



Discussion Guide

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For Adults Working with Teens

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Lesson for Should You Tell a Friend if He or She Is Being Cheated On?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, participants will be able to

- 1) Articulate—through a small group activity—at least two reasons why someone would tell and two reasons why someone would not tell if he or she knew someone was cheating on his or her friend.
- 2) Describe the benefits and challenges of telling a friend if he or she was being cheated on through a forced-choice activity.
- 3) Consider the implications of cheating in relationships through a small group activity.

TIME NEEDED

50 minutes

MATERIALS

- Copies of the article “Should You Tell a Friend if He or She Is Being Cheated On?”—one per person

- Copies of the “Should You Tell a Friend if He or She Is Being Cheated On?” Worksheets—one “yes” and one “no” worksheet per person
- A copy of “Cheating Scenarios” for instructor’s use
- Four 8 x 11 signs, each with numbers 1 to 4 in large print
- Tape
- Chalkboard or newsprint paper
- Chalk or markers
- Scrap pieces of paper
- Pens or pencils

PREPARATION

- Read the article “Should You Tell a Friend if He or She Is Being Cheated On?” and become familiar with the reasoning from each author.
- Write on the chalkboard or newsprint the following question, “Should you tell a friend if he or she is being cheated on?”
- Post signs numbered one (1) and two (2) on opposite walls in your room. During the lesson you will also post signs numbered three (3) and four (4), so that each corner has one sign posted.

PROCEDURE

1. Ask participants to raise their hands if they personally know someone who has been cheated on while he or she was in a romantic relationship. Tally the number of hands raised. Reflect that number to the larger group, by making a statement about how many people have experienced cheating in their own lives or those of their friends. [2 minutes]

2. Refer to the following question, written on the chalkboard or newsprint: “Should you tell a friend if he or she is being cheated on?” Ask participants to reflect for a moment on the question. Next, ask participants if they would respond “yes” and, if so, to raise their hands. Share the number of hands raised with the larger group. Repeat the procedure with participants who would respond “no.” Explain that there are often different opinions about the role of a friend when he or she sees someone cheating and that this lesson will further explore this complicated issue. [3 minutes]

3. Distribute copies of the article “Should You Tell a Friend if He or She Is Being Cheated On?” and the “Should You Tell a Friend if He or She Is Being Cheated On?” Worksheets to each person. Explain that participants are to read the article and then work with a person seated next to them to complete the worksheets together. (**Facilitator’s Note:** This activity can be done in pairs or small groups depending on your group size and room setup.) Allow the group five minutes to complete this task. [7 minutes]

4. After five minutes, gather the group’s attention and explain that they will next be using some of their opinions from their worksheets to look at some common scenarios that teens face in relationships.

Point out the signs numbered one (1) and two (2) on opposite walls of the room. Explain that you will be reading statements and that participants are to select which option they believe is best. Explain that there is no middle ground, although most situations have more than two possible outcomes.

For the purposes of this activity, explain that participants are to select from the two options given, so they are challenged to clarify their values. Ask participants if they have any questions about the directions and, if not, begin by reading the first question (“Would you rather...be the cheater?/be cheated upon?”). Next, instruct them to move to the side of the room that represents their choice. [3 minutes]

Would you rather...

Choice 1

1. Be the cheater?
2. Tell your friend that you saw his/her bf/gf cheating on them?
3. Have your friend tell you if he/she saw your bf/gf cheating on you?

Choice 2

- Be cheated upon?
Not tell your friend?
Not tell you?

5. Once participants have selected their side of the room, instruct them to talk with others for a few minutes about why they are there. After approximately three minutes, gather the group’s attention and ask for volunteers from each side to explain their reasoning for why they believe that choice is best. Repeat procedure with statements two and three above. (**Facilitator’s Note:** When participants are discussing statement three, post signs with numbers three (3) and four (4) in the remaining two corners of the room.) [10 minutes]

6. Explain that there are four signs—one in each corner of the room representing a choice. Explain that you will read a scenario and four choices aloud about what a person in that scenario should do. Explain that each participant should select which choice he or she believes is best and move to the corner that represents that choice. Go on to explain that if people do not feel that any of the four choices represent the best decision, they are to stand in the center of the room and write on the scrap paper what they believe a better decision is and why. Ask participants if they have any questions about the directions. If not, begin by reading the first scenario. [1 minute]

7. Once participants have moved to the corner that represents their choice, ask a couple of volunteers from each corner to share why they believe that is the best choice. Ask probing questions that explore the pros and cons of each decision. Repeat the procedure with the second scenario and have participants return to their seats when it is complete. [14 minutes]

8. Once settled in their seats, ask participants the following questions:

- What reason did you hear that was different from your own opinion that you also agreed with?
- Did you hear a reason that caused you to rethink your position? If so, tell us a little about that experience.
- Did you hear something that strengthened your opinion? If so, tell us a little about that experience.
- Lastly, look at the question still written on the board: "Should you tell a friend if he or she is being cheated on?" Did you change your opinion from the beginning of class? If so, tell us a little about that experience. [8 minutes]

9. Close the exercise by explaining that cheating in relationships is often very hurtful for the individuals involved and someone who has been cheated upon needs a lot of support, especially from friends. Explain that hopefully participants will have more empathy and insight into this complex situation as a result of this activity. [2 minutes]

Special thanks to Teri Tomatich, M.Ed., for her review of this lesson.

“Should You Tell a Friend if He or She Is Being Cheated On?” Worksheet



Please list two reasons why the author Michael Schwab believes that you SHOULD NOT tell your friend if he or she is being cheated on.

1.

2.

Please list one reason you agree with the author and one reason you disagree with the author about NOT TELLING your friend if he or she is being cheated on.

One reason I AGREE that you SHOULD NOT tell is: _____

One reason I DISAGREE that you SHOULD NOT tell is: _____

“Should You Tell a Friend if He or She Is Being Cheated On?” Worksheet

YES



Please list two reasons why the author Taryn Dexter believes that you SHOULD tell your friend if he or she is being cheated on.

1.

2.

Please list one reason you agree with the author and one reason you disagree with the author about TELLING your friend if he or she is being cheated on.

One reason I AGREE that you SHOULD tell is: _____

One reason I DISAGREE that you SHOULD tell is: _____

Cheating Scenarios

Scenario A)

You go to a party and you know your friend is not going to be there. You walk in and see your friend's boyfriend or girlfriend kissing some other guy or girl. You know the relationship has been a little rocky lately. Would you

- 1) Walk up and confront him or her at the party? Demand that he or she tell your friend about kissing someone else?
- 2) Walk away and hope he or she hasn't seen you? Then call or text your friend about what you just saw?
- 3) Call your friend and tell him or her to come to the party right away? Don't explain why over the phone, but tell your friend it's really important and has to do with his or her boyfriend or girlfriend.
- 4) Walk away and don't say anything to your friend? Their relationship has been on again, off again, so you're not entirely sure they're together right now.

Scenario B)

You tell your friend that he or she is being cheated on. You go along with him or her to confront the offender and that person denies the whole thing ever happened. Would you

- 1) Start explaining what you saw/heard/were told and try to get the offender to admit what he or she has done?
- 2) Apologize to your friend and tell him or her that you were not 100 percent sure about what you saw/heard/were told about?
- 3) Tell your friend that he or she shouldn't have confronted the offender?
- 4) Decide not to go with your friend when he or she confronts the offender and try to stay out of it completely?