

My Body Belongs to Me! – Understanding Consent



Name:

Date:



Bodily Autonomy and the Importance of Consent

Everyone has the right to decide what happens to their body. This right is called bodily autonomy. It means that no one can touch, hurt, or force you to do something you don't want to do - whether it's a hug, a conversation about private matters, or larger decisions. This is closely related to an important concept: consent. Consent means that all parties involved in an action agree voluntarily and clearly - without pressure, coercion, or fear.

Especially in school, in everyday life with friends, or within the family, there can be situations where boundaries are crossed. Therefore, it's important to know your own boundaries, to articulate them, and to respect the boundaries of others. In this context, we learn why it's so important to be able to say "no" and to accept "no" from others.

"My body belongs to me" is more than just a phrase. It is a principle that stands for respect, self-determination, and safety - for you and for others.

Task 1: My Body, My Rules

The phrase "My body belongs to me" is a fundamental principle of bodily autonomy. This means that everyone has the right to make decisions about their own body and to decide who can touch them and how. Answer the following questions related to this concept.

What does bodily autonomy mean to you personally? Describe in your own words.

Name two situations from your daily life where it is important that your bodily autonomy is respected.

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Task 2: Consent - The Essential Element

Consent means that all individuals involved in an action agree voluntarily, clearly and explicitly. Consent must be able to be given repeatedly and can be withdrawn at any time. Read the following text carefully and then answer the related questions.

Navigating Consent: Maria's Thoughts

I really care about Julian, but I'm just not ready to take that step with him yet. It's strange; sometimes I feel like there's pressure from all sides—friends, media, and even myself—to make it happen. But deep down, I know that I'm not comfortable with it right now. I think the most important thing is that we both feel good about whatever happens between us. For me, it's crucial that Julian understands where I'm coming from and respects my feelings.

I imagine having a conversation with Julian, maybe over a quiet walk or just sitting somewhere private. I would say something like, "I really care about you, but I'm not ready to sleep together yet. I hope you understand." It's important for me to see how he reacts. If he listens and respects my decision without pushing or trying to convince me otherwise, then I know he's likely okay with waiting until we're both sure. It's about feeling no pressure and knowing that we can talk openly about our boundaries.

On the flip side, I think the absence of consent is pretty clear too. If Julian were to ignore my feelings or try to persuade me to change my mind, that would be a big red flag. Even if he says he's okay with waiting, but then consistently brings it up or acts disappointed, that would make me feel uneasy. It's not just about what we say, but also how we act. Consent can be withdrawn at any moment, and if I start to feel uncomfortable or pressured, that's a sign that things aren't right.

Ultimately, I just want us both to feel good about our relationship and to be on the same page. Taking it slow means we have the chance to build a stronger connection based on mutual respect. And for now, that's enough for me.

What are three key elements of consent in Maria's situation?

How might Maria express her feelings to Julian to ensure active consent?
