

## Picturebox for Sex Education

Organisation SENIA in cooperation with  
the Austrian Institute of Sex Education and Sex Therapies

The picture box was purposely designed to include appealing illustrations regarding different topics of sex education.

Body sensitisation, getting to know other people, different relationships, personal hygiene...these topics are covered by fun, but also discussion motivating illustrations.

The aim of the material is to reach people's views and emotions. Looking at the illustrations, questions, explanations, assessments and remarks will come up. To laugh, to be annoyed, to get angry, to be surprised and to be happy – all of these emotions can be triggered by the illustration and lead to a very personal analysis. For people who communicate without language the illustrations represent a good possibility to express themselves and experience something new.

The box includes 54 illustrations on cardboard, size DIN A4, by the caricaturist Arnulf Kossak as well as 2 flipbooks showing two variations each of a woman and a man masturbating.

The picturebox is available from the organisation SENIA. Please address orders to:

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Price: €88.- (excl. shipping)

Shipping within the EU are approx. €12,-

Please cite 'TRASE Project' when placing an order

## 1. What is sexual education?

You'll find different definitions of sexual education depending on the literature and on the institution. Senia is referring to the definition of the Austrian Institute of Sexual Education and Therapies (ISP):

Sexual Education is expressed in a certain attitude in caring for people. Sexual Education requires to respect all humans as sexual beings, irrespective of their age, gender or possible impairments. Sexual Education therefore demands to support the development of fundamental sexual competencies in a positive way.

Sexual Education is oriented towards the individual living environment.

Sexual Education according to ISP is following constructivist findings.

Sexual Education is resource-oriented and demands absolute respect through modelling a respectful attitude.

Sexual Education according to ISP disapproves of missionary attempts, like moral attitudes.

The person with his or her individual possibilities and limits is in the focus.

The goal of Sexual Education is supporting people in connecting the knowledge about sexuality with their own living situation and their own emotion.

Sexual Education is therefore supporting the connection from knowledge to action.

Sexual Education is demanding to accompany people in broadening their personal possibilities of action.

To achieve this, Sexual Education is involving the levels of emotion, cognition, body and individual perception.

Among other things, Sexual Education wants to:

- Touch emotionally
- Reach people's personal situation
- Broaden the range of action
- Explain and clarify myths
- Improve the relation to one's own body
- Expand one's sexual self-concept
- Support the respect for one's own sexual body

Sexual Education following these principles, acts on the assumption that esteem towards one self is the prerequisite to be ready and willing to protect oneself. 'I can only protect what I value' is an integral part of prevention.

Likewise, Sexual Education that includes all levels assumes that treating oneself competently is condition to treating others competently.

## 2. Sexual Education in a box – applicability of material for sexual education

Sexual Education is one part of a holistic view of accompanying people of different age.

Material is therefore only ever implemented to support Sexual Education. Material does not replace dealing with the topic.

There are many materials available which refer mainly to the pedagogics of imparting knowledge about physical processes, e.g. shapes and appearances of male and female genitalia. Most material contains cognitive information presented pedagogically.

The box full of Sexual Education from SENIA mainly supports the three levels perception – emotion – and dealing with oneself and one's own beliefs.

Included materials can be used by everyone who wants to enter a process of dealing with the topics sexuality, physicality and perception. Short written instructions of use are included.

When dealing with specific questions of sexual education like contraception, sexual questions, wishing for a baby, it makes sense to get support from specialists of relevant facilities trained in sexual education.

## 3. Possibilities and limits – protection of intimacy

The material in the box should touch, agitate, excite, initiate discussions and make you smile. In any case intimacy should be protected when working with the box. The material at hand should give an input for discussion, but should not necessarily prompt personal questions that focus on the intimate areas of living and possibly overstep boundaries.

**Talking about it** – talking about feelings, sexuality, sex, physicality does not need to follow an agenda. It is not important to add knowledge in a conventional way, but to find normality in the language and in the attitude towards one's own sexual body.

The material at hand should show that sexual education is much more than learning about the cycle, ejaculation and sexual happenings around conceiving a child.

It is Sexual Education when you can laugh about a drawing on how to use the toilet and when it gets confusing because touching your whole body is becoming an every-day topic.

In terms of the normalisation principle, sexual education means to laugh, smile and talk and care about the sexuality of the body without focussing on intercourse, fertility or biological knowledge immediately.

#### 4. Box content

The material found in the box should touch you, and get you to talk and smile. You will find the following content in the box:

**Illustrations:** Getting to know each other

**Illustrations:** Types of Relationship

**Illustrations:** Body awareness and sensitivity

**Illustrations:** Physical development and genitals

**Flipbook** Example Masturbation Woman

**Flipbook** Example Masturbation Man

It's all about presenting the material in a non-judgmental way and wait for reactions.

No specific order needs to be kept.

Symbols are displayed on the individual cards to be able to easily group them according to their specific topic.

The material can be used in 1-2-1 settings and group settings.

They can be used as an introduction or start for a discussion. The clients' opinion and feelings are in the foreground.

The task of the accompanying person is it to pay attention that, especially in groups, respectful language is used among the participants as well as nonviolent communication. Individual opinions need to have space, also if they don't conform to the group leader's opinion. At the same time, it is important to create an atmosphere of respect towards a variety of different approaches in the sense of diversity.

## Illustrations: relationships

A lot of people long for a relationship. Many see a loving relationship as a way out of loneliness, primarily a (sexual) loving relationship can be something wonderful, when the personality is in the front and not performance.

And naturally, for some people the desire for a (sexual) relationship is the desire to see themselves through the eyes of another person, to become two and to 'increase their value'. It is obvious that some people wish to have a person at their relationship side to be proud of, someone to 'show off'.

It is also obvious that out of the desire for a relationship many wish to be together with a person who is socially considered more attractive or prestigious than oneself, maybe a lot younger or in any other way 'more exotic'. The Person at their side might be seen as a 'business' card of one's own personality – it's no surprise that there are certain requirements of perfection for this person.

In reality, these requirements very often lose their importance once feelings play their part. In the ideal case perfection originates in mutual attraction.

The illustrations **Relationships** show different couples

Couples who emanate attraction, joy and desire for each other.

Couples who are not considered perfect in the sense of performance.

Couples who are human.

Couples who invite to be liked.

By displaying different couples, the illustrations should show the potential desire for a relationship aside social stereotype. The illustrations should encourage discussions and courage, but mainly touch the viewer emotionally.

The illustrations' message is:

*Being in a relationship can be something very exciting and beautiful.*

*A couple's perfection lies in the mutual attraction.*

*External, societal attributes of attraction have their importance in the cognitive examination of beauty. Individually seen, mutual attraction has more value than objective beauty.*

*Different couples might need to deal with the fact of being rated by others more than other couples.*

*A visibly great couple are people who can show that they like having a relationship with each other.*

## Illustrations: getting to know someone

Getting to know someone, having a sexual relationship, being unique for someone.

Exclusivity, there is someone who is always there for me, who understands me...

This is a very human desire.

A desire which is subject to uncountable movies – at best with a Happy End.

A desire that makes money – for agencies in the internet and anywhere else.

Getting to know other people is a topic that concerns many (young) adults. When caring for other people it is obvious that this desire will be addressed time and again. The anger, the frustration, the longing – all of that can be expressed. Carers might experience helplessness. Getting to know someone is a topic that cannot be solved with a universal concept.

Being available, taking it seriously, listening – these are certainly the most important tools when dealing with the subject of longing for a relationship.

Furthermore it can be very helpful to consider which possibilities to meet someone are individually possible – and which ones won't work with almost certainty.

The illustrations **Getting to Know Someone** should encourage thought processes – how and where can I get to know someone?

What am I prepared to do?

What am I expecting?

What could work for me and what definitely doesn't?

The illustrations show different possibilities to meet someone, the possibilities can be put in words and they become tangible. They should excite and encourage dealing with oneself and one's own views.

The illustrations' message is:

*If you want to meet people – you will have to do something.*

*Your parents are not the right company to meet other, interesting people.*

*Getting to know someone mainly means to find someone likable, to discover things you have in common and to maybe meet again.*

*A loving relationship does not develop easily – least of all as in the movies.*

*But one thing is clear – the more people you get to know the higher the possibility to meet one person with mutual attraction where a relationship can develop.*

*It is obvious that everyone is responsible to meet people themselves.*

*And there's no easy solution.*

## Illustrations: body awareness

Most questions regarding sexual education refer to topics of prevention.

How can a person learn to feel which kind of touch is pleasant and which is not?

As a consequence, how can one learn to feel a YES or NO and also learn to communicate this?

How can people be encouraged to notice other peoples' sexual desires and limits.

As often as these questions are asked, the answers given are on a social, cognitive level which is little helpful for the person concerned.

*Only do what feels right!*

This prompt only works for people who have the ability to feel and distinguish pleasant and unpleasant. Experiences of this kind need distinct body awareness – a positive body image which includes the genital.

The illustrations **body awareness** should communicate that it is important to have a relationship with one's own body. This is a requirement for people liking their body, that they can experience themselves in their sexuality and that they are able to respect other people in their individual sexuality.

The illustrations should show different possibilities how to improve one's own body awareness.

The illustrations' message is:

*I can do something to improve my physical perception and sensation.*

*It is normal and natural to care for my body.*

*There are numerous occasions in everyday life to experience and feel my body – I don't necessarily have to do complicated exercises to achieve this.*

*My body is mine and I am allowed to attend to it intensively.*

*If I take my body seriously, everyday tasks like personal hygiene or the use of the bathroom can be a pleasurable experience.*