

Teacher note – *this lesson often encourages a lot of great discussion; please do extend it into 2 lessons if suitable for your group. This lesson was originally creating in partnership with Year 10 students.*

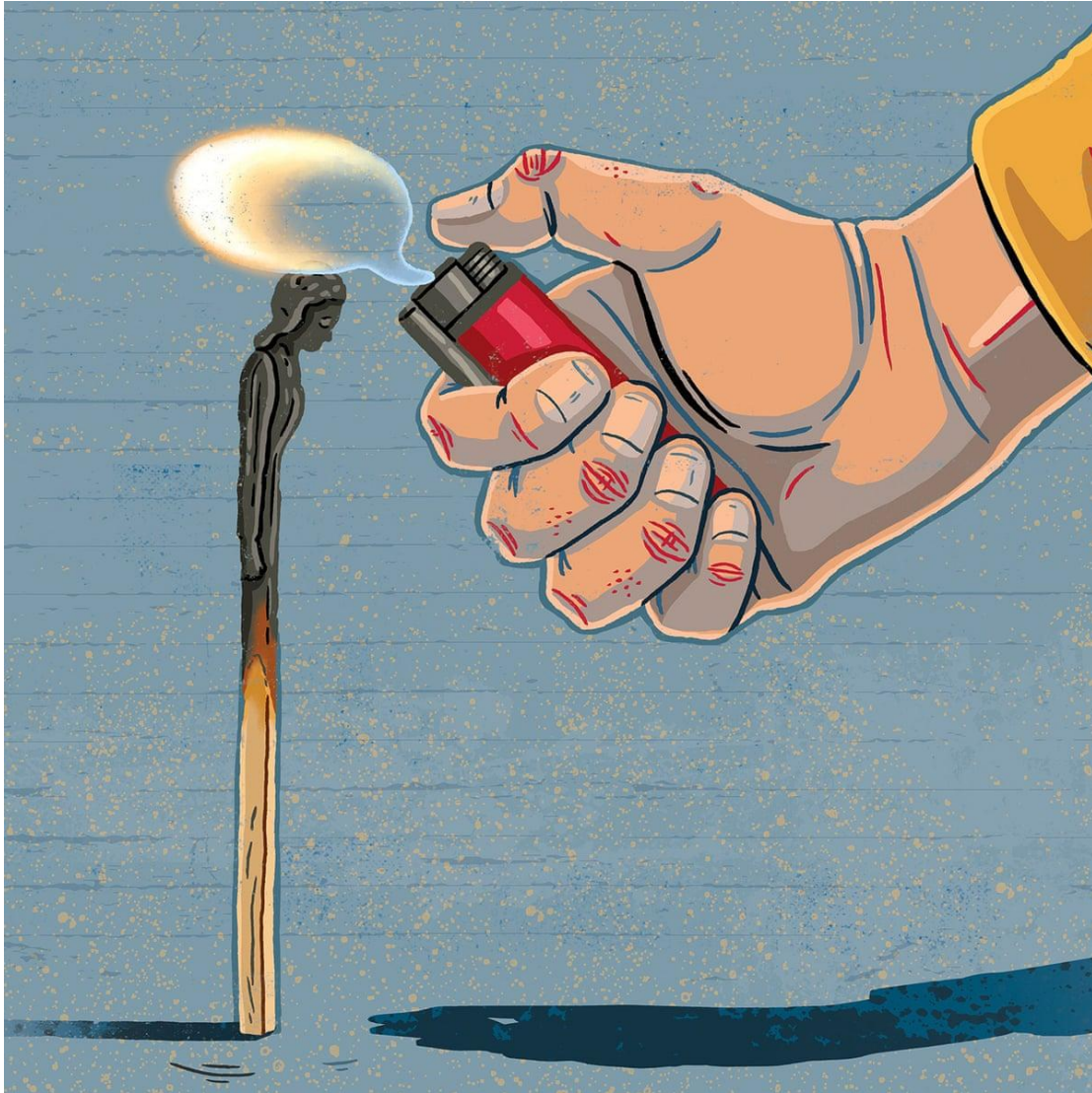
Today we are learning:

- about **gaslighting** and how to identify it in a relationship

Discuss: Do you already know what this word means?
Where do you think it came from?

We will be able to:

- ✓ Explain what the term 'gaslighting' means and how it applies to coercive relationships,
- ✓ Understand how we can strengthen ourselves to recognise and challenge those who attempt to gaslight
- ✓ Identify potential 'red flags' in a coercive relationship ▶



The term "gaslighting" comes from a British play called *Gas Light* (1938), in which a husband manipulates a wife into thinking she is crazy by changing the intensity of the gas lights in their home when she is left alone. He does this to make her believe she cannot trust herself or her memory.

This forms the basis of what a 'gaslighter' tries to achieve.

“**Gaslighting** is a form of psychological _____ where a person causes someone to question their _____, _____, or perception of reality. People who experience gaslighting may feel confused, _____, or unable to _____ themselves.”

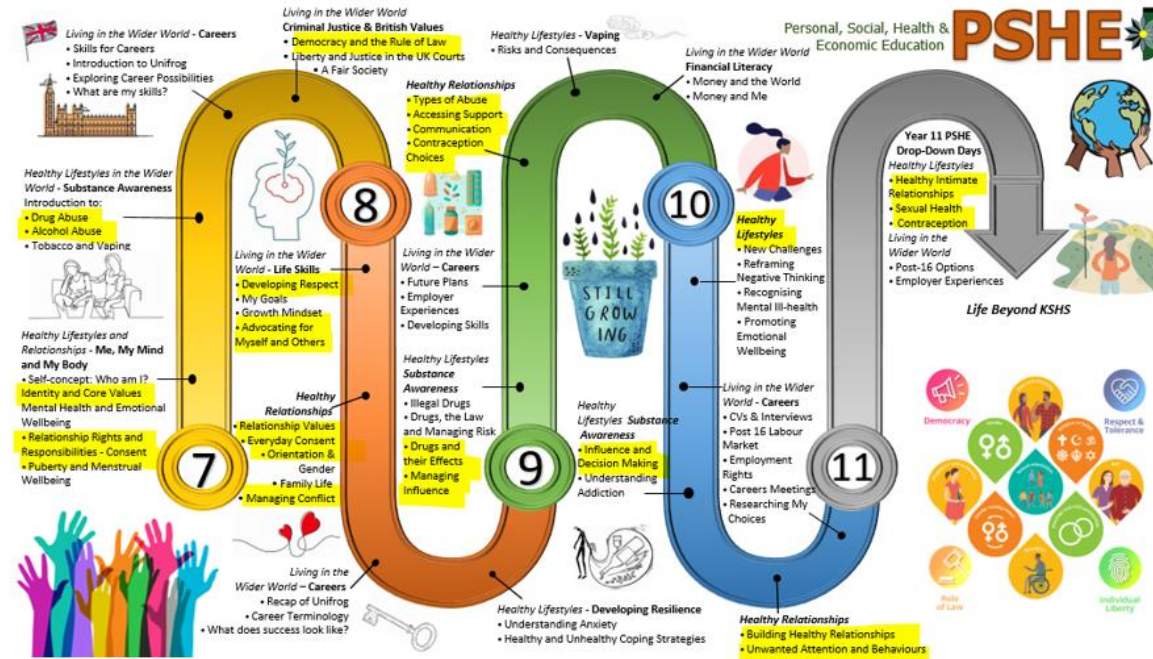


“**Gaslighting** is a form of psychological abuse where a person causes someone to question their sanity, memories, or perception of reality. People who experience gaslighting may feel confused, anxious, or unable to trust themselves.”



We know how important it is for young people to be able to **stand up for themselves in relationships.**

We also know the risks that can come from *not* growing this skill, if someone chooses to exploit that.



Your **PSHE and Personal Development** curriculum is woven around this message.

Where *else* in your daily school, public, or home life do you come across this **idea of advocating for yourself?**

We are now going to watch a 5m video that explores some of the key concepts of gaslighting.

After the video, you will fill in the table in your booklets.

You can add the 5 actions in the **first column** as you watch, but **don't** fill in the second column until you can discuss with your group.

Gaslighters may try to...	How might someone overcome this?
1. They invalidate your feelings	Remember that your feelings are valid and should not be dismissed! Identify how you feel and speak out about it clearly; this is emotional intelligence. Stick to your truth.

Disagreement or Gaslighting?



<i>Gaslighters may try to...</i>	<i>How might someone overcome this?</i>
<i>1. They invalidate your feelings</i>	<i>Remember that your feelings are valid and should not be dismissed! Identify how you feel and speak out about it clearly; this is emotional intelligence. Stick to your truth.</i>

Work together, reflecting on the video, to complete at least 3 rows of your table.

When we look at some suggested answers, add any edits in green.

You don't need to stick to the video's ideas; you can add your own, too.



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1. They invalidate your feelings	Remember that your feelings are valid and should not be dismissed! Identify how you feel and speak out about it clearly; this is emotional intelligence. Stick to your truth.
2. They make you question yourself and your sanity	Notice how you feel after speaking to them. Disengage and refuse to react to their words; maintain a strong sense of self. Remind yourself of the objective facts that you know.
3. They make you feel small	Work out their point of view to divert the discussion and protect yourself. Recall your accomplishments and speak to people who know your worth.
4. They don't take responsibility for their words and actions	Don't allow them to skew reality! Have the conviction to discredit them vocally. Prioritise your mental wellbeing over seeking their apology.
5. They make you feel anxious about interacting with them	Acknowledge they need you to feel this fear; it is part of their manipulation. Distance yourself from them and hold your boundaries. Remind yourself of how you can feel better and stronger without them.
<p style="text-align: center;">Remember you are not responsible for how they treat you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">You are also not responsible for changing them.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Your worth does not rely on them and their opinion of you.</p>	



- 1. What do we mean when we say something is a relationship ‘red flag’?**
2. Can some things be red flags for one person in their relationship, but not for another?
3. When does a red flag become part of abusive or coercive behaviour?



When you see GO, you have 60 seconds to make the best RED FLAG prop.

...

GO!



*do not aim for this size flag.

For our last main activity, we are going to watch a short film that portrays two young characters who start a relationship.

Task: When you see something that you think is a **red flag** (from any character, not just the boyfriend!), wave your red flags/call out “**RED FLAG**”!

We will pause the video for a few of these moments and discuss the actions and feelings of the characters, including where these behaviours may come from, as well as their potential outcomes/impact.

Don't complete the next booklet activity until after we have watched!





- LOVE BOMB -

Jake has just suggested people are talking negatively about Skye, but that he 'doesn't want to upset her'.

Let's clarify: why could this moment be concerning?

Jake reduces Skye's self-worth to make her think he is the only one who cares for her.

He has created insecurity so that she could come to distrust her friends/family.

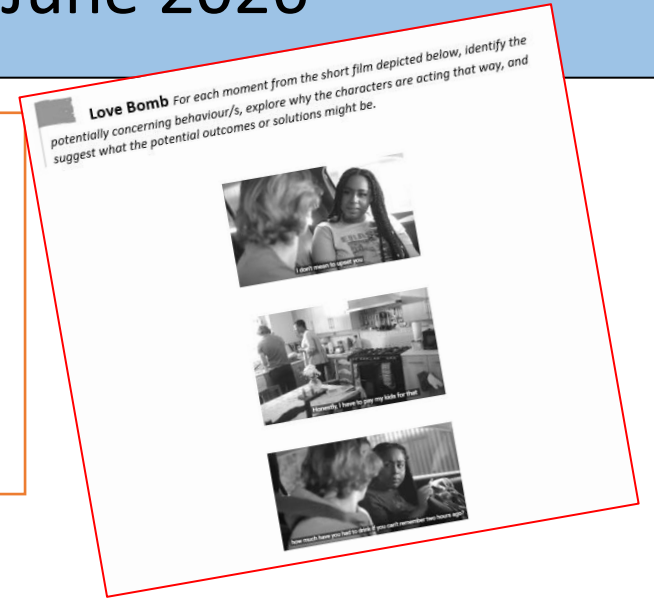


This means that if they raise suspicion about Jake's behaviours later, she might not believe them.

Skye might feel that Jake is the only person who is able to tell her the truth; she could begin to trust him and lose her own sense of reality.

What could Skye do to strengthen herself against this manipulation?

For each moment depicted in your booklets, identify the concerning behaviours, why the characters might be acting that way, and suggest what the outcomes could be for the characters and their relationships.



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Ext: suggest healthier or empowering alternative behaviours.



Threatening self-harm or suicide is an extremely powerful emotionally abusive tool.

What emotions could Skye be feeling when Jake says this?



How could Skye respond to this threat?

Sky could say...

“I care about you very much, but it is not OK to pressure me in this way. I know this is hard for you, and I can try and help find resources that can help you if you are feeling like this, but I am not responsible for your actions.”



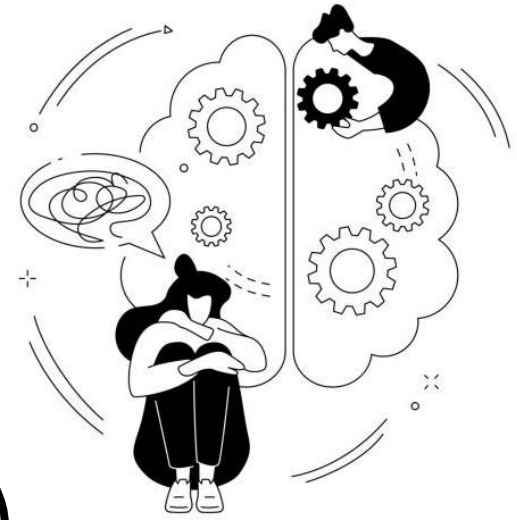
This helps show Jake that Skye cares about him while also showing that she will **stand firm in her boundaries**.

We are not responsible for another person's actions – this includes if a partner chooses to be abusive or contemplates suicide.

A relationship is about trust, and your partner should trust that you love and care for them without threats and guilt.

If you are concerned about a potentially abusive and coercive relationship, **seek help** from:

- a trusted adult (DSL – AK)
- an external support source – see below
- the police (101 non-emergency/999 emergency)
- Clare's Law – via the police [Clare's Law](#)



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Plenary/ext. question: why do you think the film is called 'Love Bomb'?

