



Lesson Plan:

Responsible and Healthy Relationships

Title:	Responsible and Healthy Relationships
Theme:	Considering the Characteristics of Healthy Dating Relationships
Time:	30 minutes
Materials:	Dating Stoplight - Laminated Game (3 lights, 15 scenario cards) Magnets or Masking Tape

Objectives:

- to teach students about the concept of positive, healthy relationships
- to allow students to think about their own criteria for healthy dating relationships
- to identify healthy and unhealthy characteristics of student's present, past and future relationships

Background Information

This lesson focuses on the issues young people face surrounding dating relationships. This topic is important because relationships gain precedence during adolescence and provide teens with the groundwork for relationship building into adulthood. It is helpful for adolescents to consider what qualities are important to them and what makes a relationship healthy and successful. It is also constructive for students to examine those components of relationships that can be detrimental or even harmful. This lesson is designed to compel teens to think about their personal criteria for healthy dating relationships and to discuss ways to evaluate these relationships in a teacher-mediated group setting. The partners people choose in life, and the relationships that ensue, will shape their experiences and self-esteem in critical ways.

Activity One: Dating Stoplight Game - 30 minutes

Tell your students that they will be thinking about and discussing characteristics of dating relationships. Ask them to participate frequently during the discussion, as their input on this topic is very important. Start the lesson by asking students to answer a few general questions about relationships. Consider the following ideas.

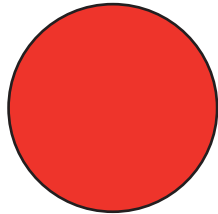
Why is it important to have partners?

These people provide friendship, support and love. As we explore what we have in common and what makes us different, partners can help us learn about ourselves. Through the process of dating, we come to understand what qualities are important to us in a relationship. Dating relationships provide us with the groundwork for relationship building into adulthood.

How do you think self-esteem is related to dating relationships?

When our self-esteem is high, and we have a positive self-concept, we are more likely to choose partners who are *good for us*. There is a saying that, "we teach people how to treat us". In other words, how we behave towards ourselves and other people gives them clues as to how they *should behave towards us*. So, when we feel good about ourselves, respect ourselves and treat others nicely, we are showing people how we would like to be treated.

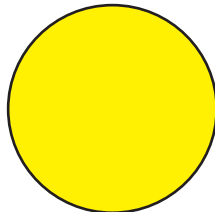
STOP! These are unhealthy/bad signs in a relationship!



Here are the instructions for setting up the "Dating Spotlight Game".

On the top left corner of your chalkboard, use tape or magnets to attach the red stoplight that reads "These are unhealthy/bad signs in a relationship".

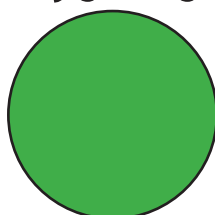
CAUTION! These are warning signs in a relationship!



Place the corresponding yellow and green stoplights underneath, as you see here.

Shuffle the Stoplight scenario cards to ensure they not in order.

GO! These are healthy/good signs in a relationship!



The object of this game is to decide which scenarios are most compatible with each of the following three statements: “these are unhealthy/bad signs in a relationship”, “these are warning signs in a relationship” and “these are healthy/good signs in a relationship”.

Attach the appropriate answers to the board/wall beside the corresponding stoplight with tape or magnets.

There are several ways that you can play this game. You can read the scenarios aloud and ask students where they think they best belong. You can give scenarios out to groups of students and they can arrive at a consensus. You can place the scenarios on a board or wall and ask volunteers to give suggestions. You might also consider placing the scenarios around the room and asking for volunteers to place them beside the proper stoplight on the chalkboard.

No matter what pedagogical strategy you use to play this game, be sure that you ask students for explanations regarding their choices. The most important part of this activity is the discussion around whether each scenario constitutes a good/healthy, a warning, or an unhealthy/bad sign in a relationship. It is in this arena that students will be able to discuss their various points of view. Your role in this game is to facilitate and mediate the conversations of your students.

When there is disagreement, you might choose not to place the scenario beside one statement, but rather choose to set it aside for further debate and discussion. If the scenario clearly represents an unhealthy/bad or warning sign, be sure to make this clear for your students.

There are fifteen scenario cards. Five scenarios correspond with each coloured stoplight: red (unhealthy/bad signs), yellow (warning signs) and green (healthy/good signs).

While there may be some discrepancies, the following is a list of suggested correct answers.

RED LIGHT: These are unhealthy/bad signs in a relationship.

1. You are afraid of this person’s temper.
2. The person you are dating threatens to hurt you.
3. Your partner pressures you to do things you do not want to do.
4. Your partner criticizes you or people you care about.
5. Your partner makes you feel nervous about sharing your ideas with them.

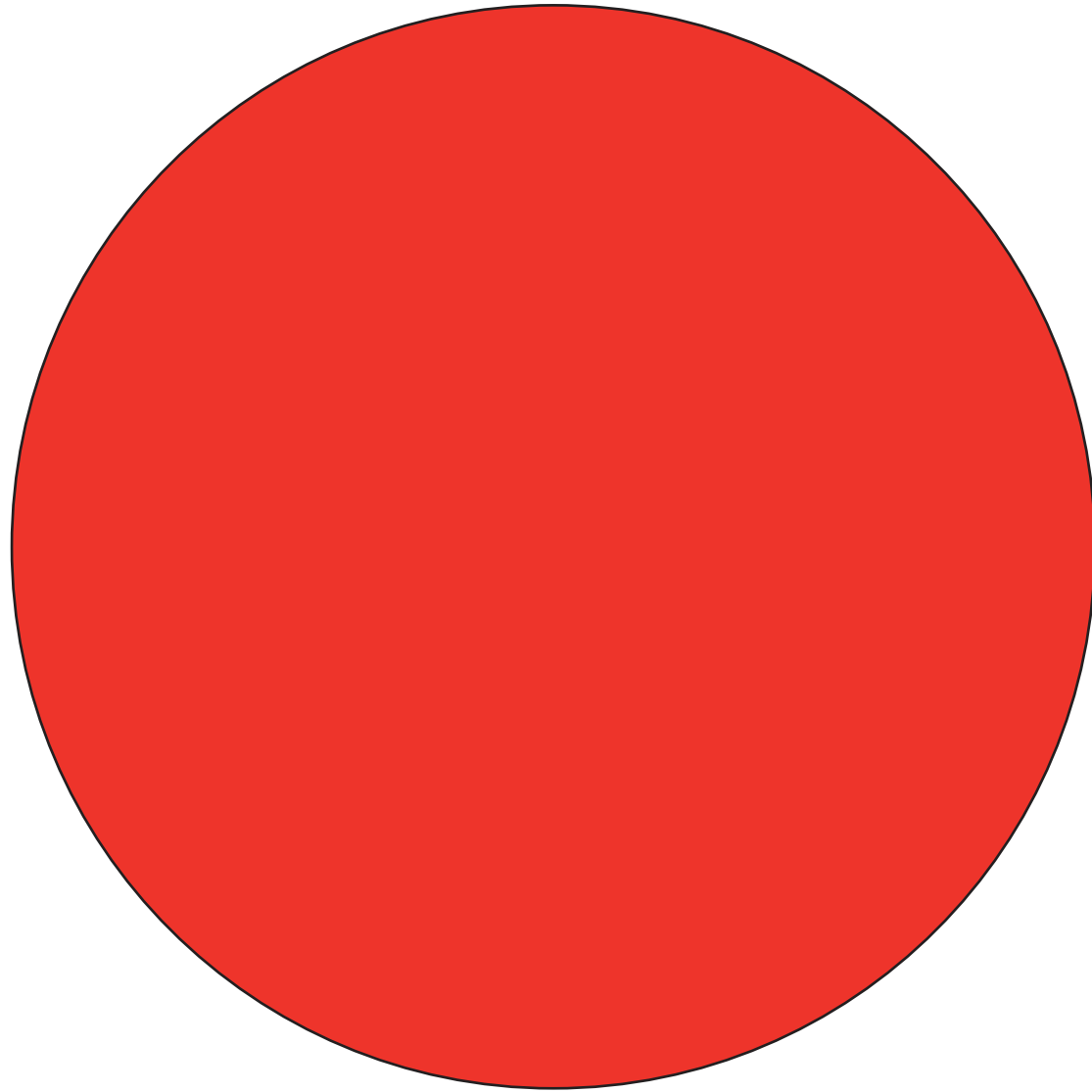
YELLOW LIGHT: These are warning signs in a relationship.

6. You are unsure about your feelings for this person.
7. The person you are dating tells you not to hang out with certain friends.
8. You rarely get to plan what the two of you will do together.
9. The person you are dating often asks where you are, who you are with and what you are doing.
10. You say that you agree with the person you are dating, even though you really disagree with them, because you are afraid that a fight might end the relationship.

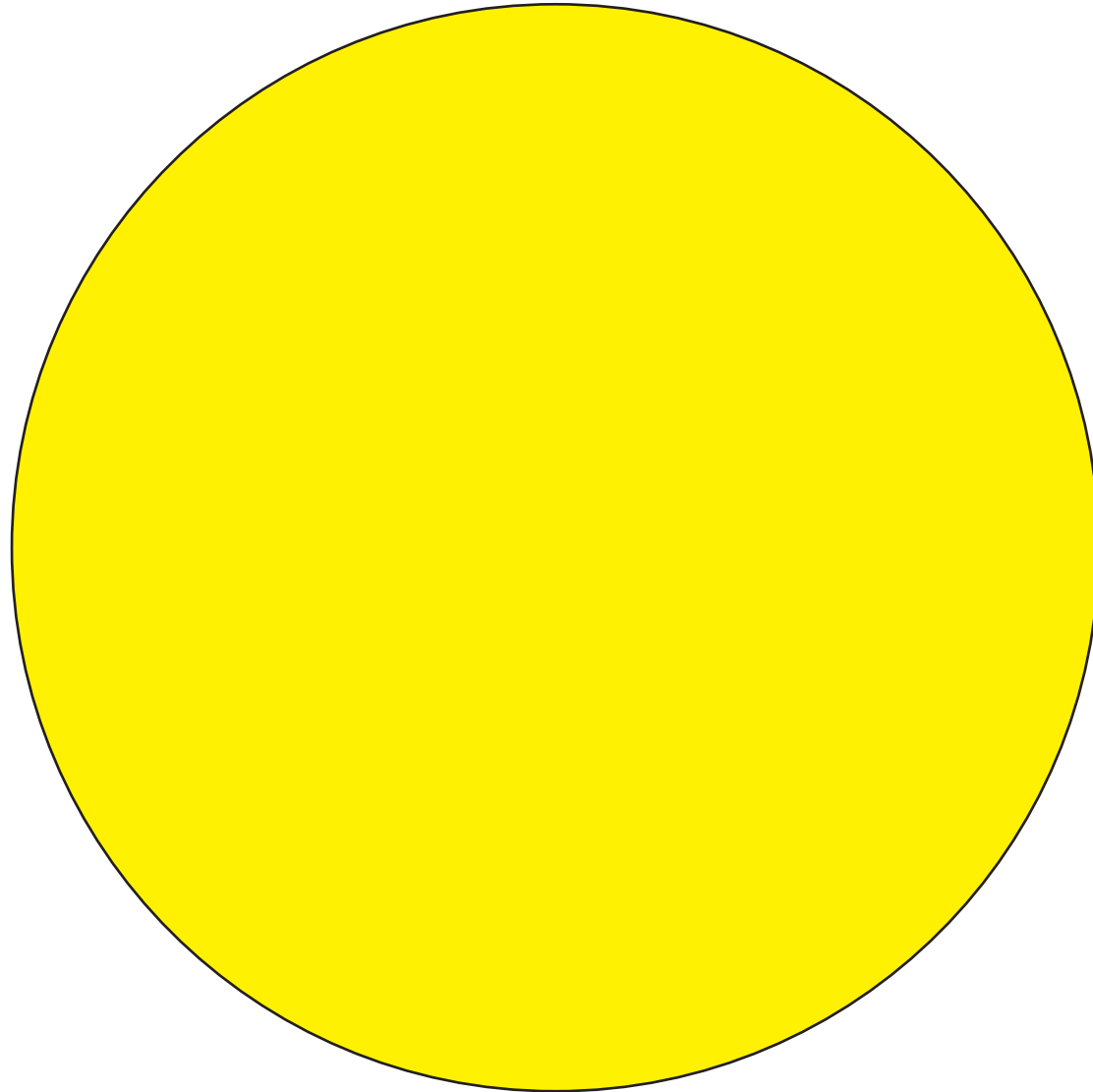
GREEN LIGHT: These are healthy/good signs in a relationship.

11. You usually feel happy when you are with this person.
12. Your partner respects your feelings and your opinions.
13. The person you are dating talks to you about their feelings.
14. Your partner celebrates your successes and they are happy when good things happen to you.
15. You enjoy being with this person you are dating, but you also enjoy spending time apart.

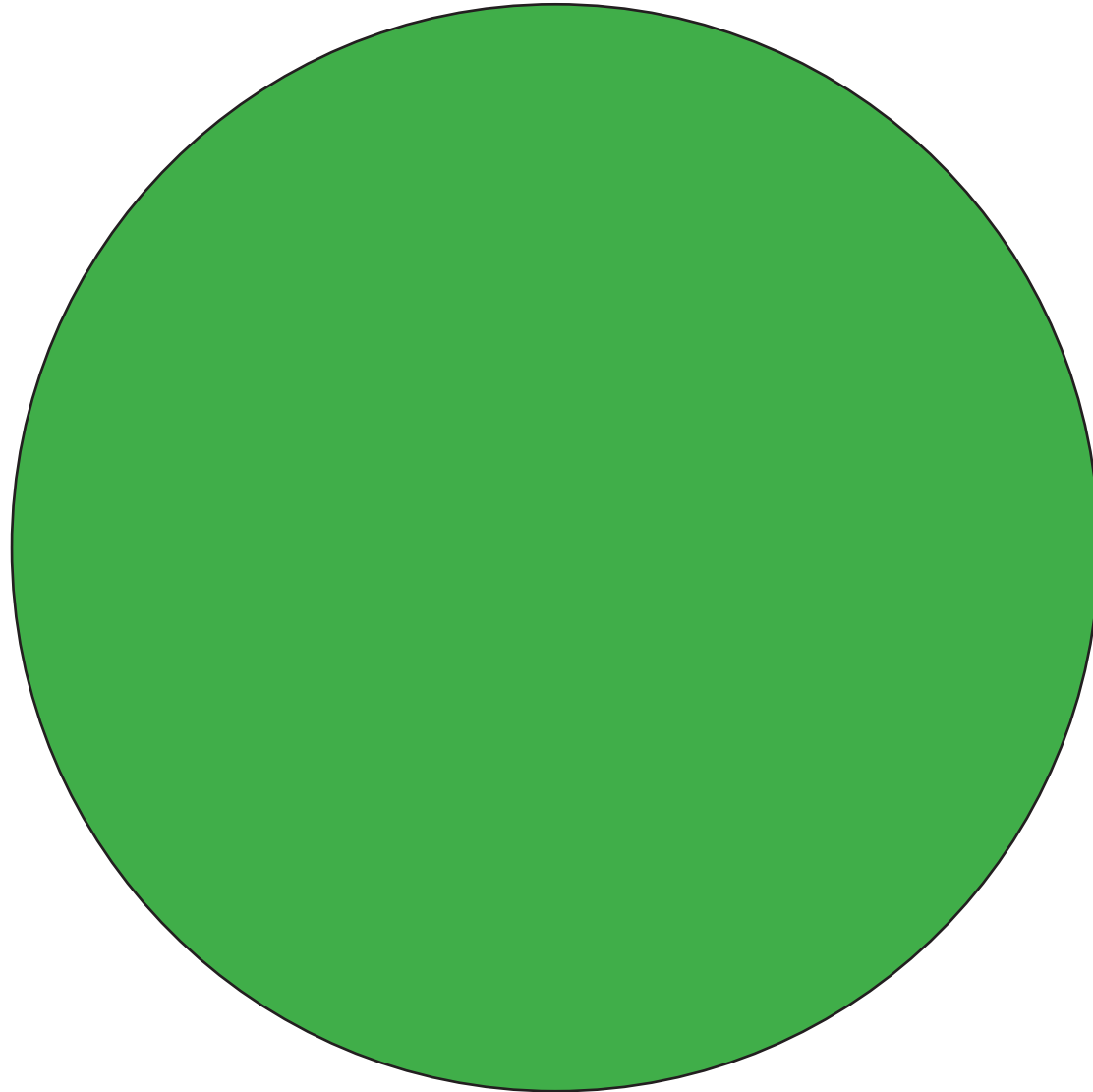
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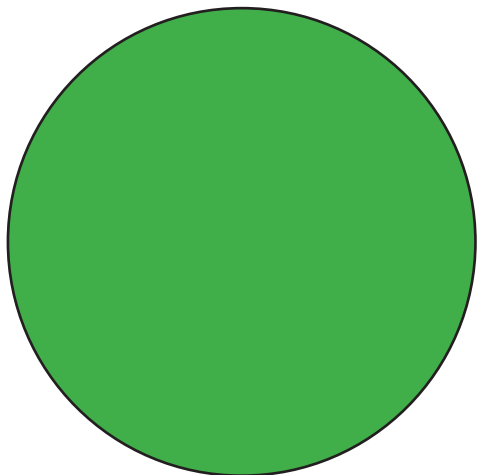
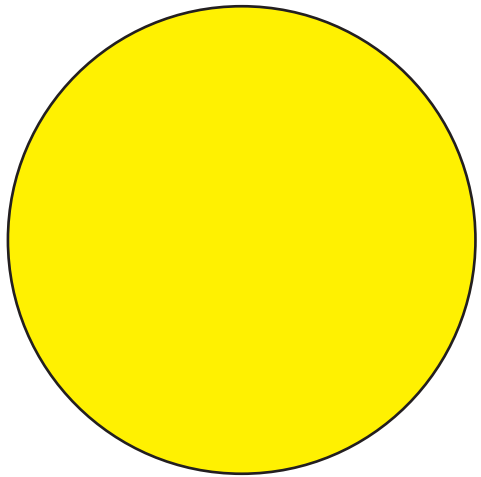
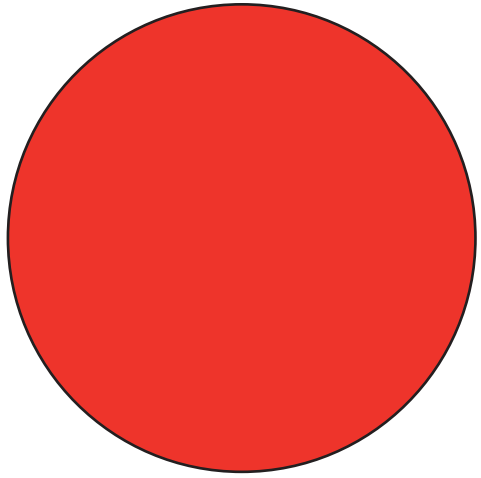


CAUTION! These are warning signs in a relationship!

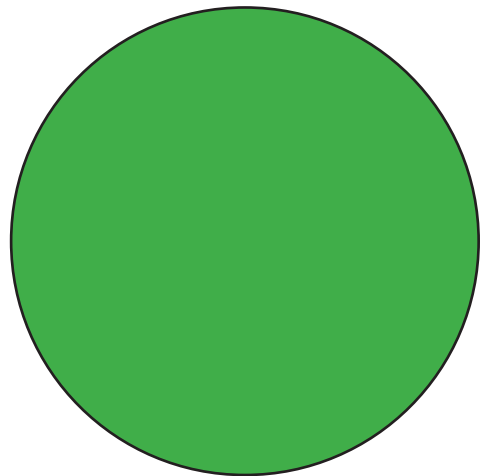
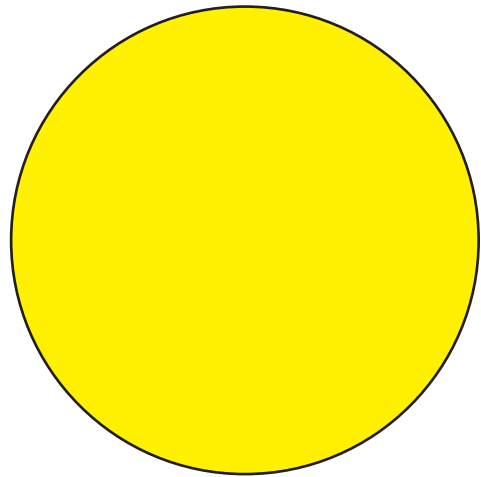
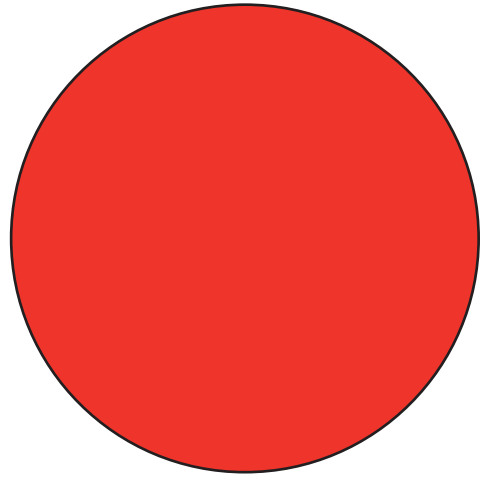


GO! These are healthy/good signs in a relationship!

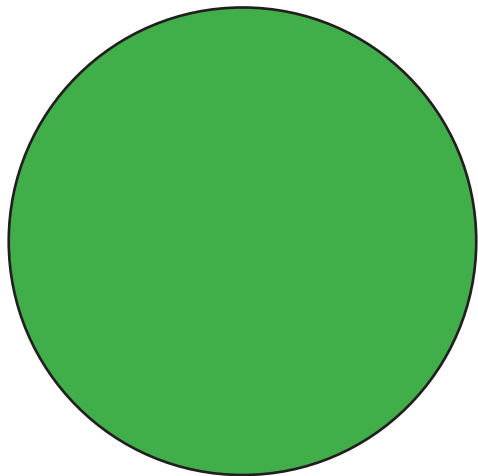
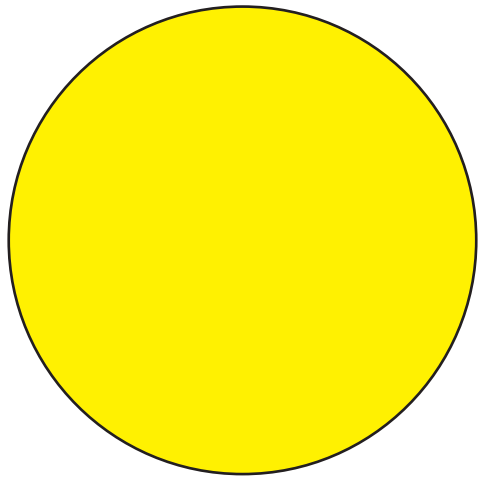
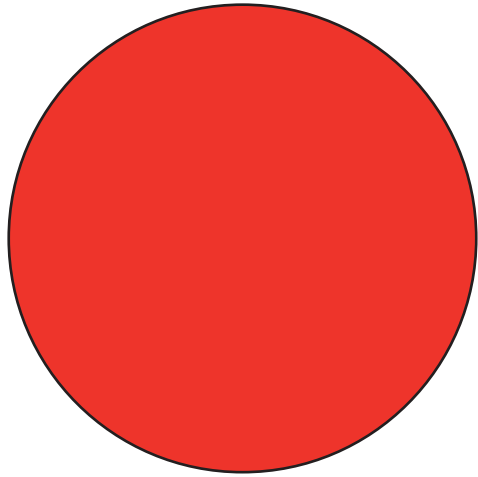




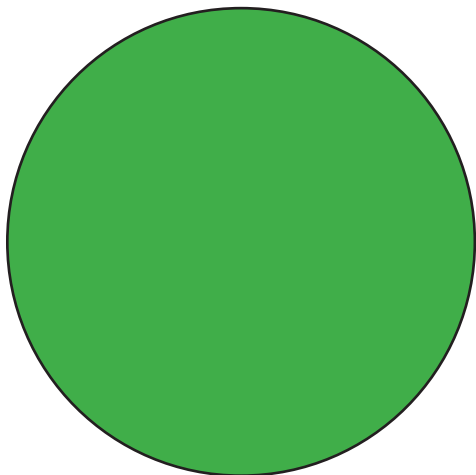
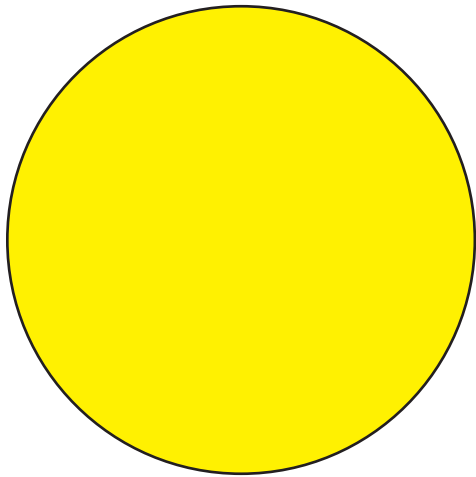
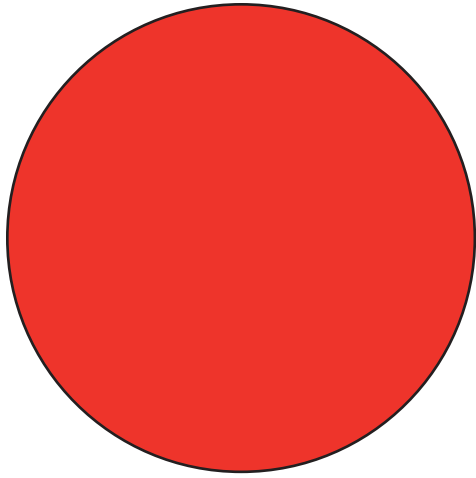
**You are
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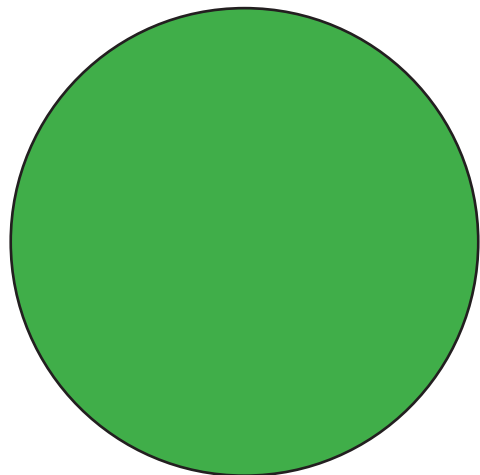
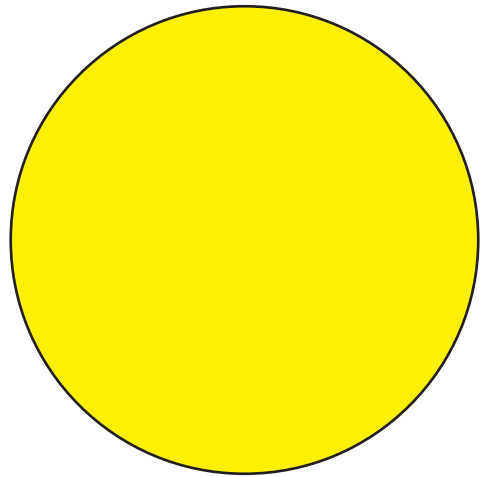
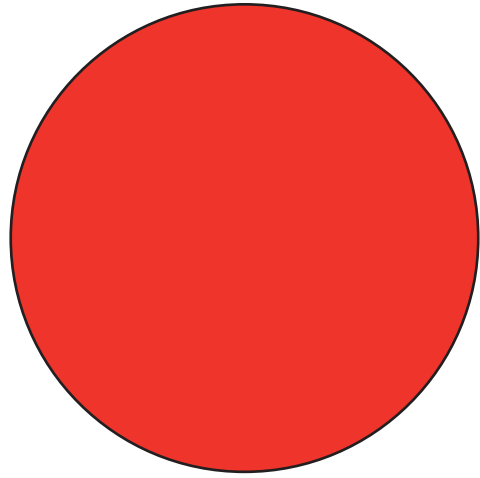
**The person
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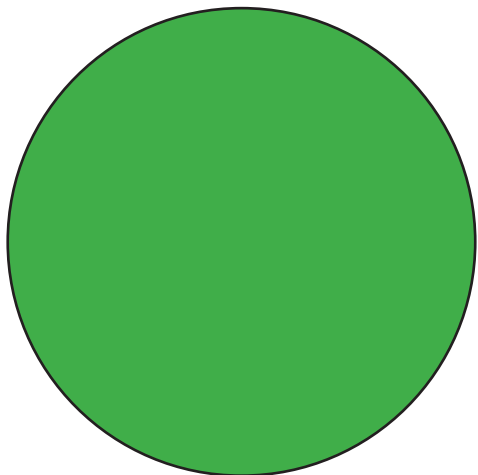
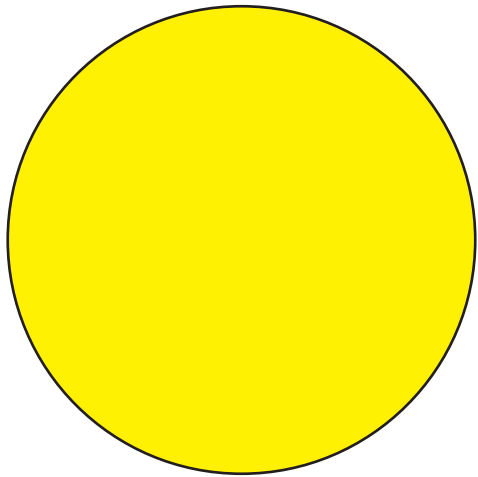
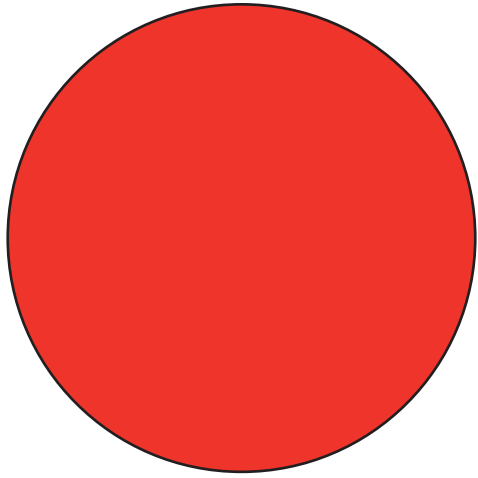
**Your partner
pressures you
to do things
you do not
want to do.**



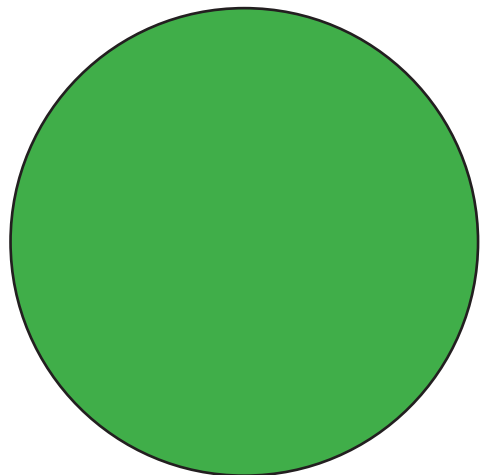
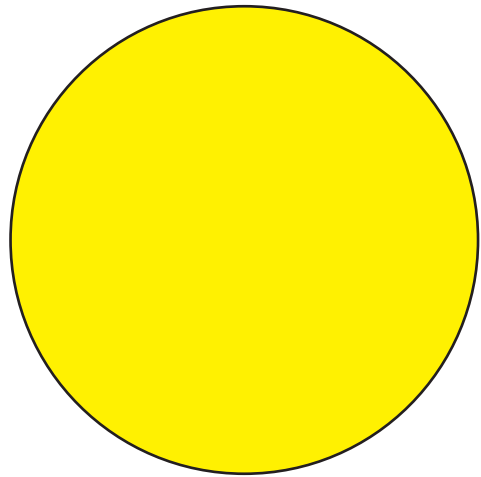
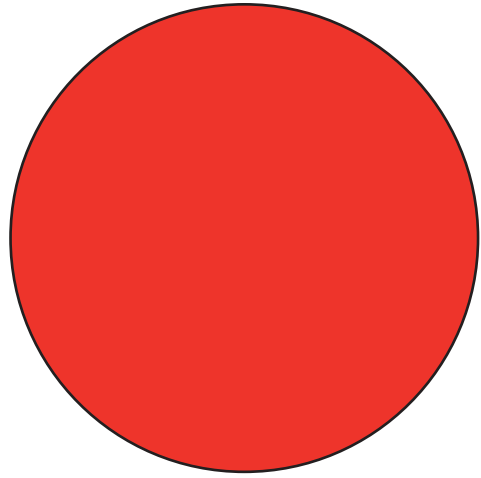
**Your partner
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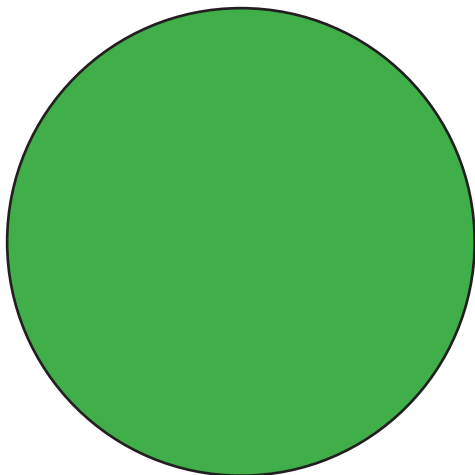
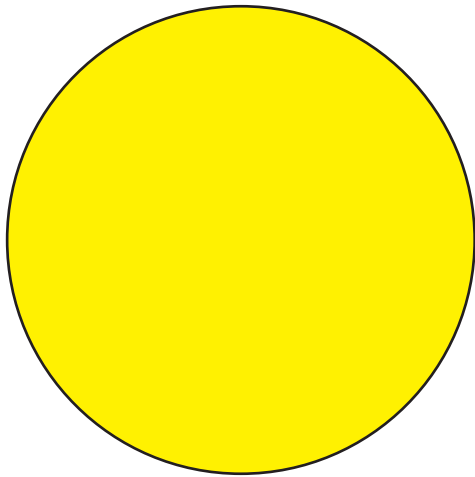
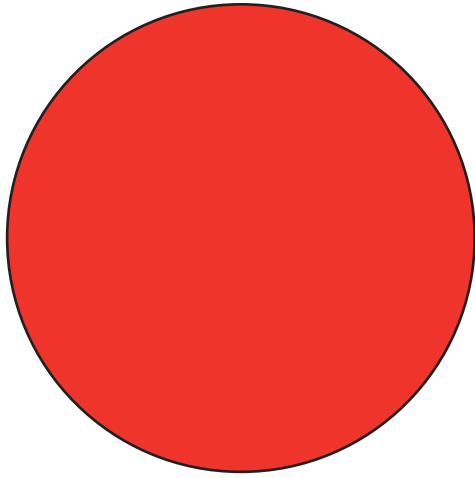
**Your partner
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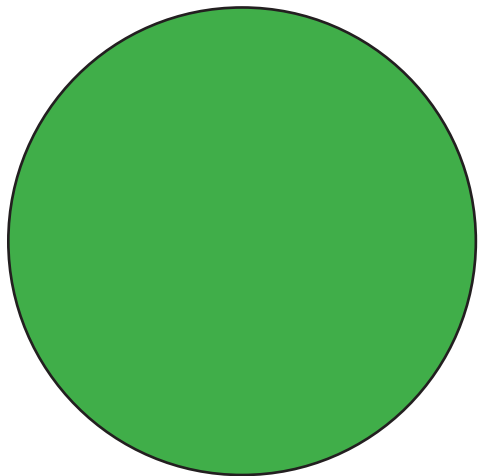
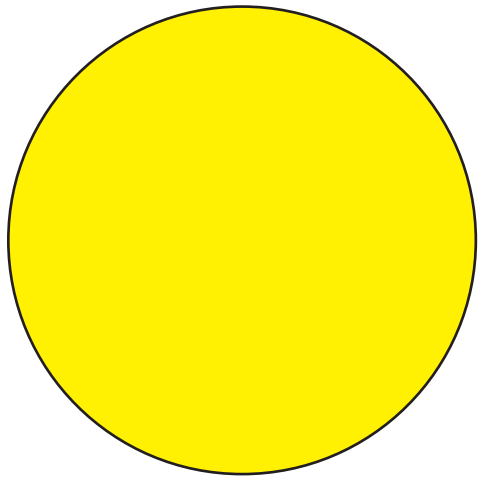
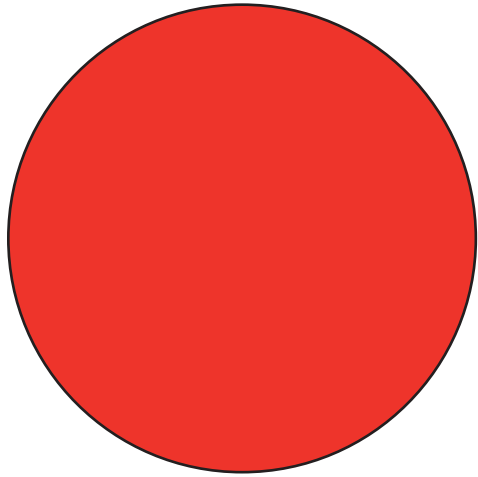
**You are
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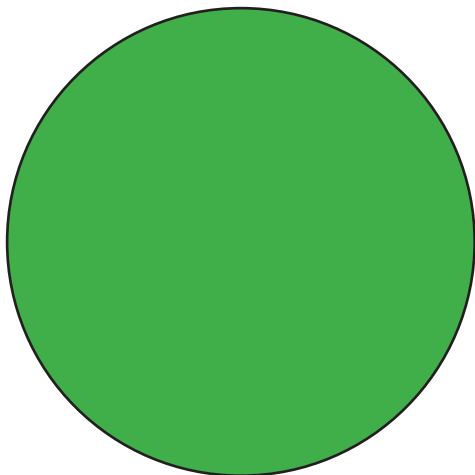
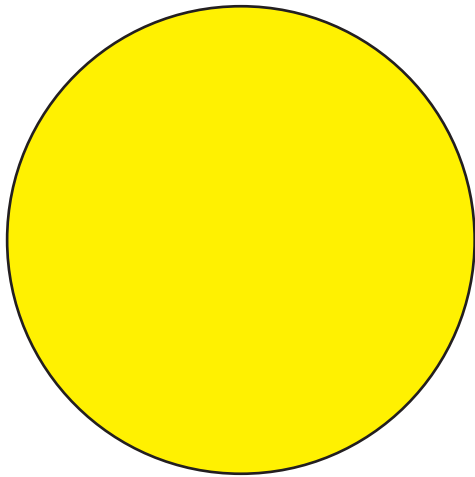
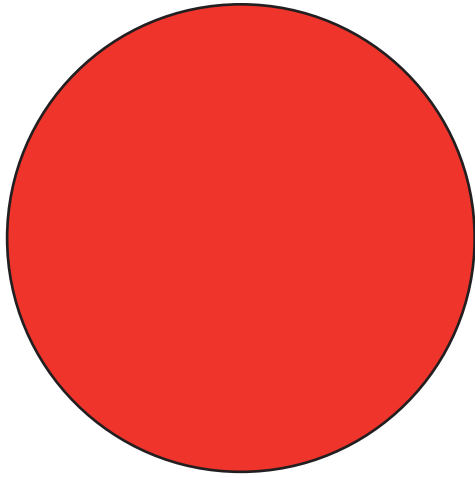
**The person
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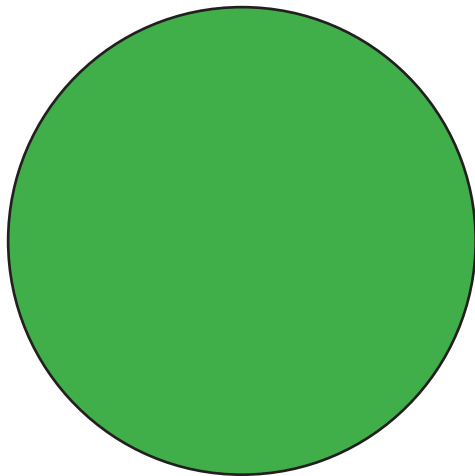
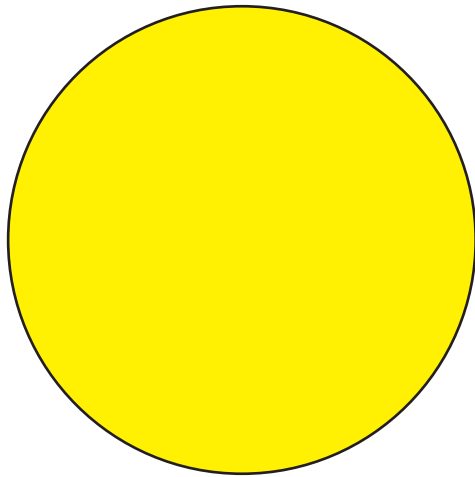
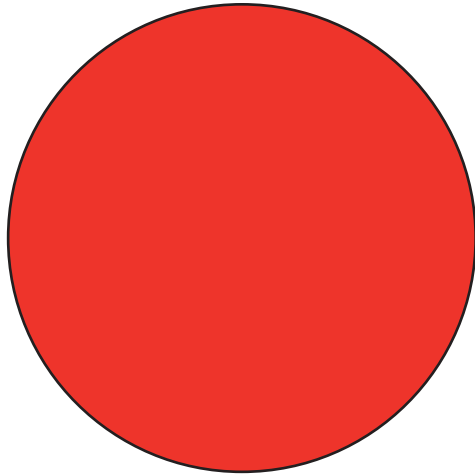
**You rarely
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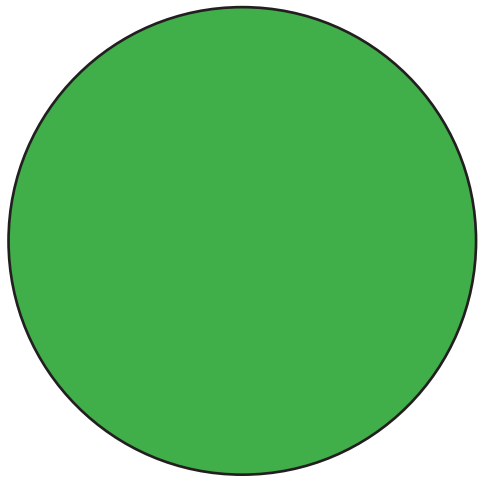
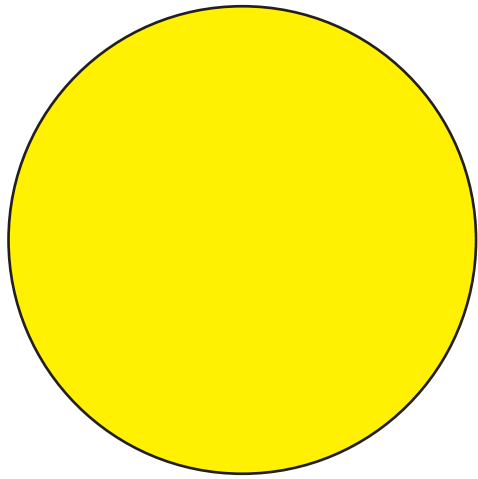
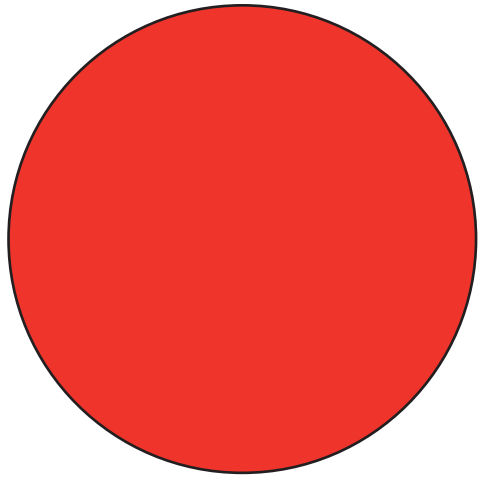
**The person
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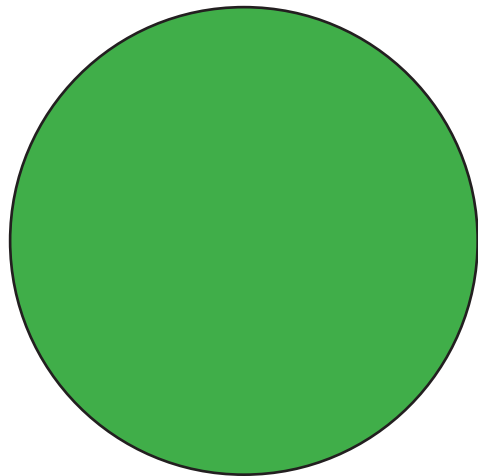
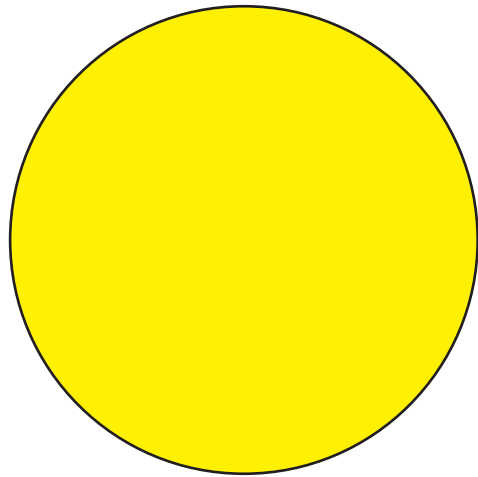
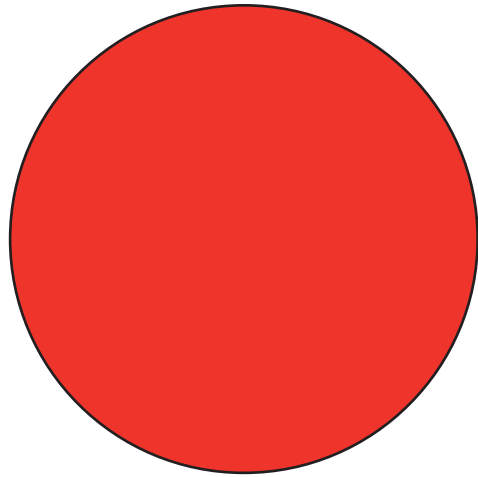
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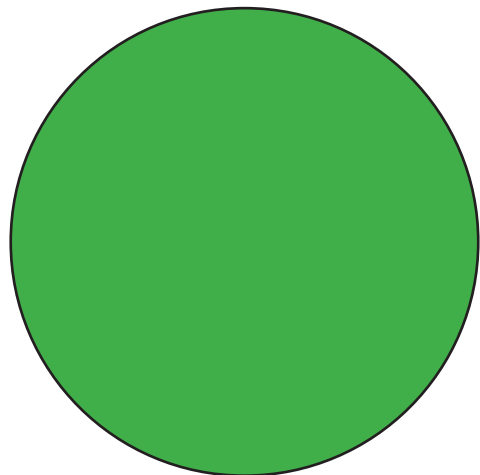
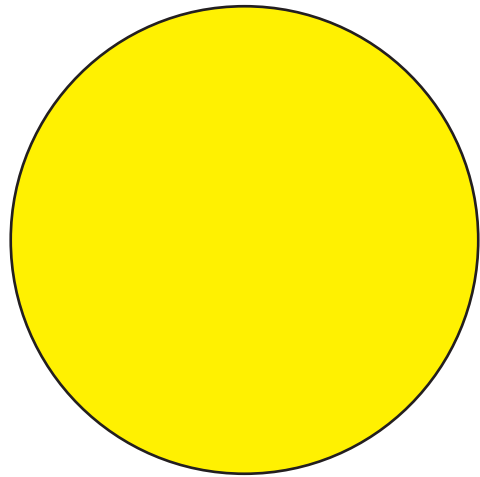
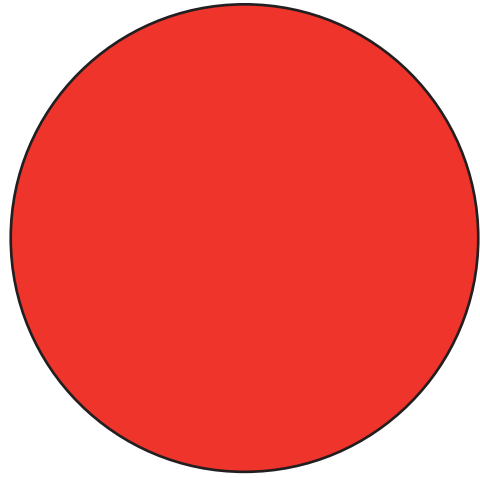
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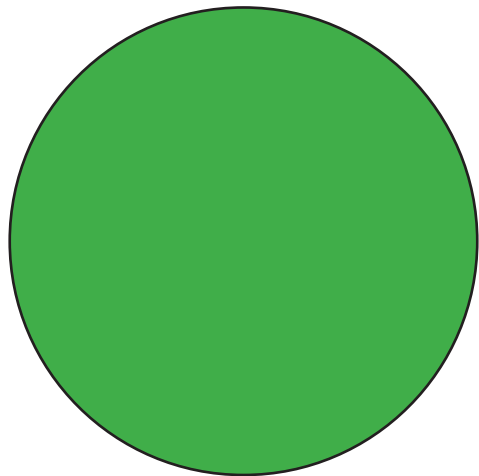
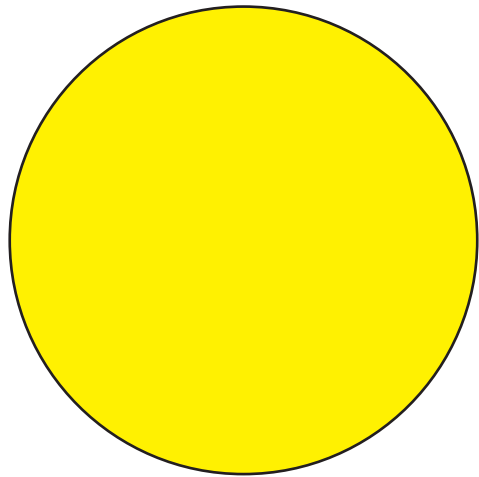
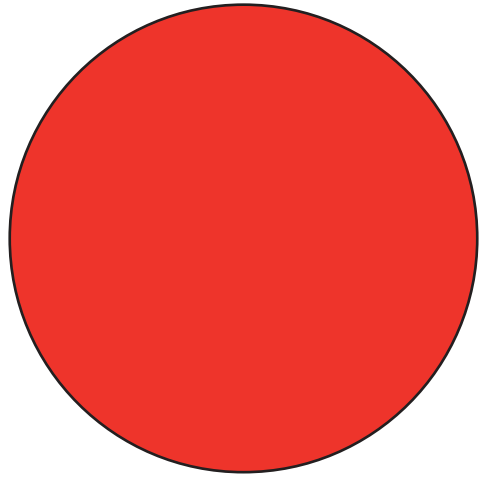
**Your partner
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**The person
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dating talks
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**Your partner
celebrates
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happy when
good things
happen to you.**



**You enjoy
being with this
person you
are dating, but
you also enjoy
spending time
apart.**

References

Dacey, J., & Maureen, K. (1997). *Adolescent Development* (2nd Ed). Toronto, ON: Brown and Benchmark.