

What is Sex?

An explanatory model to encourage and strengthen
Individual physical perception and awareness

Introduction

Clients' questions about sexuality are usually in need of orientation. Orientation means to explain the foundation of sexuality – What is Sex? – in a simple and manageable way.

This document includes an example wording to answer the question 'What is Sex?' with the goal of strengthening and encouraging individual physical perception and awareness. It should – by no means – be associated with explaining 'good' or 'right' sex. It should support and strengthen the individual's perception and never transmit values!

For better understanding the levels are explained according to the three lights of a traffic light. Depending on the situation and the target group the model can be replaced with other symbols. Please bear in mind that the wording and language you'll find in this instruction might need to be adapted to the individual client you are working with.

Additional content

Introduction In a separate document you'll find an introduction to the explanatory model to answer the question 'What is Sex?' with the goal of strengthening and encouraging individual physical perception and awareness. You'll find information about hidden codes in questions, common answers for 'What is Sex?' you will come across and why they are misleading, goals of sexuality education and why it is so important to have an answer for the fundamental question 'What is Sex?'. For better understanding the three levels of the model – the head, the gut and the genitals - are explained according to the three lights of a traffic light. Depending on the situation and the target group the model can be replaced with other symbols.

SEX...What is Sex?

Most people think of sexual intercourse when they hear the word sex. So they think of sex with another person/sex between two people.

But the very first thing is that sex is a feeling. A feeling that is your very own feeling only. Sex is an enjoyable feeling. A feeling of pleasure.

There are a lot of other feelings too. For example fear or disgust. These are no sexual feelings. A sexual feeling is always an enjoyable, pleasurable feeling.

Of course you can have this feeling with yourself. That's why a lot of people have sex with the person they know best...with themselves.

In order to do that, it is important to get to know your body, to touch your body and to feel your body.

There are occasions when you get in contact with your body almost automatically.

When you take a shower and when you wash yourself, you feel your own skin.

If you put lotion on your body after taking a shower you can feel a pleasant touch – and it smells good too!

It is important to know your own body and your own genitals well in order to recognise pleasant feelings.

When you touch yourself/during masturbation you realise what you like and what gives you feelings of pleasure. That's why a lot of people like to touch themselves/like to masturbate.

SEX with another person

When you want to have sex with another person that means to share your own sex feelings with someone else. To share this wonderful enjoyable feeling with another person.

Sex with another person is a bit more complicated than sex with yourself. Because both people involved have to have a desire for experiencing this feeling. And that they want to share this feeling with someone else.

That's why it is important to know your own feelings very well. To realise if it is pleasant for you to be so close to someone else in that very moment.

For Sex to be possible, more than just one feeling have to be present:

First of all, your head has to say YES!

And your head has to know a lot:

- It is important to know when and where you can be intimate.
- It is important to know that sexfilms on tv or on the internet don't really show what's happening in reality.
- It is important to know how to take care of your own body.
- It is important to know how to tell someone else what you want and what you don't want.

And it is really important to know:

- No one can know everything about sex.
- It is totally normal to have questions. And it is totally normal that new questions arise.
- It is important to ask other people if you want to know something.
- You can ask questions to your gynaecologist – the doctor for women, the urologist – the doctor for men, your carers and counsellors.
- But the most important thing is that your head has to say YES when you get involved in a sexual situation.

It is a little bit like traffic lights. Your head has to indicate GREEN!

But you will need a second green indicator – your gut

Your gut knows how much closeness and how much distance you want to have.

There are days when you really like to touch someone else and when you like being touched.

And there are days when you don't like to be touched and you don't like to touch anyone – even though you might be in love.

And you will need a third GREEN indicator – your genitals!

A sexual feeling is what people call a sensation they can feel in their genitals. People of all different abilities can usually tell the difference between a nice feeling of being close to someone and a sexual feeling.

The difference between a nice kiss and a sexual kiss is only due to what the person feels.

Only the person him or herself can feel if a touch, a fantasy, a book, or even a conversation can spark a sexual feeling.

No one else can tell them and should be allowed to tell them if/when they have a sexual feeling.

You can only feel that yourself.

You can see, sex is actually quite complicated. All three lights have to indicate green so that sex is possible.

And actually it is even a bit more complicated: if two people want to have sex with each other, then two traffic lights have to show three green lights each.

But when all the lights indicate green, then sex is not that complicated anymore. And you can experience some wonderful enjoyable pleasurable feelings.

All people are sexual beings.

All people can have a desire to experience sexuality.

All people can do something for their own sexuality.

All people can value their own sexuality – even if they don't have a partner (at the moment).