

THE STORY OF JO & SAM

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE:

Participants get to think about sexual behaviour and boundaries, beliefs about men and women, voluntariness and compulsion.

TIMING:

30-40 min

HOW TO CONDUCT THE EXERCISE:

Split the group into two smaller groups and give each group a copy of the story of Jo and Sam. You tell one group that Sam is a girl and Jo is a boy. The other group gets to hear that Sam is a boy and Jo is a girl. Make sure the groups do not hear that you give different instructions. The participants read the story in their group and answer the corresponding questions.

Now the groups come together again. The trainer asks how they have answered the questions. As the groups have had different instructions, there will be confusion on the gender of Sam and Jo (as is the intention). The teacher asks if this is relevant and whether their appreciation of the situation will change too. Then the differences and similarities will be discussed with emphasis on the underlying beliefs about men, women and sexuality.

THE STORY OF JO & SAM

In a large room there's a wedding party going on. Sam and Jo hardly know each other but are both friends of the happy couple and fairly informed of each other's lives. They are both a little tipsy. He doesn't seem drunk. She obviously has had too much to drink, because she starts giggling and cannot seem to stop. It's hard to say which one of them is most interested, because they are both obviously flirting. When the uncles and aunts are gone, he takes her hand and they hit the dance floor. She says, "I hope you're not holding my hand because you're worried that I will fall down otherwise" "You know that's not the reason," he replied, and he only wants to slow-dance the rest of the evening, even when the DJ plays a fast track. Well after midnight the party ends and the fluorescent lights come on. "We could go somewhere," Sam mumbles. The proposal is something like a question mark in the air, until Jo whispers: "to talk..." They nod, pick up their coats and take a taxi to Jo's flat. Jo's roommate is sleeping on the first floor, so they go to the living room. Jo apologizes for the clutter and gestures to the couch. "The most comfortable place in the house." The couch is full of bumps and is clearly too small for the two of them. They have to sit very closely together and soon they don't know where they should put their arms. "This is not ideal," Sam notes after half an hour. "Why don't we go to the bedroom?" "No, let's chat." "We can chat upstairs." Sam replies. "But my roommate is sleeping there. If we make noise ... "Jo does not finish the sentence and they look at each other. What they see is: her dress is crumpled halfway down her thighs, his shirt is completely unbuttoned and their lips are moist from all the kissing. By the time the issue of 'relocating' is being discussed again, it is three o'clock in the morning. "Why not?" asks Sam. "The reason," says Jo, "is that we will feel connected, not knowing whether we really

like each other." "But what's the difference with what we are doing?" Sam asks. "What we do now is more casual," stammers Jo. Sam replies with "but I do not want something casual with you" and ends by saying that it is too late now to go home. "You need to know" - Sam's hand disappears behind the elastic of the underwear -. "I like you very much" "Listen," Jo whispers, "I do not want this. I mean, I want it, but not now. We haven't even been out on a date." And so it goes on. The rhetoric, the arguments, the further intertwining of their bodies.

Jo doesn't push Sam away, and doesn't imply in any other way that it isn't fun anymore. Yet Jo says "no, you can touch me here, but not there; you can do this, but not THAT. Not yet - Not tonight". "But why not?" Sam tries once again. Jo says hesitantly, "I think I'm afraid of AIDS. If ..." "I have a condom with me," Sam quickly says. The condom is being brought out. Sam's hands are everywhere now. "Stop these meaningless games and let's do what we feel like doing!", Sam says. When Jo's hand goes down to try to stop Sam, this makes little impression. Sam says: "Is this stage fright or something?" The underpants come out. Jo sits huddled on the couch, conflicted. Sam snarls: "What are you afraid of? Don't be so squeamish?" And so they have sex.

Questions:

- What does Sam want? Why? How does Sam make this clear?
- What do you think about Sam's behaviour?
- What would you do?
- What does Jo want? Why? How does Jo make this clear?
- What do you think about Jo's behaviour?
- What would you do?
- How do you think Sam will feel the next morning?
- How do you think Jo will feel the next morning?
- Is this a rape? Why or why not?
- Is there a mutual agreement? How can you tell?

SUGGESTIONS:

Provide enough time for a group discussion afterwards.

Illustration: It's as simple as TEA!!!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8>

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