

Task 1 Recipe for a good relationship

Ingredients

In small groups, make a list of things that people look for in a partner.

As a class, compare lists. Are the ideals similar across the class?

Would this list change with:

- age
- sexual orientation
- if marriage was on the horizon
- if one of the partners already had children?



Negotiate the class's top 10 qualities and record them below:

| | | | |
|-------|--|-------|--|
| 1. | | 6. | |
| | | | |
| 2. | | 7. | |
| | | | |
| 3. | | 8. | |
| | | | |
| 4. | | 9. | |
| | | | |
| 5. | | 10. | |
| | | | |

Now, as an individual, prioritise the class list into your own personal list of preference.

Method

Having a partner with the qualities you look for is a start, but it is not enough. What do you need to do, or how do you need to behave, to make a relationship work?

Again, make a list in small groups, and then compare with the class.

Negotiate the class's top five tips and record them below.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Task 2 Signs of a bad relationship

Below are some things people often say about a relationship that isn't going as well as hoped.

Read through the list. Which would you say are the most serious issues? Choose the three most serious.

- a. *I get very jealous if they talk to anyone else.*
- b. *They go all quiet and won't talk.*
- c. *They only want sex. They aren't really interested in me.*
- d. *They always expect me to pay when we go out.*
- e. *I feel bad about fancying someone else.*
- f. *They ignore me when their friends are about.*
- g. *They don't get on with my friends.*
- h. *We keep on having rows.*
- i. *They never turn up when they say they will.*
- j. *They got angry and hit me.*
- k. *They keep putting me down.*
- l. *They are far too serious and I am not ready for it.*
- m. *They are a different religion to me and my parents won't like it.*
- n. *They keep putting me down.*



Have you found yourself thinking the same sorts of things when in a relationship?

Look again at your three most serious issues. What advice would you give to a friend facing these issues?

Task 3 Are you in love?

Read through the opinions below and highlight the parts that are the most important to you. Cross through any parts that you disagree with.

Love is ...

... **unmistakeable!** You'll know when you're in love with someone because your heart beats faster when you see them, you get butterflies in your stomach and you get embarrassed when you talk to them. You may be distracted or dreamy because you just can't stop thinking about them.



... **only possible if you're honest with each other**, including about the physical side of your relationship, even though it can seem embarrassing. Your partner may be feeling the same way, but you'll never know if you don't talk about it, and you'll feel much better for getting things off your chest.

... **about accepting the other person**, including their faults. Even if they don't look like a filmstar, or they have different beliefs from you or habits that some people find annoying, it doesn't matter because you still feel just as strongly about them.

... **all about give and take**. If your partner does something you don't like, it's important to talk about it, in a way that respects each other's feelings and opinions. Relationships don't just work by magic – you have to make them work – and that involves discussion and compromise.

... **a feeling that can develop over time**. It can take a while to get to know someone properly and you may not fully appreciate all their great qualities until you know them better. Physical attraction can develop from a deeper knowledge of someone's personalities and opinions.

Task 4 How does it feel when a relationship ends?

What advice would you give to a friend if he/she said these things?

- a. They've dumped me and I feel terrible.
- b. I want to stay friends, but they say they don't want to see me any more.
- c. They want to stay friends, but I want more than that.
- d. I don't fancy them any more.
- e. How can I end it? They'll be so upset.
- f. I'm scared they'll dump me. Should I dump them first?
- g. I don't really like them that much, but I don't want to be the only one without a partner.
- h. I only stay with them because I feel sorry for them.

Task 5 Splitting up and being single

1. Read through the advice below. Cross through any suggestions that you think are not helpful. Add in any tips that you think should be included.
2. Now rewrite the advice so that teenagers will be more likely to read it.

Almost everyone has to go through a break-up at some point in their lives, but that does not make it any easier, and it is perfectly natural to experience a whole range of difficult emotions such as sadness, anger and loneliness when an important relationship comes to an end. However, although it is hard to believe it at the time, it is possible to get over these feelings, and the advice below may help you through this difficult period of your life.

- Spend time apart from your former partner. Even if you want to stay friends, continuing to see them can make it harder to get over the break-up.
- Talk about your feelings with your family and friends. They may have been through a similar experience, and even if they haven't, it can be good to bring your feelings out into the open.
- Don't rush straight into another relationship. Allow yourself time to grieve for the partner you have lost.
- Join a club or take up a new hobby. You may meet a new partner eventually, but, more importantly, it is a great way of making new friends and starting to enjoy life again.
- Don't forget that there is nothing wrong with being single. It allows you the freedom to follow your own interests and be the person you want to be, without having to consider someone else's needs.

Finally, if the tips above are not helping, remember that there's always someone you can speak to through counselling services or helplines such as Brook, Relate or the Samaritans.

