



SMARTS

(Supporting Me About Rights to Sexuality)

Supported Decision Making (SDM) about Sexuality Training Course Handouts



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Partners:



Marie part 1

Marie Marie is a young woman who has Down's Syndrome. now lives in a 3 bedroomed house that she shares with two other ladies with disabilities. The two housemates are a little older than Marie and have lived independently for over five years. They have similar support needs to Marie. In the house there are support staff coming in supporting the ladies with their daily living and finances.

Marie has always completed her own personal care following the routines that her mum taught her as she grew up. Marie's Mother has always done the shopping for all of her personal care toiletries and all of her clothing. One of the things Marie is looking forward to is choosing all of these things for herself. When she started the visits to the house, she was amazed by the clothes the other ladies wore and that one of them wore make up. Marie had never been allowed to wear make-up, her mother said, "It's not right for girls like you!" Marie had never asked why as she didn't want to upset her mother.

Marie had been out with her housemates to do some shopping and bought some new clothes. These were clothes that any average woman her age would wear. Marie was so excited. However, when they were out Marie became very upset by comments made by her housemates about her underwear. While they were out it became clear that Marie had never had a bra as her mother said, "Girls like you don't need bra!" Again, Marie had never asked why.

The other ladies were stunned and had innocently remarked "You are a woman, not a child!"

This really made Marie think about being a woman and not a child. Part of her wants to dress as a woman and express her womanliness but then she gets frightened as she has always been viewed and treated as a child by her family, especially her parents.

One of the Support staff at the house suggest that Marie visits the SDM and Sexuality Service to help her make decisions about this.

You have been allocated as her Supporter, you are meeting Marie this afternoon to complete her SDM Agreement and Individual Support Plan.

- » **What sort of things will you support Marie to include in the SDM Agreement and Individual Support plan?**
- » **Are there any concerns that you feel Marie needs to be aware of?**

Nicolas Part 1

Nicolas is a man with a learning disability. He is in his early twenties and has lived in a supported living complex in his own apartment for the last couple of years (prior to that he had lived in a residential unit since his birth having never had any contact with his family). The complex has 7 apartments along with some communal areas and each person has an individual support package. Nicolas has a supporter to help him with his shopping and finances. Nicolas works part time at a local supermarket, collecting the trolleys, 3 days a week. Nicolas enjoys watching films and playing games on his computer console. He likes to be as independent as he can and goes out on his own to meet a group at the 'gaming shop' in town. They meet to discuss the latest games and films along with everything and anything. Over the last few weeks, a new person, John, had started to come to the 'game shop' meeting. He is a bit older than Nicolas and they get on really well. Nicolas has never met anyone like him before. John is really outgoing and wears different clothes to Nicolas ... ones Nicolas would like wear but would never dare. He is great to talk to and makes Nicolas feel so good and happy about life. Nicolas really likes his new friend and is surprised when he asks him to go for a drink at a bar after the gaming night. Nicolas has only been to a bar once before, but he and John have a great evening spending so much time laughing and having fun. Nicolas hasn't had such a good time ever.

A couple of days later Nicolas is chatting to Kirsty, one of the other residents about his evening when she says she knows John. She then nervously asks Nicolas if his trip to the bar with John was a date following up with "You know he is 'gay', don't you?"

Nicolas is a little shocked by the question as he had not thought of the drink in the bar as a date. In fact, he had never been on a date in his life. He had never thought about dating, anyone ever. When he lived in residential care any talk about dating, boyfriends, girlfriends etc was banned by the staff. They were just told not to think about things like that, so they didn't or if they did it was kept a secret. If the staff ever discovered the boys/men touching themselves, they were told they were disgusting and what they were doing was not right'. Some staff mocked them and made negative comments about being 'perverted'. Some of his friends would talk about sexual things when the staff weren't about. They liked looking at ladies and talked about having a relationship and about sex. But Nicolas wasn't interested in ladies or their bodies: he never understood what they were talking about.

After the evening at the bar Nicolas had some strange dreams, all of which had John in them. Nicolas woke up a couple of times feeling sexually aroused when he had been dreaming about John. This left him feeling like he had done something wrong. He thought he was a bad person or a pervert. Staff used to really shout at the boys/men in the care home if they did that. John didn't understand why he was aroused when he had never felt like that about women. He was feeling worried and concerned, he did not know what to do.

He didn't go to the next 'Games shop' meeting, he was so confused, embarrassed but part of him was desperate to see John again. He couldn't stop thinking about things, he couldn't stop thinking about John! Part of him wanted it to have been a date, but then he was worried, he felt bad. What would John think? What will people think? Will he be in trouble? What does all of this mean?

On his way back from meeting Kirsty he saw a poster for your SDM and Sexuality Service, in desperation he wrote down the number and called it.

- » **What sort of things will you support Nicolas to include in the SDM Agreement and Individual Support Plan?**
- » **Are there any concerns that you feel Nicolas needs to be aware of?**

Joan Armatrading- Love and Affection

I am not in love
But I'm open to persuasion
East or West
Where's the best
For romancing
With a friend
I can smile
But with a lover
I could hold my head back
I could really laugh
Really laugh
Thank you
You took me dancing
'Cross the floor
Cheek to cheek
But with a lover
I could really move
Really move
I could really dance
Really dance
Really dance
Really dance
I could really move
Really move
Really move
Really move
Really move
Now if I can feel the sun
In my eyes
And the rain on my face
Why can't I
Feel love
I can really love
Really love
Really love
Really love
Really love
Love love love love
Love love love love
Now I got all
The friends that I want
I may need more

But I shall just stick to those
That I have got
With friends I still feel
So insecure
Little darling I believe you could
Help me a lot
Just take my hand
And lead me where you will
No conversation
No wave goodnight
Just make love
With affection
Sing me another love song
But this time
With a little dedication
Sing it, sing it
You know that's what I like
Once more with feeling
Give me love
Give me love
Give me love
Love
Make love
With affection
Sing me another love song
But this time
With a little dedication
Sing it, sing it
You know that's what I like
Once more with feeling
Sing me another love song
But this time
With a little dedication
Sing it, sing it
You know that's what I like
With affection
With a little dedication
Once more with feeling
You know that's what I like

Source: [LyricFind](#)

Songwriters: Joan Anita Barbara Armatrading Love and Affection Lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing

Marie Part 2.

After Marie used the SDM and Sexuality Service, she implemented a plan with the help of the SDM Supporter, support staff and her housemates. Marie is now a much more confident young woman who buys all of her own clothes and toiletries including some make up. She has had her hair styled in a more modern style and is considering having it a different colour.

However, it has been a strained journey with her parents, her mum in particular who finds it hard to see Marie as the young woman she is rather than the child she kept her as.

Marie and her housemates go out regularly to a local bar a couple of times a week. She has made many new friends there and has mixed with a small group men of a similar age. She has loved talking to them with her housemates. One of her housemates, Mandy, keeps mentioning that one of the young men likes her. Marie has had no real experience with the opposite sex and is nervous about what Mandy says and what it all means. The young man, Mark, who has a mild intellectual disability, is very nice and Marie really likes being in his company. They laugh a lot and have many of the same interests in music, games and films. Last week he messaged her and asked if she wanted to meet him, just the two of them.

Marie is so excited but also worried and a bit scared. Her Mother told her as a teenager she should never talk to boys or men, as they are dangerous. She had overheard two of the bar staff talking about Mark saying they wondered why he would go out with a 'downs' girl, which really upset her.

Marie chats to her support worker about her concerns and difficulty in deciding what she would do. The support worker sign posts her back to your SDM and Sexuality Service.

Marie has asked for you to be her supporter again after the success of her decision making previously.

- » **What sort of things will you support Marie to include in the SDM Agreement and Individual Support Plan?**
- » **Are there any concerns that you feel Marie needs to be aware of?**

Nicolas Part 2

After using the SDM and Sexuality Service over the following weeks Nicolas started to come to terms with his developing sexuality and what it meant for him. He was still very nervous and was worried about what other people would think but he knew his feelings were real and they weren't going to change. His SDM supporter reassured him there was nothing wrong with him, he was not a bad person, the staff at the care home were wrong.

Over the weeks he was working with the SDM supporter he missed a lot of the 'Games shop' meetings, but he felt it was the best thing to do until he was clearer about his sexuality and what it meant for him.

As his self confidence started to grow a little, he went back to the 'Game shop' meetings. The first time he was so nervous, terrified that John would be there but also desperate for him to be there. John wasn't there, part of him was relieved but a huge part of him was so disappointed. Friends at the meet said the John had been asking for him each time he had been, he had even asked if anyone had his contact details. But no one at the meet gave out contact details without the person's permission.

The following week Nicolas went again, as he arrived there was no sign of John, his heart sank, but he enjoyed meeting his other friends. He was just chatting to Roger when he heard a familiar voice arrive, it was John. As he turned and their eyes met Nicolas smiled from ear to ear, John looked pleased too. They both sat quietly saying how pleased they were to see each other. They agreed they wanted to talk and decided to go to the bar after the meet.

They talked and talked at the bar, Nicolas was brave and told John what he was going through. John was very supportive and said he understood. John said he would like to slowly get to know Nicolas if he wanted to or was ready.

Over the following months they became closer, one evening John asked Nicolas if he wanted to actually have a date with him and got to a bar which is visited mostly by people who are gay. Nicolas panicked this all still felt new, and although exciting it was scary as well. He wasn't sure if he could cope with being open about his sexuality. What would the people at work say if they found out? What would staff say and his friends?

He decided this was big step for him and a decision he couldn't take easily. So went back to the SDM and Sexuality Service for support.

- » **What sort of things will you support Nicolas to include in the SDM Agreement and Individual Support Plan?**
- » **Are there any concerns that you feel Nicolas needs to be aware of?**

Responding to Abuse

Scenario 1. Sally

Who is who:

- Sally: Supported person
- James: Supported person living upstairs
- Jane: Support worker on duty
- Tony: Support Worker on duty

Jane works as a Support Worker at a service supporting 6 adults with disabilities living in a shared house. The large house has a shared kitchen and lounge area on the first floor, bedrooms for the ladies on the second floor and bedrooms for the men on the top floor.

Jane notices that after tea Sally is very quiet. This is out of the ordinary as she is usually happy, smiling and enjoying life living with her friends. Jane asked another staff member who said she had also noticed Sally being 'not right'.

Sally was sat away from everyone most of the evening and seemed very much on edge. Sally was sat watching TV and seemed reluctant to go to upstairs, she seemed to want to be with a staff member.

So, when everyone else had gone upstairs Jane sat next to Sally and asked her if she was ok. Sally started cry but did not say anything. Jane tried to calm her down and perhaps get her to explain what was wrong. Then James one of the other residents came walking into the lounge. As soon as he came into the room Sally quickly turned away and wiped her eyes, then moved close to Jane holding her arm tightly and looking scared and uncomfortable. Jane asked James to go back upstairs while she chatted to Sally. James looked concerned about Sally. But Sally was clearly very shaken by James's intrusion. Jane tried to speak with Sally however again she refused saying she wanted to go to bed.

- » **With this limited information would you have any concerns?**
- » **How well do you think Jane has handled the situation?**
- » **Is there anything that you would do differently to Jane? if so what and why?**
- » **Do your Service's Policies and Procedures inform you of what to do in these circumstances?**

Scenario 2. Robert

Who is who:

- Robert: Supported person
- John: Supported person
- Tom: Support worker at the day centre
- Sue: Support worker at the day centre
- Brian: Manager at residential house where Robert and John live

It's a cold day at the day centre today. Some people were late to work and some people with disabilities haven't made it in today because the weather is so bad. Robert and John come to the day centre 5 days a week, they have always loved it and having been coming for a long time, they have been friends for many years. Robert and John have always enjoyed working in the gardens and green houses at the back of the day centre. Today Robert is still eager to get to work even though it is cold outside. However, John is less keen and keeps making excuses.

Tom and Sue are the support workers who cover all the gardening areas, they want everyone to still go outside even though it is cold. They feel it is important for the supported people to understand gardening is not just for warm sunny days.

Tom and Sue start to gather the gardeners together but because of the weather there are only 3 people in the group today: Robert, John and one other.

John is still making excuses; he is cold, he needs the toilet, he wants a drink and finally he says he is unwell.

So, Tom takes the others outside while Sue takes John for a cup of tea. She decides she will try to find out what is wrong with John. When she speaks to John he suddenly says; "Today is a very bad day, I am very bad, very bad".

Sue tries to reassure him about the bad weather and not going out telling him it is ok, as she has assumed that is the problem.

John repeats the sentence and becomes quite agitated, rocking a little and wringing his hands tightly. She thinks Robert may know what is wrong with John so leaves him with another staff member for a few minutes. She asks Robert if he knows why John is so upset. Robert says he doesn't know, but he did overhear Brian (the manager of the house where they live) talking to John in his room this morning. He told John "Don't you tell, you will be in trouble". Robert asked John on the way to the centre what was going on with Brian and John wouldn't say why he was scared.

- » **With this limited information would you have any concerns?**
- » **If you were Sue, what would you do and why?**
- » **Do your Service's Policies and Procedures inform you of what to do in these circumstances?**

Marie Part 3.

After several meetings with the SDM Supporter Marie made a decision that she was going to meet Mark and see how things went. Through her discussions with her supporter, she had put strategies in place to manage the reaction of her mother and father along with any other people who may make a comment. She had talked to Mark about it, he knew that some people have different ideas, but he didn't care what others thought, as he really likes Marie.

Their relationship has been going from strength to strength. They love spending time together. After over eight months of meeting at the bar and going out on dates things are progressing in their relationship. Mark and Marie spend evenings together at each other's houses (Mark lives at home with his mum and Dad). They have both told each other that they are in love. Mark and Marie have been holding hands and kissing which Marie has been comfortable with and quite likes. Now Mark has said he wants their relationship to go further and wants to do more than kissing. Marie has no experience or real idea about this. She knows about reproduction, but no one has ever spoken to her about intimate relationships. She is feeling confused, worried and doesn't know whether to go along with Mark or not, if she doesn't she is worried he may stop loving her.

Marie has had such good support from the SDM and Sexuality Service she contacts her previous Supporter and asks for help again.

- » **What sort of things will you support Marie to include in the SDM Agreement and Individual Support Plan?**
- » **Are there any concerns that you feel Marie needs to be aware of?**

Nicolas Part 3.

After working with his SDM supporter, Nicolas was feeling much more settled and was slowly coming to terms with his feelings and desires. Through working with his Independent Support Plan the SDM supporter helped him. Nicolas had found a lot of information to help him understand about his sexuality. He understood much more about what was happening. He had also managed to find a couple of organisations that support gay men in the area where he lives.

He and John had remained friends and John had been supportive of him and soon they started to date regularly. It was all going very well; Nicolas was happier than he had been in a long time.

However, John said he wanted to take the next step in their relationship which was for Nicolas to stay overnight at his apartment. Nicolas had never stayed overnight anywhere other than the care home and his own apartment. He had not been intimate with anyone before, other than recently when John kissed him, which he felt was a big thing. Although he really liked it he still felt like he was doing something wrong. He was nervous and unsure if he was ready to stay at John's overnight. He was still worried about what other people think and about being bad etc.

He decided to contact the SDM and Sexuality Service again as he felt this was a big decision and he was confused.

- » **What sort of things will you support Nicolas to include in the SDM Agreement and Individual Support Plan?**
- » **Are there any concerns that you feel Nicolas needs to be aware of?**