Intimacy scale

Purpose
To introduce issues relating to relationships and communication.

Teaching notes
This activity lets students look at their own attitudes and values and how they might respond to real-life situations where they need to make choices. It generates a lot of discussion, so it's important to allow plenty of time for each step. It's designed to be done in groups, but also works well as a class activity, where some students are given a card and asked to silently put themselves on the continuum. Each student is then given the chance to explain their choice before taking part in a class discussion.

Procedure
1. Ask students to work with a partner to describe what intimacy means to them. Give them enough time to come up with a definition and then hold a class discussion until everyone agrees on what intimacy means. *Please note: A dictionary definition of intimacy is a close, familiar and usually affectionate or loving personal relationship with another person or group.*
2. Discuss with students different types of intimacy (e.g. physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and sexual intimacy), and whether it's possible to experience one without the others.
3. Divide the class into four groups.
4. Give each group a set of *Intimacy scale* cards.
5. Ask them to put each card on a scale from ‘Most intimate’ to ‘Least intimate’. Let students know there are no right or wrong answers, but that each group must try to come to an agreement about where the cards are placed. Allow plenty of time for group discussion.
6. Ask each group to choose a spokesperson to share the three most and least intimate cards listed on their group’s scale and their reasoning.

Discussion
A class discussion could include the following questions:
- How do individual perceptions of intimacy affect the placement of the cards?
- Does everyone have the right to decide where their limit is at any time?
- Does the level of intimacy depend on the situation?
- What influences your decisions about the level of intimacy you go to?
- What happens when two people in a relationship want to be at different places on the line?
- Where does a relationship start and how does it keep going?
- Where or who can you go to for help, support or information about relationships and decisions?

Activity Details

**Victorian Curriculum**

**Health & PE**
Evaluate strategies to manage personal, physical and social changes that occur as they grow older
VCHPEP124

**Capabilities**
VCECD017, VCPSCSO038

**Time**
40 minutes

**Levels**
7 & 8

**Equipment**
- a set of Intimacy scale cards per group

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Adapted with permission from Mackay, L and Cleland, A 1994, Challenges and change: a sexuality education programme for adolescents, New Zealand Family Planning Association, Auckland.
Most intimate

Least intimate
Activity 7-8.8.2

Showing affection in public

Saying 'I love you'
Dancing together

Texting or Facebooking each other
Activity
7-8.8.2

Sharing secrets

Introducing your partner to your parents
Activity 7-8.8.2

'Having a feel' with your clothes on

Giving presents to each other
Sleeping together (not having sex)

Listening to music
Activity 7-8.8.2

Going to the movies

Hugging
Kissing on the lips

Sending a nude photo of yourself to your boyfriend/girlfriend
Tongue kissing

Flirting
Activity 7-8.8.2

Having sex

Touching one another under clothes
Giving or receiving oral sex