree, that what's said in the room stays in the room
6. Have fun, be creative, and speak up!

Workshop

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

Facilitators introduce themselves and provide a verbal written workshop outline including the ground rule when possible create ground rules with students. Allow time to address any concerns people may have upfront as relationships can be a sensitive topic. Facilitators might ask, "What have you heard that we'll talking about today?" "What are you hoping we'll talk about?", "What are you hoping to learn?"

Facilitators should have an open discussion to define relationships with students – is the discussion only going to be about romantic relationships? family relationships? Platonic friendships? To help students to feel comfortable talking about relationships, facilitators should ask a couple of short and simple questions about relationships and have students answer. Facilitators should answer these questions also. Sample questions could include:

- Name a person that you share a positive relationship with?
- What trait do you have that's important to a positive relationship?
- What trait can ruin a positive relationship?
- What do you hope to learn about relationships today?

2. "Any Way the Wind Blows" (20 minutes)

NOTE: If it appears that the students are unfamiliar to each other, you may want to add fun "get to know you" questions to the beginning of this activity.

In this activity, we discuss the ideas and ideals that society, culture, and family place on us. We will take another step deeper into why we are who we are. We will also discuss statistics about relationship issues, dating, and domestic violence.

This can be a fun, "get to know you" game, but also can be loaded with peer pressure, so tread carefully. Let students know that there will be difficult questions, and it is their choice to answer what feels most comfortable. It is important to encourage them to think and answer for themselves and restrict cross talk until positions have been established.

Designate an imaginary line, which goes from one end of the room to the other. As the facilitators make statements and/or ask questions of the group, students will move to one part of the line or the other depending on how they want to respond to that particular statement or question. One end of this line represents 'strongly agree' while the opposite end represents 'strongly disagree'. Creating signs is helpful in reminding which part of the line represents what response. Be sure to indicate which side represents "true" and which "false" for true/false questions. The middle represents 'indifference' or lack of knowledge regarding the specific statement or question.

Once the group is ready to begin, have students stand in the middle of the line. The facilitators should begin by starting with simple statements and/or questions (see sample statements/questions below for suggestions). Be sure to give students enough time to think about their response and move to the appropriate part of the line.

Once students have settled in their respective places make (be sure to provide the correct answer to the true/false questions) be sure to support brave decisions or ask open-ended questions to discuss their choices. Questions should be addressed to the whole group so no one is put on the spot. If students feel comfortable with each other one might ask a specific group member why they chose that position (agree, disagree, or neutral). With the permission of the group, facilitators should be encouraged to participate.

Sample statements/questions for "Any Way the Wind Blows":

- I've been in a relationship that felt weird but I didn't know how to get out of it.
- I have a close relationship with a parent.
- I've been in a relationship where my feelings and voice was constantly heard.
- True or False: In the US a woman is raped once a day and battered every hour. Answer: False. In the US a woman is raped every 6 minutes and battered every 15 seconds.
- T/F: Around the world, one in three women have been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in their lifetime. Answer: True. Most often, the abuser is a member from their family.
- T/F: Girls who have positive relationships (especially with their friends), live longer, healthier lives. Answer: True!

3. Debrief “Any Way the Wind Blows” (10 minutes)

After the conducting the “Any Way the Wind Blows” exercise, facilitators should allow time for debrief, to give students a chance to discuss the experience. Here are some sample questions to help guide the debrief discussion:

- How did these questions make you feel?
- Did any of these questions and/or facts surprise/upset you?
- How do you define "abuse"? (At this time one facilitator will write down students' responses onto large notepad, while the other asks the questions and guides the students' discussion. Make sure that the list includes the five different types of abuse and that each is defined.). Abuse is an ongoing cycle of behaviors in a relationship that are used to gain and/or maintain control and power over person. The abuse can be:
 - Emotional (name calling or saying cruel things)
 - Psychological (threatening or causing fear)
 - Economic (one partner controls the money and the other person becomes dependent on their income)
 - Sexual (harassment, inappropriate touch, or any sexual activity without your consent)
 - Physical (ranging from pinching and spitting to beating).
- How do you define a good relationship?(List responses on separate sheet of paper)

4. Film Clips: (20 Minutes)

Watch movie clips of ‘Imitation of Life’ and ‘Maria Full of Grace’ Movie scenes should be cued up beforehand. Before clips are shown, share background stats with students, and distribute movie questionnaire for student to complete while watching the films.

- **Maria Full of Grace (Colombia, 2004):**

Background information: Before showing the film clips, please share the following background information with the students. Colombia is the second largest exporter of cut flowers in the world (behind Holland). Two-thirds of flower workers suffer from muscle pain, nausea, miscarriages, and birth defects of babies because of exposure to pesticides used on the flowers. Explain to students that this was the job Maria and her friend Veronica had at the beginning of the film-where they worked long hours and weren't treated or paid well.

Approximately 1,000 people make the journey as drug mules from Columbia to the US each year. Share with the students that Maria and Veronica leave the flower factory jobs to take a job as drug mules, transporting cocaine in their stomachs into the United States. You may also want to define drug muling for the group and detail how the girls transported the drugs.

Show the clip from “Maria Full of Grace” (we suggest the scene in which Maria is helping Lucy in the shower, because it was a positive as well as a cultural response to a difficult situation.). Pass out movie questionnaire on which students individually will fill their responses to the following questions:

- Is it a positive or a negative relationship?
- Which character (if any) do you identify with and why?
- What would you do in the situation?

Once students have had about 3-5 minutes to record their facilitators should introduce the second film “Imitation of Life.”

- **Imitation of Life (New York, USA, 1959):**

Background information: This movie was released soon after the United States Supreme Court’s landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* decision, which declared segregation in public schools unconstitutional. Make sure that students understand the terms “unconstitutional” and “desegregation.”

In 1955 African-American Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the front of a bus to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama, at a time when people of color had to sit in the back of the bus. She was arrested, but members of her community boycotted buses for over a year until a law was passed allowing people of color to sit where they wanted on the buses.

Students then watch the film clip from “Imitation of Life” (We used the scene where Sara Jane’s mother stops to see Sara in LA for the last time. We chose it because it brought up issues surrounding mixed race, and the complexities of a mother and daughter relationship). Remind students to write down what they see in the film relationships. Students spend 3-5 minutes after the film clip to write down answers to the same three questions as for “Maria Full of Grace.”

5. Small Group Sessions: (5-7 minutes)

After students watch each clip, they will form small groups (no more than five students per group) and discuss one of the three questions from the movie questionnaire per film clip. One student should be assigned to be the ‘note taker,’ and each small group should decide how they want to present their information. Remind students to select a different question to answer for each film. Here are the questions again:

- Is this a healthy/unhealthy relationship?
- Which character do you identify with?
- What would you do in this situation?

6. Large group discussion: (5 minutes)

Bring the small groups together. Each small group should present their response to their selected question to the larger group, beginning with one movie. If time permits use the same process for the second movie. As a large group discuss similarities and differences of the various groups’ perspectives. How do the relationships in the films mirror those of students’ family or friends?

7. Open Studio Activities: (20 minutes)

Students should choose one of the two activities detailed below. If activities run over time, please make sure that students have at least 20 minutes for the studio activities:

- Distribute Aya de Leon article to students. Sometimes we struggle and stress to maintain relationships with others, yet we hardly ever stop to maintain a relationship with ourselves. Today you will marry yourself. Have fun writing or illustrating the vows to your own commitment ceremony and prepare to spend the rest of your life with yourself in sickness and in health. Think about how you will present your vows ... be creative.
- Take one of the scenes that you have just watched and become the main character. Rewrite the scene to represent your reaction to the situation. How will the scene change if you were the main character? Or, why not make yourself the supporting character? What would happen then? Time permitting have students perform their script.
- Write a letter/poem to a friend expressing your appreciation for them in your life.

8. Clean-Up (5 Minutes)

End Notes

Friends <http://www.coolnurse.com/friends.htm>

National Institutes of Health: Teen Friendships and Racial Diversity
<http://parentingteens.about.com/cs/education/a/teenfriendship.htm>

Women Today Magazine: Resolving Conflict in Friendships
http://www.womentodaymagazine.com/relationships/fr_conflict.html

Movie Questionnaire

Imitation of Life (1959)

Directed by: Douglas Sirk

What is healthy or unhealthy about the relationship portrayed in the film clip?

Which character do you identify with?

What would you do in this situation?

Maria Full of Grace (2004)

Directed by: Joshua Marston

What is healthy or unhealthy about the relationship portrayed in the film clip?

Which character do you identify with?

What would you do in this situation?