



Lesson Two

Title:	Responsible and Healthy Relationships
Theme:	Considering the characteristics of healthy dating relationships
Time:	125 minutes
Materials:	* Dating Stoplight-Laminated Game * CD player & music * Magnets or masking tape * Solving Problems in Relationships Worksheet

Objectives

- to teach students about the concept of positive, healthy relationships
 - to acknowledge the links between healthy relationships and positive self-esteem
 - to consider the reasons it is important to have healthy relationships
 - to allow students to think about their own criteria for healthy dating relationships
 - to discuss the good signs, warning signs and bad signs in dating relationships
 - to have students explore ways to deal with difficult situations in dating relationships
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Curriculum Expectations

- 9p1 - identify the factors that contribute to positive relationships with others
- 9p6 - describe the factors that lead to responsible sexual relationships
- 9p8 - demonstrate understanding of how to use decision-making and assertiveness skills effectively to promote healthy sexuality (e.g., healthy human relationships)
- 9p23 - use appropriate social skills when working collaboratively with others
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4MAT Quadrants

- 1L:** Listening, Analyzing, Teacher-led Discussions, Speaking, Sharing
- 1R:** Making Connections and Integrating Experiences, Large Group Activities, Game



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Background Information

This lesson focuses on the issues young people face surrounding dating relationships. The topic is important because these relationships gain increasing importance during adolescence and provide teens with the groundwork for relationship building into adulthood. As girlfriends and boyfriends become a more significant source of influence for teens, it is helpful for them to consider what qualities make 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. Inevitably, the partners who young people choose to date, and the relationships that ensue, will shape their experiences and self-esteem in critical ways.

Procedure

Activity One: Brainstorming Bubble – 20 minutes

This first activity is to introduce the idea of relationships and to generate discussion, constructing a positive, safe classroom environment. Create a list of words related to the topic. For example, in health, ask students to give you words related to the word, "RELATIONSHIPS." Students may suggest: 'love,' 'friendship,' 'understanding,' 'family,' 'dating,' etc. Write all suggestions on the board, clustering by theme or common idea where possible. This is a good way to begin a group discussion. You can also use this opportunity to introduce or review new vocabulary and terms related to relationships.



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Activity Two: Moving with Music – 20 minutes

1. Pre-prepare for each student a slip of paper on which there are three or four numbered questions.

Example:

- *What makes a relationship healthy?*
 - *Discuss characteristics of an unhealthy relationship.*
 - *Share about a good relationship you have experienced (friend, family, significant other). Why was/is it a good relationship?*
2. Give the students their slips with the three topics and ask them to stand up.
 3. Explain that when the music starts they are to begin milling around silently but greeting each other as they pass by (wave, smile, wink, head nod, etc...)
 4. Explain that when the music stops (or when you give the hand signal), each student is to stop and discuss question #1 with the student standing close by for 1 minute. Explain that when the music begins again, they are to repeat the process until they have discussed all three questions.

Suggested Reflection Questions:

1. Did you have similar things to share? If so, and if you are comfortable sharing, what similarities did you find?
2. What skills did you have to use in this activity? (Suggest some: listening, speaking clearly, sharing opinions, respecting difference.)



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Activity Three: 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 great girlfriends and boyfriends?**

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.

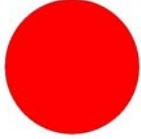
- **How do you think self-esteem is related to dating relationships?**

When our self-esteem is high, and we have a positive self-concept, we are more likely to choose girlfriends and boyfriends 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.



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STOP! These are bad signs in a relationship!



CAUTION! These are warning signs in a relationship!



GO! These are good signs in a relationship!



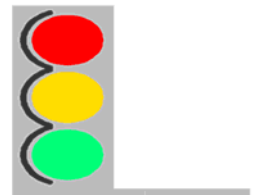
Here are the instructions for setting up the “Dating Stoplight Game”.

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

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

Shuffle the Stoplight scenario cards to ensure that they are not in order. The graphic shown on the right appears on each scenario card.

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



Attach the appropriate answers to the chalkboard beside the corresponding stoplight with tape or magnets.



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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 could give scenarios out to groups of students and they can come to a consensus. You can place the scenarios on overheads 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 matching 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, a warning or a 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 a 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, yellow and green.





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

RED LIGHT: These are 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 girlfriend or boyfriend pressures you to do things you do not want to do.
4. Your boyfriend or girlfriend criticises you or people you care about.
5. Your boyfriend or girlfriend makes you feel nervous about sharing your ideas with him/her.

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 him/her, because you are afraid that a fight might end the relationship.

GREEN LIGHT: These are good signs in a relationship.

11. You usually feel happy when you are with this person.
12. Your girlfriend or boyfriend respects your feelings and your opinions.
13. The person you are dating talks to you about his/her feelings.
14. Your boyfriend or girlfriend celebrates your successes and s/he is happy when good things happen to you.
15. You enjoy being with the person you are dating, but you also enjoy spending time apart.

Activity Four: "Solving Problems In Relationship" Homework Assignment – 5 min.

Distribute the homework assignment. Discuss expectations and evaluation strategies, allow a few minutes for questions.



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Possible Extensions

Once their homework assignments have been submitted, have a discussion with the students asking them to share some of their solutions to one of the relationship problems. Allow for a couple of students to offer their solutions to the same situation, as different approaches are valuable in problem solving.

Also think about having students role-play their way through some of the “relationship problems”. Consider having peer evaluations for their performances, offering alternative suggestions for solving the problems.

Possible Assessment

An opportunity for summative evaluation is present in this lesson; the “Solving Problems In Relationships” homework assignment allows teachers to evaluate students problem solving skills. Also if students are required to complete the role-play activity, teachers could evaluate group work, and communication skills. Students could evaluate themselves and/or their peers based on the final role play presentation.

Resources

Dacey, John and Maureen Kenny. (1997). *Adolescent Development 2nd Edition*. Toronto: Brown and Benchmark.

Gibbs, Jeanne. (2001). *TRIBES: A new way of learning and begin together*. CenterSource Systems, LLC. Windson, California, USA.



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Homework Assignment

Solving Problems In Relationships

Everyone will have some difficult times in their relationships. Even in the closest of relationships, problems do arise. It is important that you be able to tell the difference between good relationships and not-so-good relationships. One way you can do this is to decide if the problems you face with your partner are “warning signs” or “bad signs” in your relationship. By now, you have played the Dating Stoplight Game with your class. Remember that “warning signs” make you feel a little worried about your relationship, while “bad signs” make you feel very uncomfortable.

Think of a time when you had a problem in a relationship. For this homework assignment, you will be writing a solution to a problem in a relationship. The solution can be something you actually did to solve a problem, or it can be something you might do if the problem came up again. If you can not think of a problem in your own life, please provide a solution to Pat’s, Faisal’s or Chris’ problem. They are listed on the following page.

On a lined piece of paper, complete all three tasks below.

- Task #1:** In one or two sentences, describe the problem you faced with your partner (girlfriend, boyfriend) OR write down that you will be trying to solve Pat’s, Faisal’s, or Chris’ problem.
- Task #2:** Explain why you think the problem is a “warning sign” or a “bad sign”.
- Task #3:** Write a solution that you used, or that a person could use, to solve the problem. If you are not sure how to solve the problem, try writing a few ideas that you think might work.

Evaluation

Criteria	1 Poor	2 Fair	3 Good	4 Very Good	5 Excellent
Student thoroughly completed all three tasks					
Quality of the solution(s) provided					

Grade out of 10/10



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Homework Assignment

Solving Problems In Relationships

Jamie has been dating Pat for 10 months and they feel they are in love with each other. They have even talked about living together in the future. Pat has a very bad temper, and Jamie is concerned about that. Pat is extremely critical about Jamie's hair, clothes, spending money, etc. which make Jamie feel hurt. Pat often says "You're too sensitive". Jamie has recently done things just to please Pat.

How can Pat help solve this relationship problem?

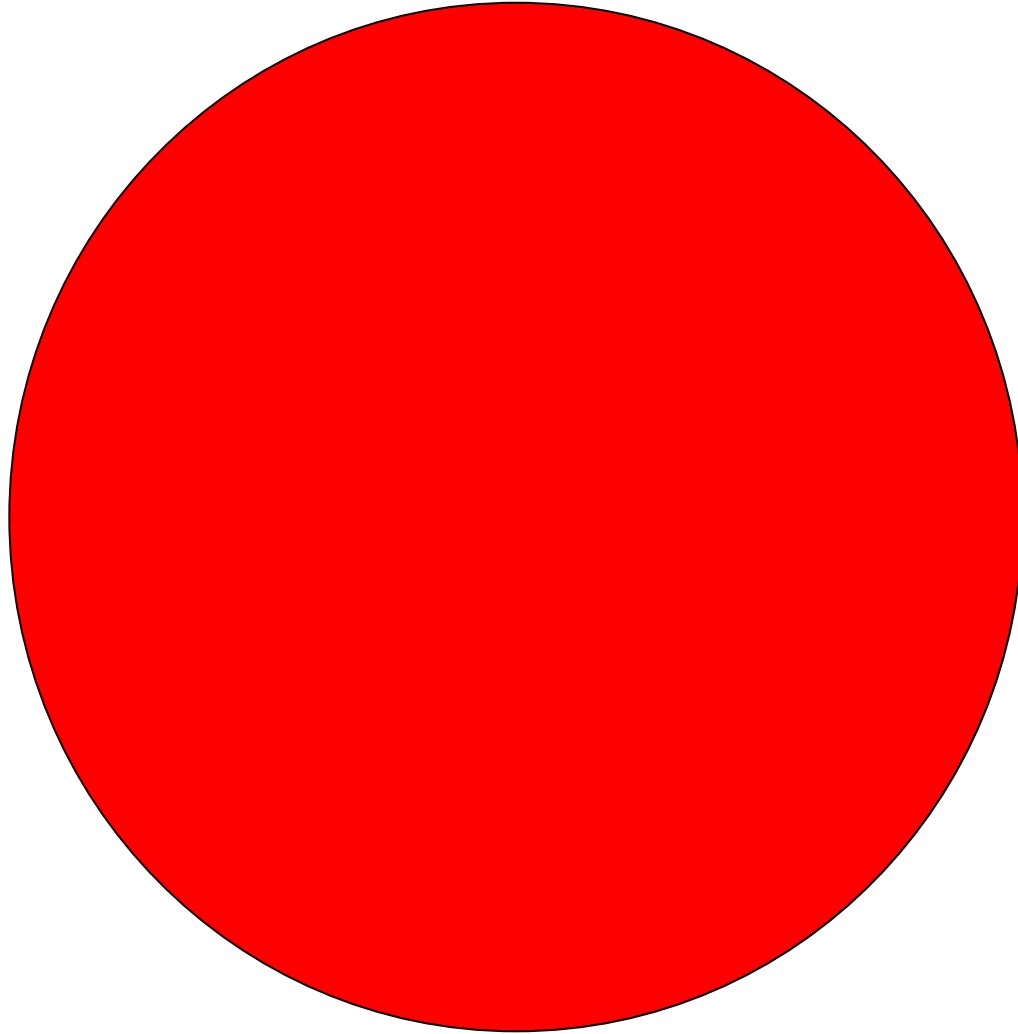
Faisal and his girlfriend have been together for over a year. Faisal has a very jealous personality. Every time his girlfriend does not answer her cell phone or when she is not at home he gets these thoughts that she is with someone else. His girlfriend is becoming frustrated with the continued questions and accusations. He really wants to make the relationship work but when he becomes jealous his stomach hurts, he can't sleep and he feels angry and hurt.

What can Faisal do to help solve this problem in his relationship?

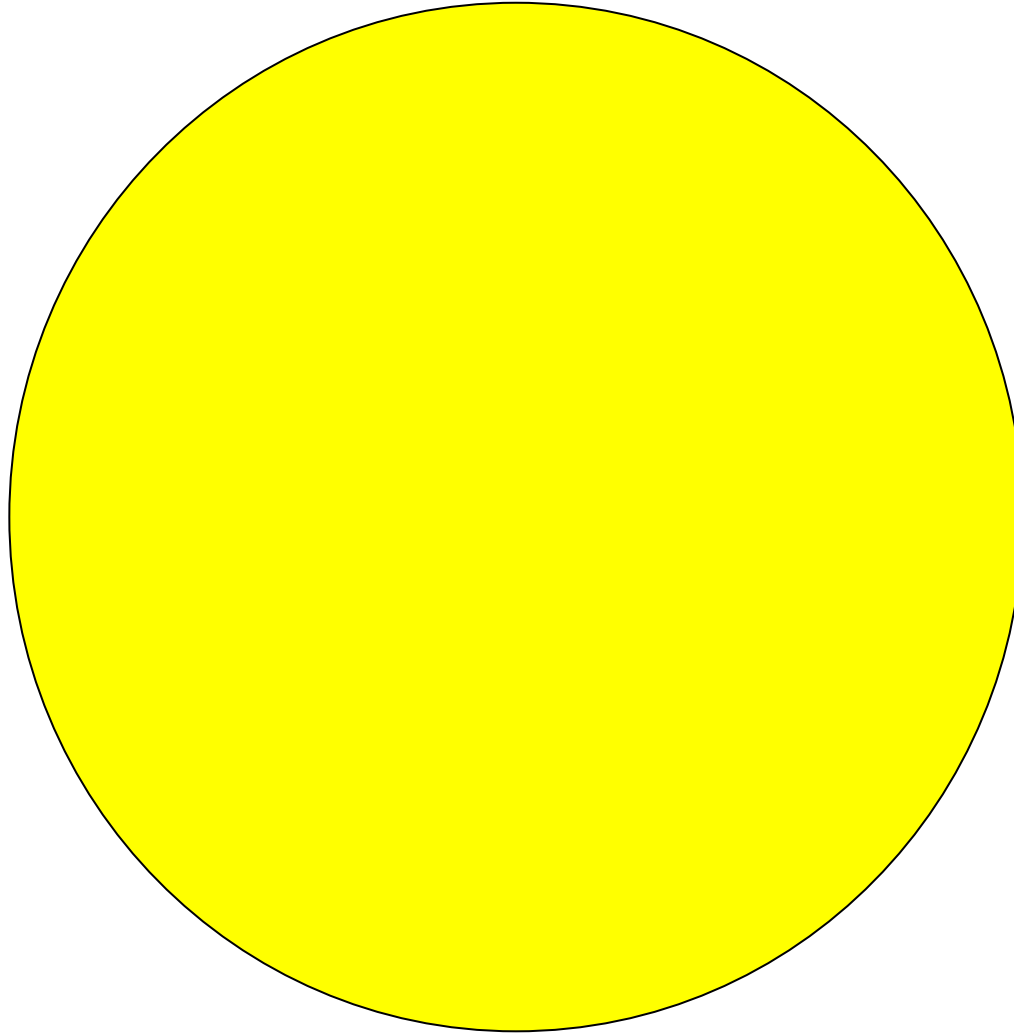
Chris and Sam have been dating for 3 months. They are at a pool party and everyone is drinking and seems to be having a good time. Sam wants to have sex with Chris and is hoping that tonight is the night. Sam says all his friends are having sex. Chris isn't sure if she is ready for sex but is worried that Sam may be disappointed or mad at her if she keeps saying no, she really likes him and his friends. Sam has heard about sexually transmitted infections in health class last year but doesn't think that he has to worry about it, after all, Chris is a virgin, and anyways he is too embarrassed to buy protection. Chris' parents know that she has a boyfriend. She is afraid that her parents would be very disappointed in her if she had premarital sex.

How Can Chris help solve this problem in her relationship?

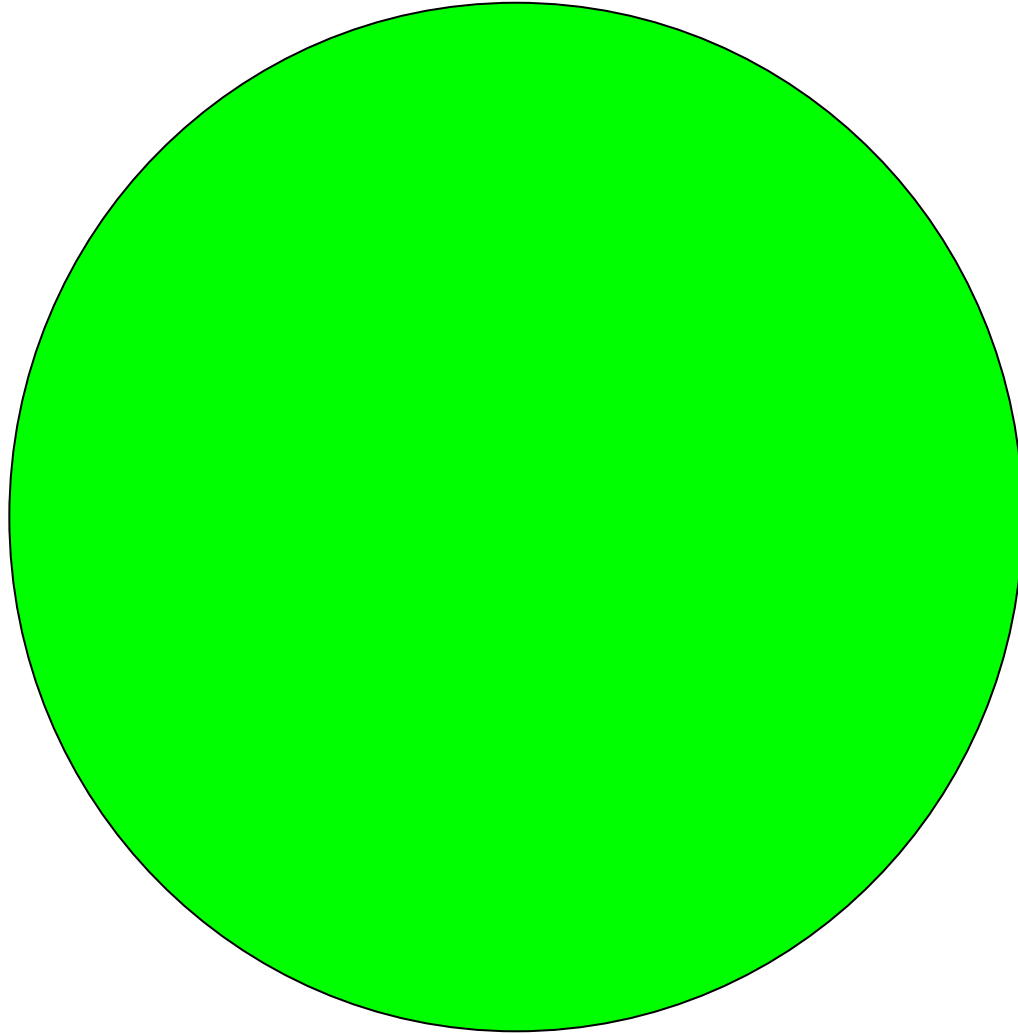
STOP! These are bad signs in a relationship!

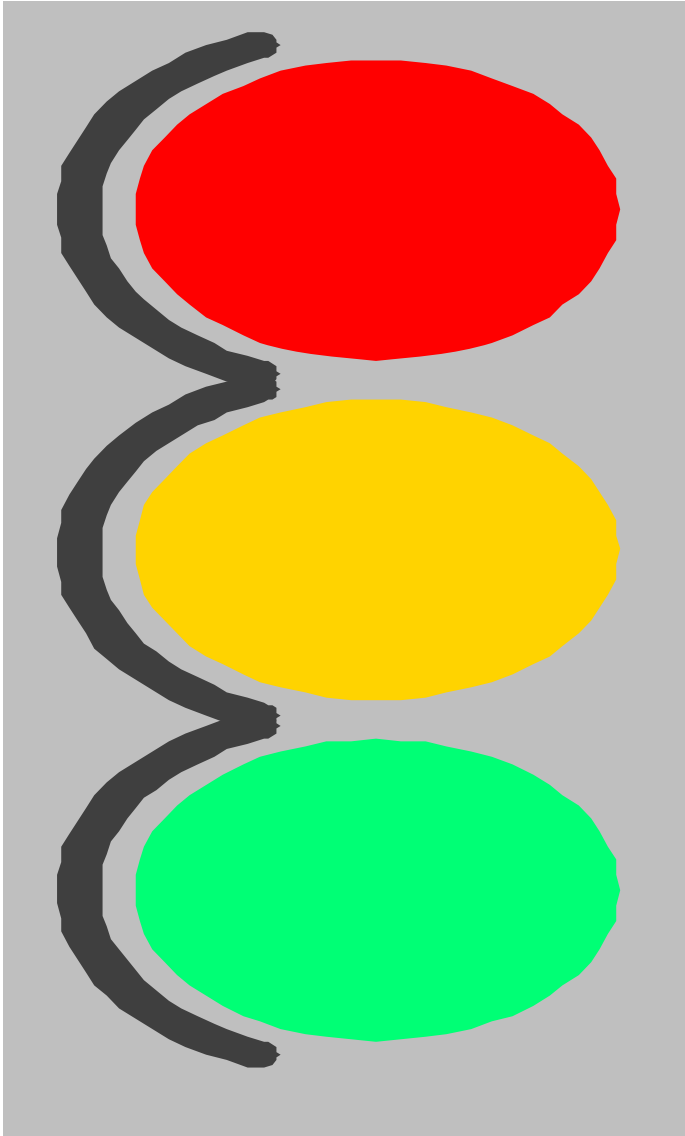


CAUTION! These are warning signs in a relationship!

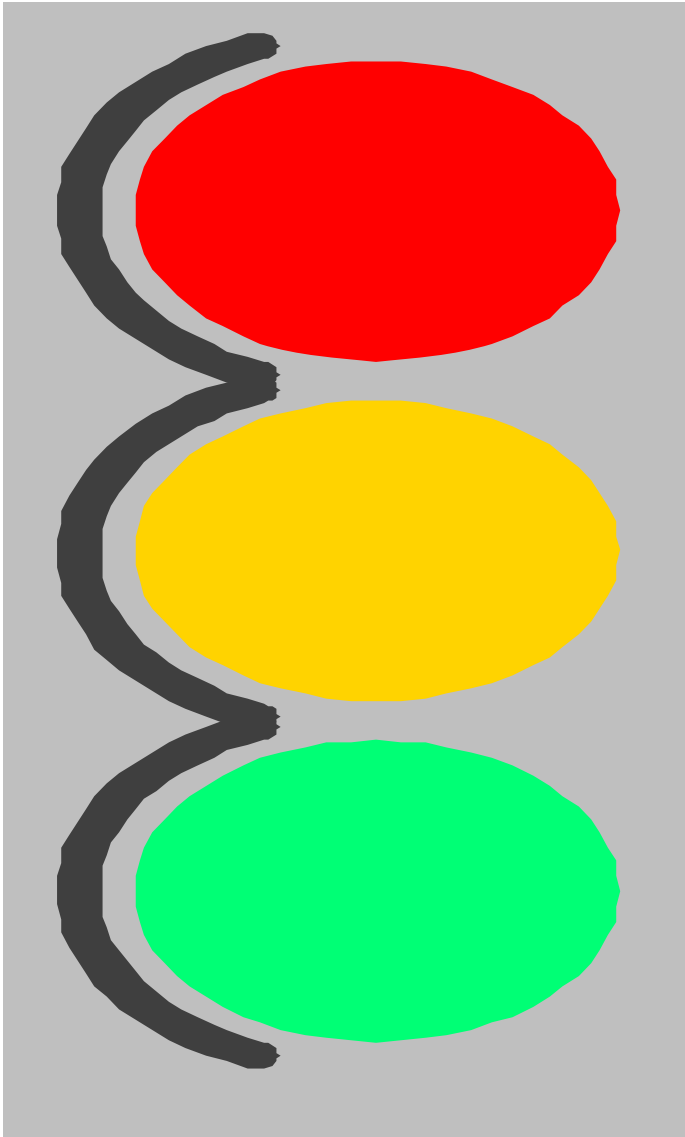


GO! These are good signs in a relationship!

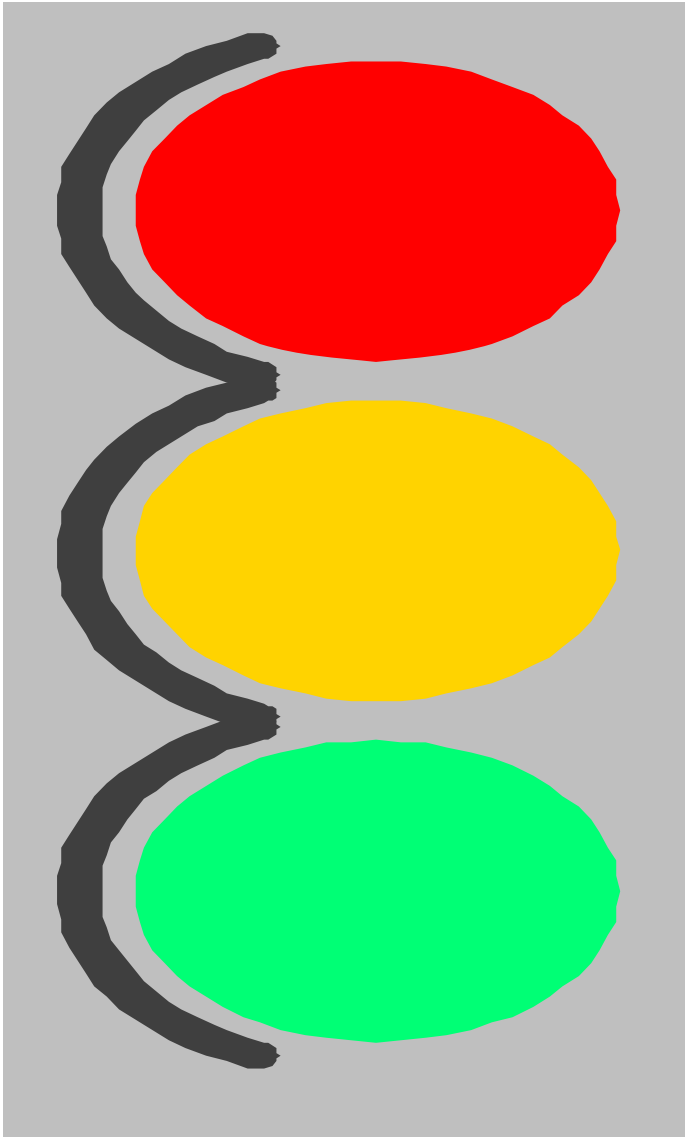




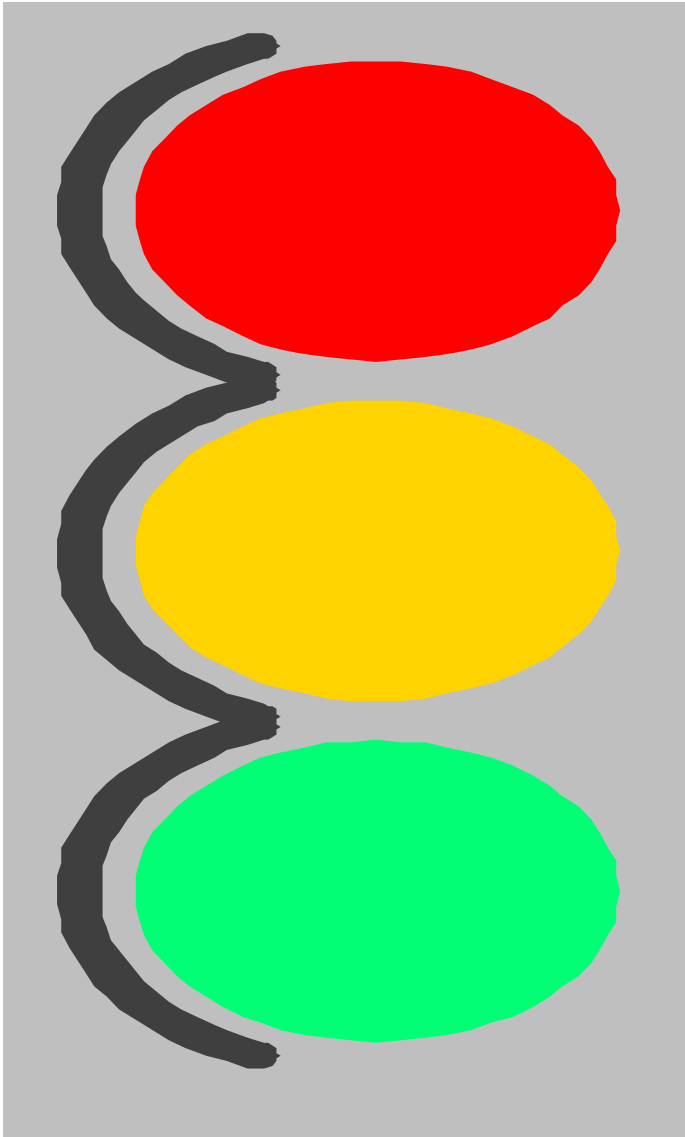
You are
afraid of
this
person's
temper.



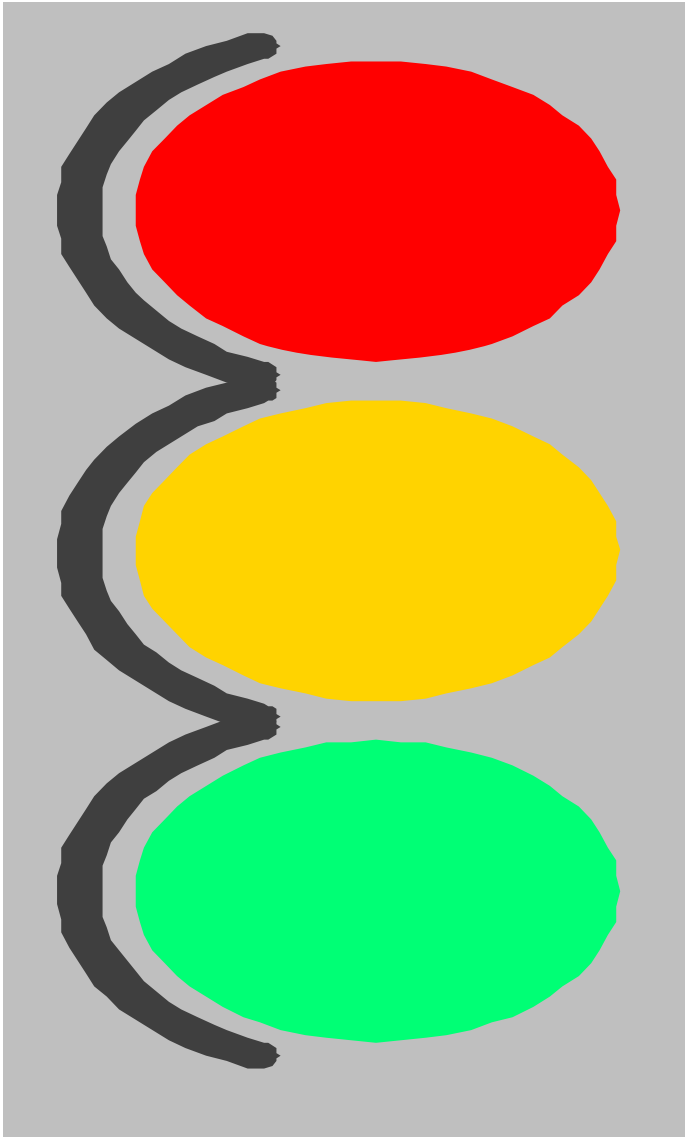
The person
you are
dating
threatens
to hurt you.



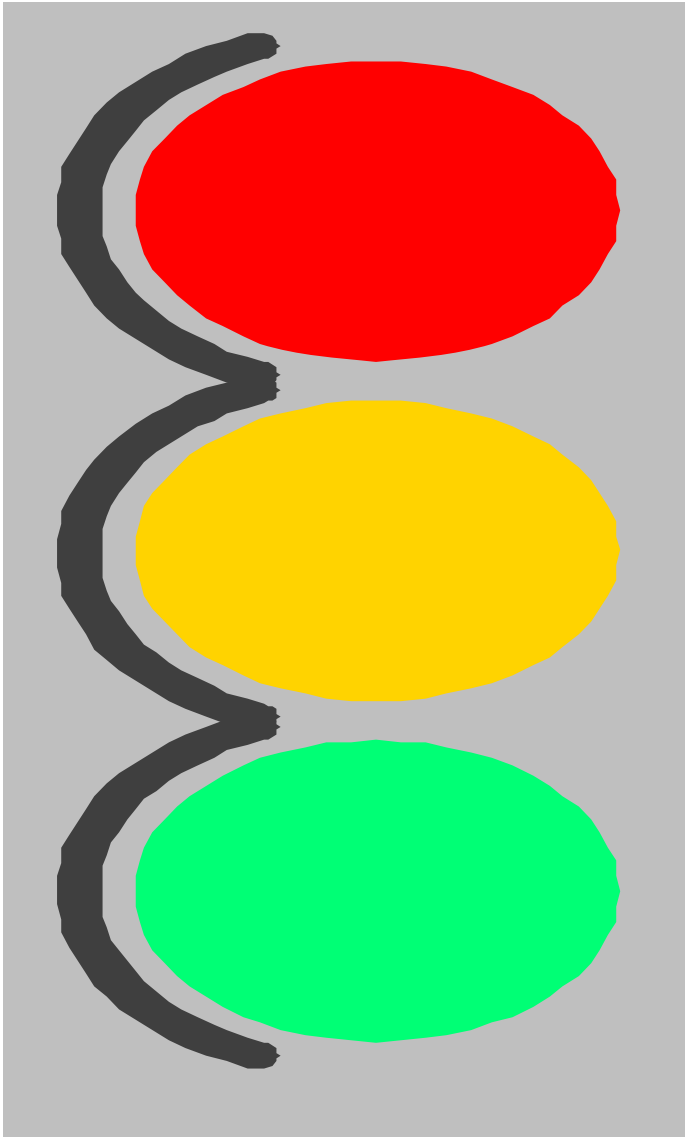
Your girlfriend
or boyfriend
pressures you
to do things
you do not
want to do.



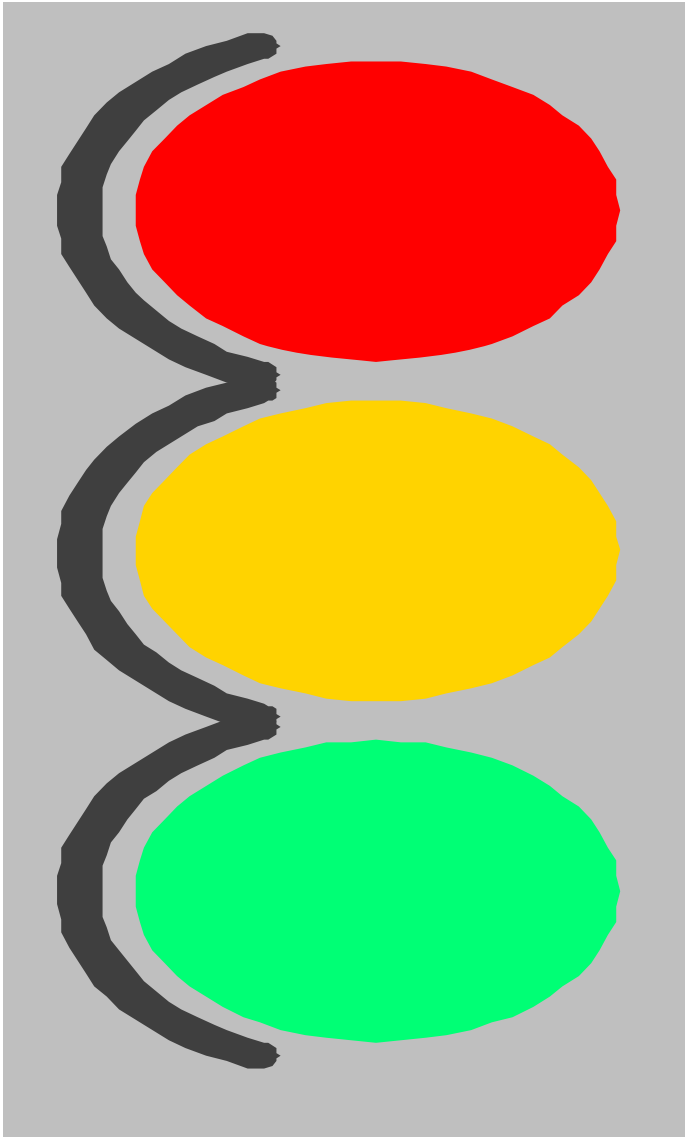
You are
unsure
about your
feelings for
this person.



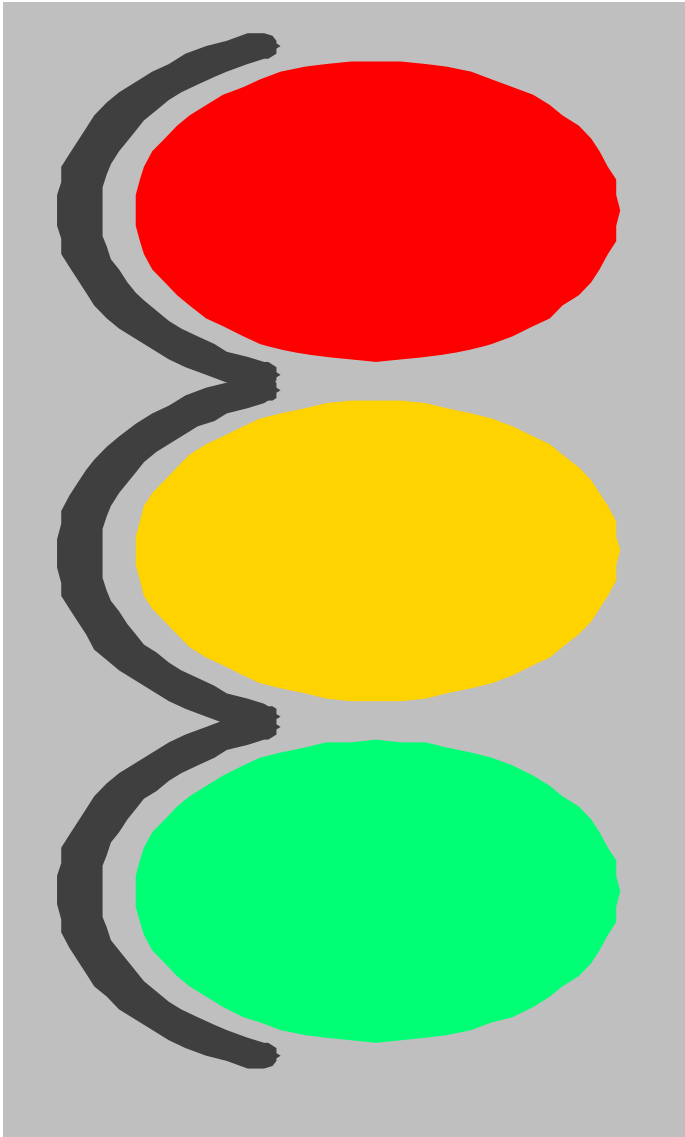
Your boyfriend
or girlfriend
makes you
feel nervous
about sharing
your ideas
with him/her.



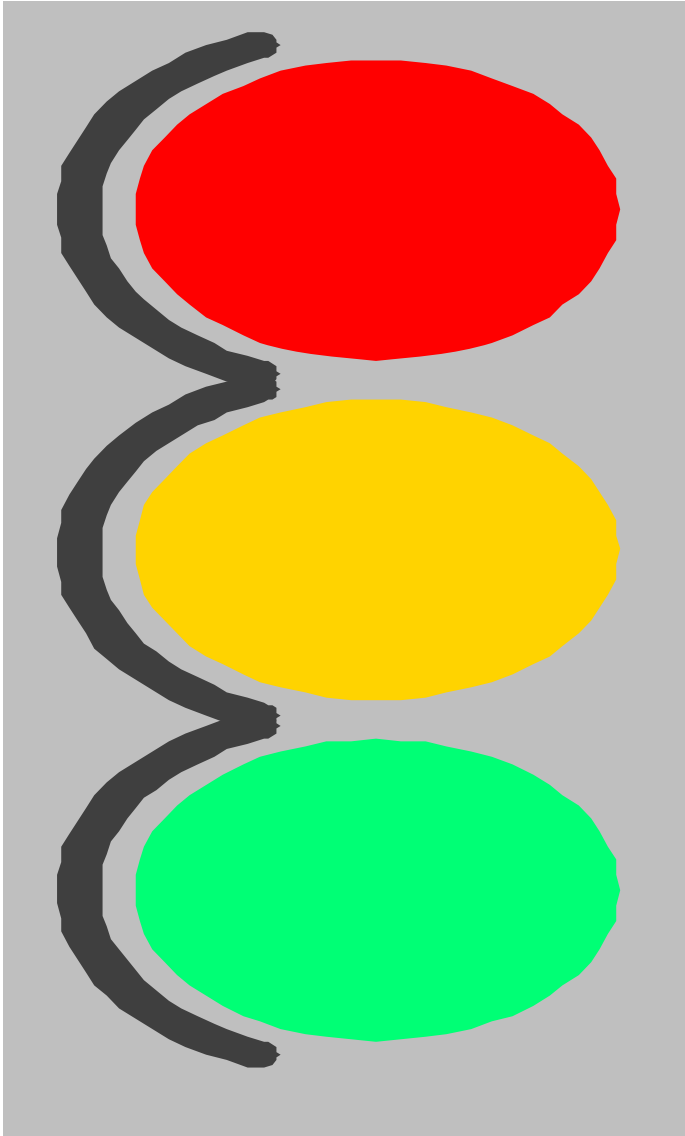
The person
you are dating
often asks
where you are,
who you are
with, and what
you are doing.



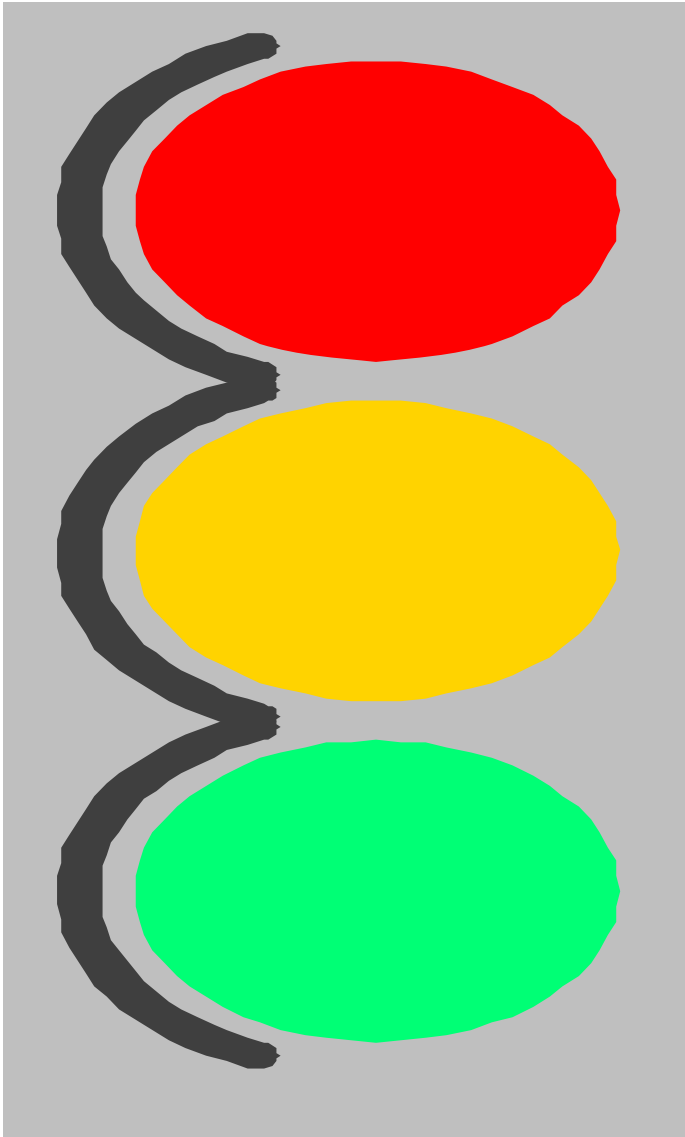
You rarely
get to plan
what the
two of you
will do
together.



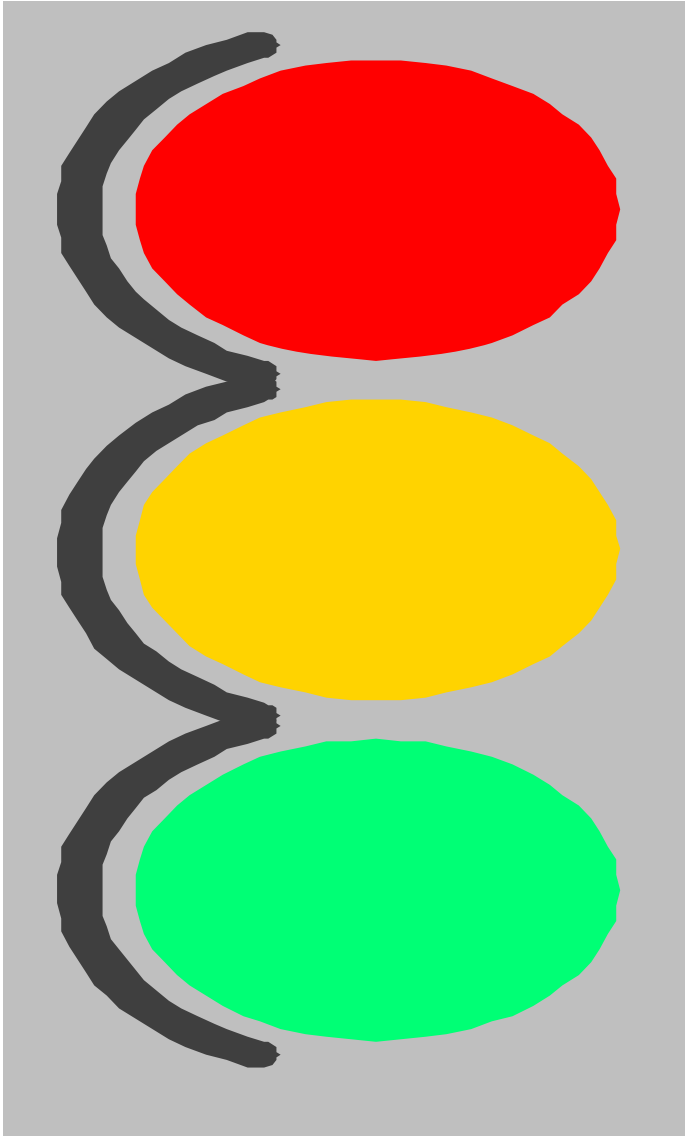
You say that you agree with the person you are dating, even though you really disagree with him/her, because you are afraid that a fight might end the relationship.



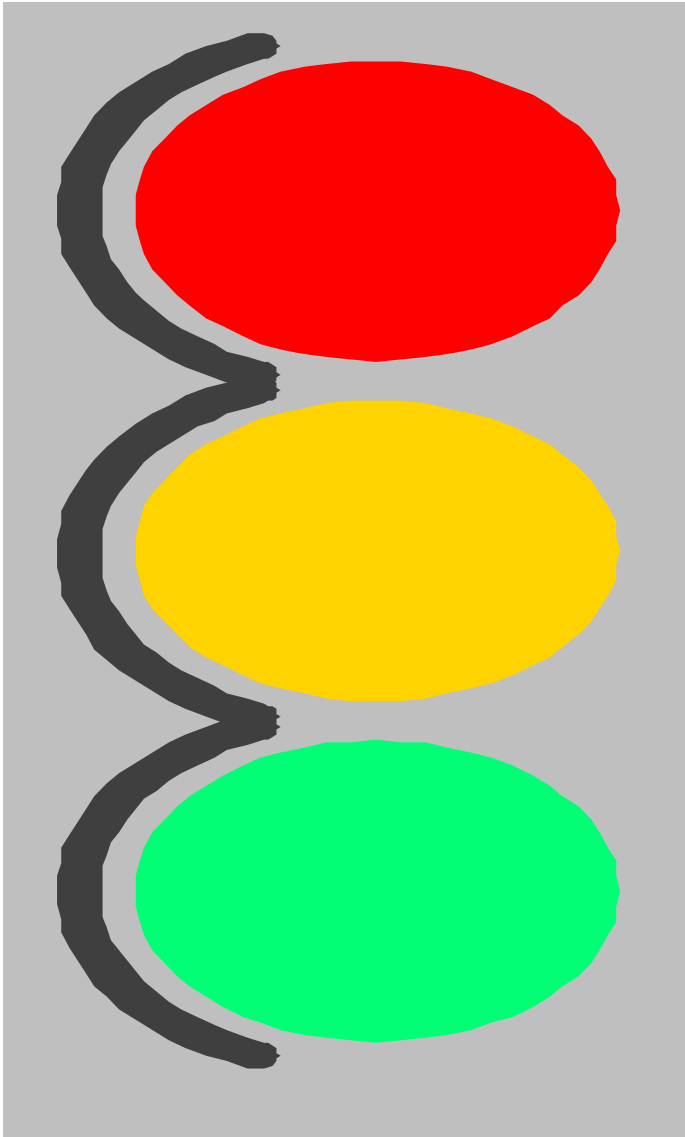
You usually
feel happy
when you
are with
this person.



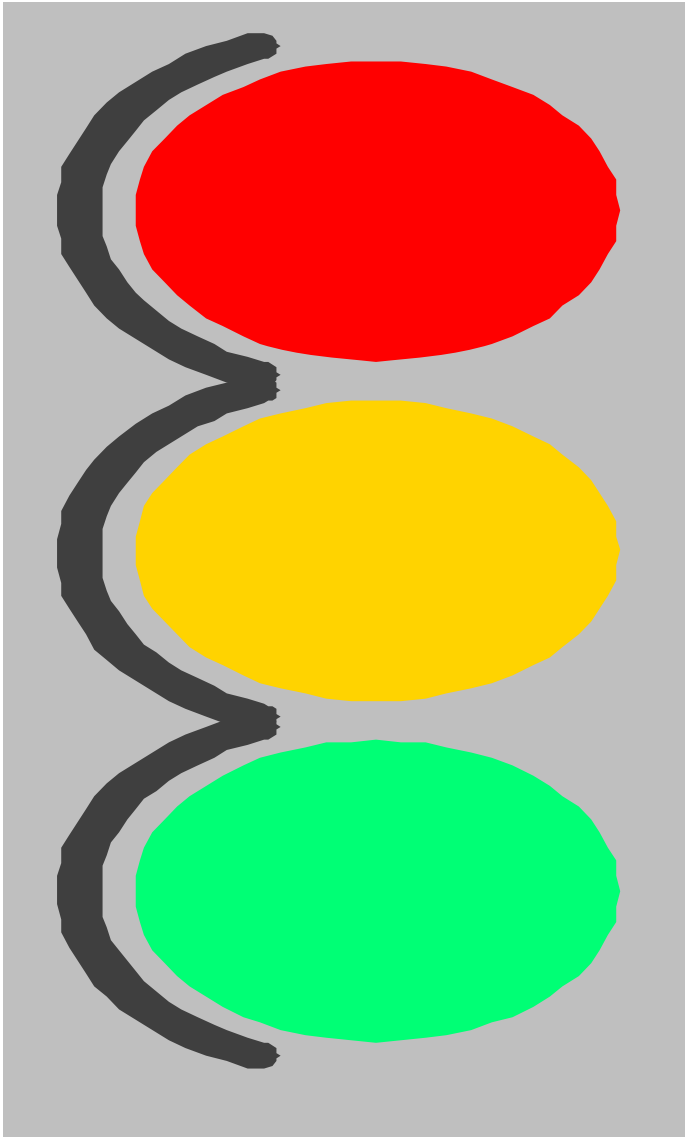
The person
you are dating
tells you not
to hang out
with certain
friends.



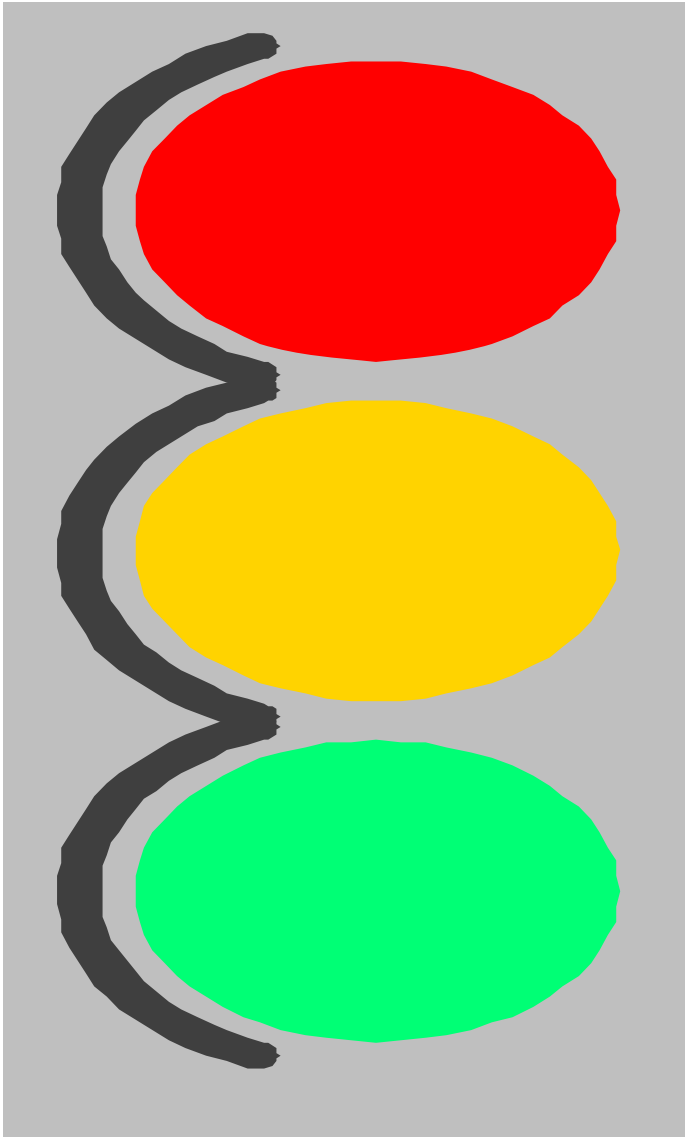
Your
boyfriend or
girlfriend
criticises you
or people you
care about.



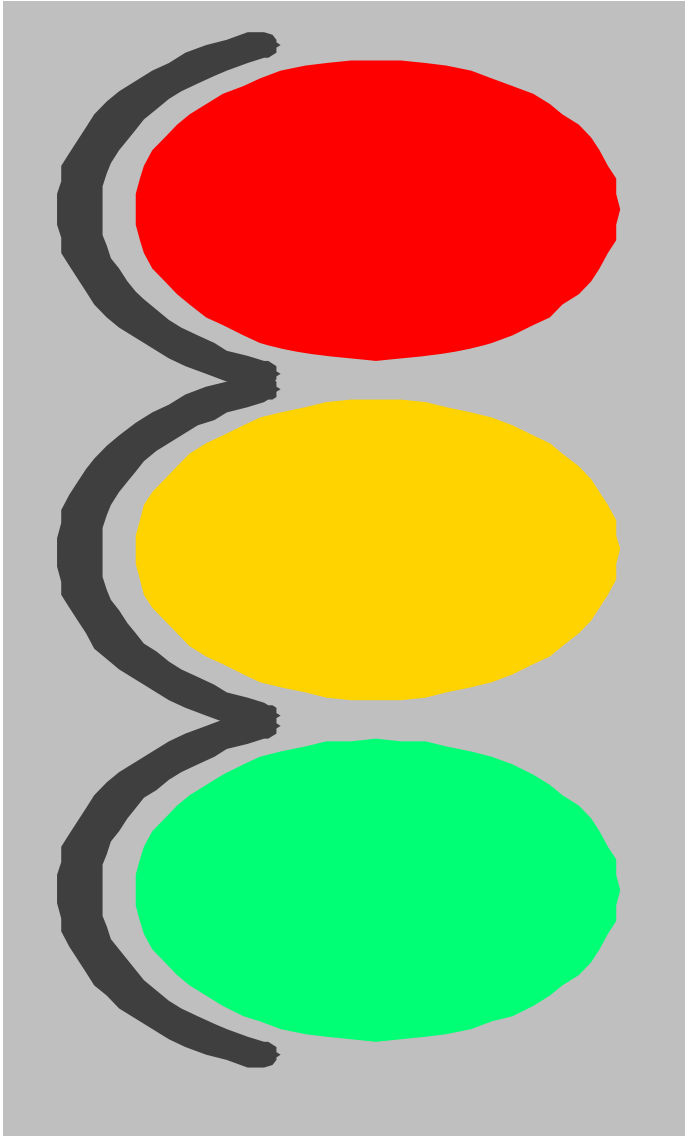
Your girlfriend
or boyfriend
respects your
feelings and
your opinions.



The person
you are
dating talks
to you about
his/her
feelings.



Your boyfriend
or girlfriend
celebrates your
successes and
s/he is happy
when good
things happen to
you.



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