

Worksheet #4: Sex and Gender Messages

1. At what age do you first remember hearing or experiencing anything about sex? Who was involved? Was the message positive or negative?

2. At what age do you first remember hearing or experiencing anything about gender (e.g., differences between boys and girls)? Was the message positive or negative?

3. What did you learn about female sexuality in the following contexts:

Family and Cultural Upbringing:

School:

Religion:

Peers:

Magazines and Books:

Television and Movies:

Internet:

First masturbation experience:

Early sexual experiences:

Early dating experiences:

4. Which messages are still meaningful to you? Are there messages that you are ready to leave behind?

5. Remember that you are not alone! Here are some suggestions for how to release harmful messages:

- Write about them
- Talk to friends
- Read a self-help book
- Talk to a counselor
- Join a support group
- Volunteer at a related nonprofit
- Work on positive affirmations
- Ask your partner for assistance

Which of these suggestions are most comfortable to use for your sexual personal growth?

6. Are there positive messages about sex you want to pass along to others—children, friends, significant others? What are they, and with whom would you like to share them?