

## ETHICS OF SEX

We all bring with us our own ideas about sex and physical intimacy to our sexual encounters with others. Sometimes these ideas are similar but sometimes they are totally different. Below is a framework with some questions and issues designed to help you make decisions about sexual intimacy.

### A Sexual Ethics Framework

#### 1. Caring for myself – caring for my needs

- Am I doing what I really want to do?
- What is the best and worst thing that can happen to me if I do this?
- Have I done something like this before? Did it feel ok afterwards?
- Am I safe emotionally and physically?
- Does anyone know where I am and who I am with?
- How do I know the other person will treat me with respect?
- Have I thought about safe sex?

#### 2. Being aware of my desires & the possible impact on the other person

- Just because I feel or want something doesn't mean the other person feels or wants it too.
- They may want to be close but not have sex the way I am imagining it in my mind
- What are they imagining sex will be like?
- I know that sometimes we start to go along with something but change our mind along the way but don't know how to stop.
- I need to look out for signs from my partner that they are feeling ok.
- I need to make sure I am feeling ok too.

#### 3. Negotiating and asking

- It is important to work out what BOTH people want
- 'Asking' can be non-verbal or verbal
- Be aware of what is going on for you and the other person
- Make sure neither of you are too drunk to make a good decision

#### 4. Reflection

- Take time to think about the situation
- What did I do or not do, and what was the response?
- What would I do differently?
- Is there another way of thinking about what happened?

An extract from Carmody, M. (2009), *Sex and Ethics: the sexual ethics education program for young people*, Palgrave Macmillan, Melbourne, pp. 46-7.  
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For more information see the **Sexual Ethics** website. <http://www.sexualethics.org.au/>

