



WORKSHEET

## Do you always have to say yes to sex with your partner?

### Key facts and discussions



#### What do you think Mwila should do?

Do you always have to have sex with your boyfriend or girlfriend? Can you just assume that if you've had sex with someone before you can have sex with them again? If your boyfriend or girlfriend doesn't want to have sex does that mean something is wrong in your relationship?

We know these things can be hard to talk about, but here are a few facts to help you think through some of these issues.

## Key facts

**Taking part in any kind of sexual activity** with someone else should involve **giving and getting agreement**. This is also known as **sexual consent**.

Consent requires a **clear and enthusiastic yes**. If someone seems unsure, stays silent, doesn't respond, or says "maybe," that isn't consent.

You should **always ask for consent and give consent every time you have sex**.

You **always have a right to say no** to any form of sex or sexual activity – it doesn't matter who the other person is, what your relationship is, what you've done with them or others in the past. It is the same whether you're having sex for the first time with someone, or if you're in a long-term relationship.

**Consent is an ongoing process** – you might agree to sex earlier on and then change your mind – you might agree to one type of sexual activity but not to another – everyone has the right to do this.

Giving your consent and getting your partner's consent may feel a bit awkward but ultimately **sex is about communication** and can and should be a positive and pleasurable experience when it's based on mutual consent.

You should **not assume that your partner will want to have sex** just because you've had sex in the past. Similarly, if you feel pressured to have sex or feel too afraid to say no – that's not OK, and may be a sign of an unhealthy relationship.

Sex is only one aspect of a good relationship and **having sex is not proof of love** or guarantee fidelity. If your partner doesn't want to have sex remember that they are saying no to sex, not to you.



## Ideas for discussion

Here are some questions to think about yourself or discuss in your group.

- **What do you think Mwila is thinking and feeling?  
What do you think Sepiso is thinking and feeling?**
- **Can you suggest positive ways they could communicate their thoughts and feelings to each other?**
- **What are some ways that someone might communicate that they don't want to have sex? Do they always have to say no?**
- **If someone says no to having sex with you is it OK to keep asking or try to change their minds?**

## Useful resources

### **Sexual consent**

<https://www.avert.org/sex-stis/consent>

### **Healthy relationships**

<https://www.avert.org/sex-stis/relationships>

### **6 things you need to know about sexual consent**

<https://www.avert.org/news/6-things-you-need-know-about-sexual-consent>

This worksheet is part of the Young Voices package of resources on sex and relationships. For more details please visit:  
[www.avert.org/hubs/young-voices-africa](http://www.avert.org/hubs/young-voices-africa)