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Family Communication
During Stress and Crisis

A stylized graphic consisting of three black silhouettes of people's heads and shoulders, arranged in a circle. The silhouettes are connected by white lines that suggest conversation or interaction. The word "Family" is written in a large, white, cursive font across the middle of the silhouettes. Below "Family", the word "STRESS" is written in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font with a white outline, appearing to be superimposed on the silhouettes.

Family
STRESS

**FAMILY COMMUNICATION
DURING STRESS AND CRISIS**

FAMILY COMMUNICATION DURING STRESS AND CRISIS

Material prepared as a part of North Central Region Stress Management Program Focused on Farm Families using data from NC164, "Stress, Coping and Adaptation in the Middle years of the Family Life Cycle." Project funded by Extension Service, USDA.

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B. USING FIVE VERBAL RESPONSES

FAMILY COMMUNICATION DURING CRISIS AND STRESS

Leader's Guide

Introduction

From the time families are formed until they dissolve, they undergo changes that are both normative and non-normative. Normative changes, such as the birth of a child and members growing older, are expected and occur in most families. Residual effects, if any, are usually short term. Non-normative stressors, on the other hand, are usually not expected. Nor do they occur in a majority of families. They include such events as an abrupt job loss, divorce, or the untimely death of a family member. Effects related to these events may be chronic.

As families attempt to adapt to these changes, stress will result. The amount of stress generated will depend upon the family's perception of the demands they are facing and the resources they feel are available to them for responding. In order to reduce the perceived demand, family members will carry out verbal and non-verbal transactions with one another in order to share perceptions, thoughts, and feelings with one another. Some families develop very effective communication patterns, while others suffer more intensely because of faulty communication.

Rationale

Working with families experiencing prolonged or intense stress can be a difficult and demanding job for helping professionals, particularly when a family's communication patterns are ineffective. The family structure may be such that members relate to one another in very damaging ways. Power, affection, and communication patterns may be skewed so that certain members feel isolated, alienated, and helpless. Members may be unaware of how certain non-verbal behaviors contradict their spoken messages to one another. While everyone might have something to say, no one may be listening. Responses they make to one another may be highly critical, offer only minimal support, or cut off further meaningful discussion.

Professionals who are unfamiliar with communication concepts may themselves have family communication styles or be unable to identify potentially damaging behavior in families, thereby limiting their ability to guide stressed families toward positive adaptation. Therefore, the purpose of this programming is to increase skill levels in helping professionals in: 1) assessing their own interactive styles and 2) identifying positive and negative communication patterns in the families with whom they work.

OBJECTIVES:

Participants will

- become more knowledgeable about how family structure and interaction style affect the communication process within the family.
- better understand the importance of nonverbal communication in a family's total communication process.
- increase their ability to identify and use effective listening skills.
- enhance their understanding of the consequences of using, overusing, or misusing any one of five common response styles.
- become better acquainted with the concept of ego states and the powerful manner in which they influence the communication transactions between two or more individuals.
- become knowledgeable about and more skillful at communicating during conflict resolution.

SESSIONS:

Programming format includes six separate and complete sessions, each approximately 1 1/2 hours in length, including:

1. Family Structures that Impact on Communication
2. Nonverbal Communication
3. Effective Listening Skills
4. Five Verbal Response Styles
5. Ego States: Understanding Communication Transactions
6. Communicating During Conflict

Included in each session is a session guide, some type of warm-up exercise, mini-lecture, group activities, overheads to support the mini-lecture, and camera-ready handouts.

INTENDED AUDIENCE: Adult Helping Professionals: Can also be used by helping professionals with lay audiences.

SKILL LEVEL OF PRESENTER:

Requires some background knowledge of content area and good leader skills. Background reading is provided in the teaching packet.

MATERIALS NEEDED: See session outlines provided.

References

- Aldous, J. Family Careers. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1978.
- Bolton, R. People Skills: How to Assert Yourself, Listen to Others, and Resolve Conflicts. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1979.
- Carney, T. F. No Limits To Growth. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Harbeck and Associates, 1976.
- Galvin, K. M. and B. J. Brommel. Family Communication, Cohesion and Change. Glenview, Illinois: Scott Foresman and Company, 1982.
- Hamachek, D. E. Encounters With Others, Interpersonal Relationships and You. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982.
- Johnson, D. W. Reaching Out, Interpersonal Effectiveness and Self-Actualization. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972.
- Millar, D. P. and F. E. Millar. Messages and Myths. Port Washington, New York: Alfred Publishing Company, 1976.
- Pace, R. W.; B. D. Peterson and T. R. Radcliffe (Eds.) Communicating Interpersonally. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1973.
- Skolnick, A. The Intimate Environment. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1983.

Session I

**FAMILY STRUCTURES THAT
IMPACT ON COMMUNICATION**

SESSION I

FAMILY STRUCTURES THAT IMPACT ON COMMUNICATION

SESSION GUIDE

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GOAL: To enhance participants' knowledge of the important overall effect that family structure and interaction style have on the communication process within the family.

Objectives:

1. To review very briefly the structural element of communication.
2. To identify other elements of family structure that impact negatively or positively on communication: roles, family composition, affection, and power.
3. To provide participants with an experiential exercise through which they can become more sensitive to the interactive nature of these structural elements when conflict is present within the family.
4. To introduce participants to other communication components that will be discussed in further detail in forthcoming workshops: non-verbal communication; effective and non-effective listening styles; response patterns; and personality components that affect communication.

Implementing Objectives: Suggested Format and Time Allowances for Presentation:

1. Complete <u>get-acquainted exercise</u> , "Getting to Know You."	10 minutes
2. Provide information to participants about elements of family structures through <u>mini-lecture</u> (Objectives 1 and 2).	30 minutes
3. Complete <u>group exercise</u> (Objective 3)	
.Role Play	10 minutes
.Group Discussion	15 minutes
4. Show <u>Video Tape</u> (FAMILY COMMUNICATION DURING STRESS AND CRISIS (Objective 4)	15 minutes
5. Wrap up. Elicit comments about video tape. Share handouts with participants and remind them of plans for forth-coming workshops.	10 minutes
<u>Total time allotted for workshop:</u>	90 minutes

Materials Needed:

1. Name tags and markers
2. Refreshments (Optional but desireable)
3. Get-acquainted exercise sheets and extra pencils or pens
4. Mini Lecture Notes
5. Overhead projector if needed and overheads (Optional)
6. Role play/Group Exercise sheets.
7. Video equipment and video tape, Family Communication during Stress and Crisis (If tape and equipment are unavailable, leader may provide a brief summary of the key points that are covered in the sessions forthcoming).
8. Handouts

Overheads Provided:

- .Family Communication
- .Normative Changes in Families
- .Non-normative Changes in Families
- .Wheel and Satellite patterns
- .Switchboard and Cloverleaf patterns
- .Two-tiered Family Power Structure
- .Vertical Family Power Structure
- .Horizontal Family Power Structure

Camera-Ready Handouts:

- .Stress Press, Stress Tops Families' Concerns, Vol. 1, No. 3
- .Monitoring Family Stress Levels
- .Family Communication in Time of Stress

Suggested Background Reading for Leaders:

Aldous, J. The Making of Family Roles within Family Composition Constraints (Chapter 3), FAMILY CAREERS: DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGE IN FAMILIES. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1978.

Galvin, K. and Brommel, B. Communications and Family Conflict (Chapter 9), FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS. New York: Scott Foresman, 1982. Book included in packet.

Glavin, K. and Brommel, B. Family Communication and Developmental Stress (Chapter 8). FAMILY COMMUNICATION. New York: Scott Foresman, 1982. Book included in packet.

Get Acquainted Activity

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Find someone who has children exactly the same age as yours. Have that person sign his/her name:
2. Find someone who hates to talk on the telephone:
3. Find someone who knows everyone in the room:
4. Find someone who is frustrated with some part of his/her job:
5. Find someone who admits to being a work-a-holic:
6. Find someone who understands himself/herself completely:
7. Find someone who doesn't know a family who is experiencing a crisis:
8. Find someone who is saving money regularly:
9. Find someone who has experienced some problem communicating with stressed people:
10. Find someone who knows what "zamia" means:

Mini Lecture

MINI LECTURE

FAMILY STRUCTURES THAT IMPACT ON COMMUNICATION

Key Points Contained in This Lecture:

- A. Families are stressed by both developmental (normative) and unexpected (non-normative) changes.
- B. Family members develop patterns of behaving toward one another, including roles, power structures, communication, and affection.
- C. These patterns affect how family members are able to communicate with one another on a daily basis as well as during periods of stress and crisis.
- D. Though these patterns develop into relatively enduring structures, they can and do change over the life cycle, depending upon their relative usefulness in helping families respond to demand.

Though family life has never been completely free from problems, the battle may be tougher today as outside forces such as greater work involvement by adults, socialization of members by the media, and a variety of developmental and social changes impact on the family unit. If families are to remain intact and be successful in weathering the pressures they encounter, they must learn effective ways to adapt to both expected and unexpected change. Normative and developmental stressors that most families experience include such events as the birth of a child, children becoming more independent, members growing older, normal changes in the marital relationship, and retirement. Non-normative and unexpected changes (divorce, unemployment, untimely death of a member, birth of a handicapped child, development of chronic illness, teen-age pregnancy, or chemical abuse by a member) may cause more acute strain.

How families resolve the stress that arises when these stressors pile up depends a great deal upon the patterns they develop in interacting with one another and the way they communicate with one another on a day-to-day basis. Very early, family members develop ways of behaving with each other. Patterns arise from roles that family members elect to play or are forced to play as they attempt to fulfill both individual and family goals. These structures help to make family life more predictable for its members, even when what is predictable may be very negative. Overt roles include earning money (provider), keeping the house clean (housekeeper), and watching the children. Covert roles are also played by family members. These include being a harmonizer, providing encouragement to other members, dominating decision-making, and inducing stress.

Roles may be very traditional (ex. father works outside the home, mother stays home) or constructed and less traditional (ex. father becomes a househusband because he is unemployed; his wife, who is able to find outside work, becomes the family provider).

Roles are never independently played. That is, they are always complementary or interdependent on a role partner. One person's right becomes another's responsibility. A very young child's right to eat becomes the parents' responsibility to provide food. A spouse's right to receive affection becomes the other spouse's responsibility. Role conflict can occur when one person perceives that he or she is expected to do something that is unreasonable, unpleasant, or unfair. Role strain can occur when one member of the family has assumed too heavy or too many role responsibilities.

Family members also develop patterns in the kinds of messages they exchange in certain situations. Unspoken "rules" are set up about the kinds of things that can be talked about and what kinds of things must be "avoided" by family members. What is said may be verbalized on at least two levels, content and instruction. Content is the literal definition of what is said. However, instruction (or meta-message) conveys the intent of the message. Content may be a simple statement (such as, "I don't care") but instruction (meta-message) depends upon emotion, intent, context in which the statement is made, nonverbal cues, gestures, and body position. In other words, a simple statement such as "I don't care" can mean exactly the opposite, and the receiver will pick this up if actively listening. Of course, what is seen and heard by the receiver is

always filtered through that person's own perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and values. If the person receiving the message is ever unsure about what is really meant by the person, it would be wise to tune in to instructional clues.

Aldous (1978) suggests the term "Switchboard" be applied to families where everyone communicates freely with everyone else. In families where one or more members appear to be outsiders, she applies the label, "Gap," to the family. She describes families where one member serves as message carrier to other members as having a "wheel" pattern.

Arlene Skolnick (THE INTIMATE ENVIRONMENT. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1983) notes the following basic tenets of communication:

1. It is impossible not to communicate -- just as it is impossible not to behave.
2. There are issues of dominance versus equality in any communication between one person and another.
3. Human communication always takes place at several levels. Verbal communication is always qualified by tone of voice, facial expression, body movement, and by the context of the situation.
4. Any statement a person makes to another is an attempt to define or control the relationship between the two of them, even if the person wishes to be independent and helpless in the relationship.

Family solidarity or affection patterns also develop and determine to a large extent how much and what kinds of communication go on between various members of a family, quality of eye contact, how closely they stand from each other when speaking, whether or not there has to be a "go-between" member to interpret what is said, and whether or not there is any touching between the members. Aldous (1978) has identified three types of affection patterns in families: 1) Isolate, where one or more members seem to be on the outside; 2) Cloverleaf, where everyone seems equally affectionate with one another; and 3) Satellite, where one member

seems to serve as a "go-between" to carry affection. For example, a daughter who has never been able to tell her father that she loves him but occasionally asks her mother to "tell Dad I love him, too" is using her mother as the "go-between," and the family pattern can thus be described as satellite. A family where a son joins the service and purposefully does not communicate with his family in any way for a number of years may be described as isolate.

Power patterns in families change over the family life cycle. These patterns have been described as "two-tier" (for example, husband and wife share equal power but children have less decision-making power) and "vertical" (power is hierarchal, with the husband having the most, the wife the next greatest amount of power, and children having power relative to their ages). As children grow older, families that are two-tier may switch to a "horizontal" pattern, i. e., with every member in the family enjoying approximately the same amount of power as anyone else. Research indicates that where there are significant imbalances in the power structure of a family, family interaction tends to be less healthy.

Though these various patterns that constitute family structure become relatively enduring interchanges, they can and do change over the family's life span, depending upon family composition (size of family, age of various members, gender composition of the family), member performance of responsibilities, and the usefulness of the structures in helping families adapt to internal and external pressures they face.

Also, a number of variations in these structural patterns may exist in families, particularly where patterns may be faulty. For example, alliances may build between two or more family members, causing gaps in communication or affection between them and other members. One person in a family may become a scapegoat, while another is looked on as a "goody-goody." A husband may not consider his wife's feelings or ideas when an important decision has to be made. Children may feel left out when parents decide on a divorce without telling them what the rupture will mean for them. In large families, single-parent families, or dual-employed families, there may be greater allocation of power to the older children. Moreover, there may be a significant shift in power when a wife moves into the labor market and begins contributing a great deal more to the family's spending power. She may come to expect a more egalitarian "partnership," while her husband sees her independence as a

threat. Children moving into adolescence may demand more independence than their parents are comfortable in allowing them. **(It would be good at this point to ask the audience if they have experienced similar role shifts over time in their families).**

When we consider that husbands and wives have grown up in very different families and that, even within families children may "experience" the family from a very different perspective depending upon sex, age, position, etc., it is understandable that there may be conflict between members that cannot always be resolved from simply "talking it over." In fact, talking things over and "clearing the air" can often lead to further irritation, disappointment, and resentment unless family members are able to be sensitive to other properties in their relationships with one another. A simple request from a wife telling her husband to pick up his clothes may carry overtones of **commanding** that he do so. If he perceives this tone as an effort on her part to be the controller in their relationship, he may find her request as incompatible with the way he defines their relationship, i. e., his being in charge. Instead of obeying her command, thereby reinforcing **her** definition of the relationship, he is likely to ignore her request or erupt negatively. She may then complain that she doesn't understand why he has to respond the way he does to such a simple request (Skolnick, 1983). Similar "misfirings" in communication exchanges go on between parents and developing children, between siblings, and between adult children and their parents.

These ideas can be further explored by participating in an activity which simulates family conflict (Leader, see group activity which follows).

OVERHEADS PROVIDED:

Family Communication

Normative Changes in Families

Non-normative Changes in Families

Wheel and Satellite Patterns

Switchboard and Cloverleaf Patterns

Two-tiered Family Power Structure

Vertical Family Power Structure

Horizontal Family Power Structure



NORMATIVE CHANGES IN FAMILIES

1. Are expectable

2. Occur in most families

3. Effects are usually short term

Examples :

Birth of a child

Members growing older

Children becoming independent

Graduation

Marriage

Retirement

NON-NORMATIVE CHANGES IN FAMILIES

- 1. Are untimely and/or unexpected**
- 2. Do not occur in the majority of families**
- 3. Effects may be chronic**

Examples:

Divorce

Unemployment

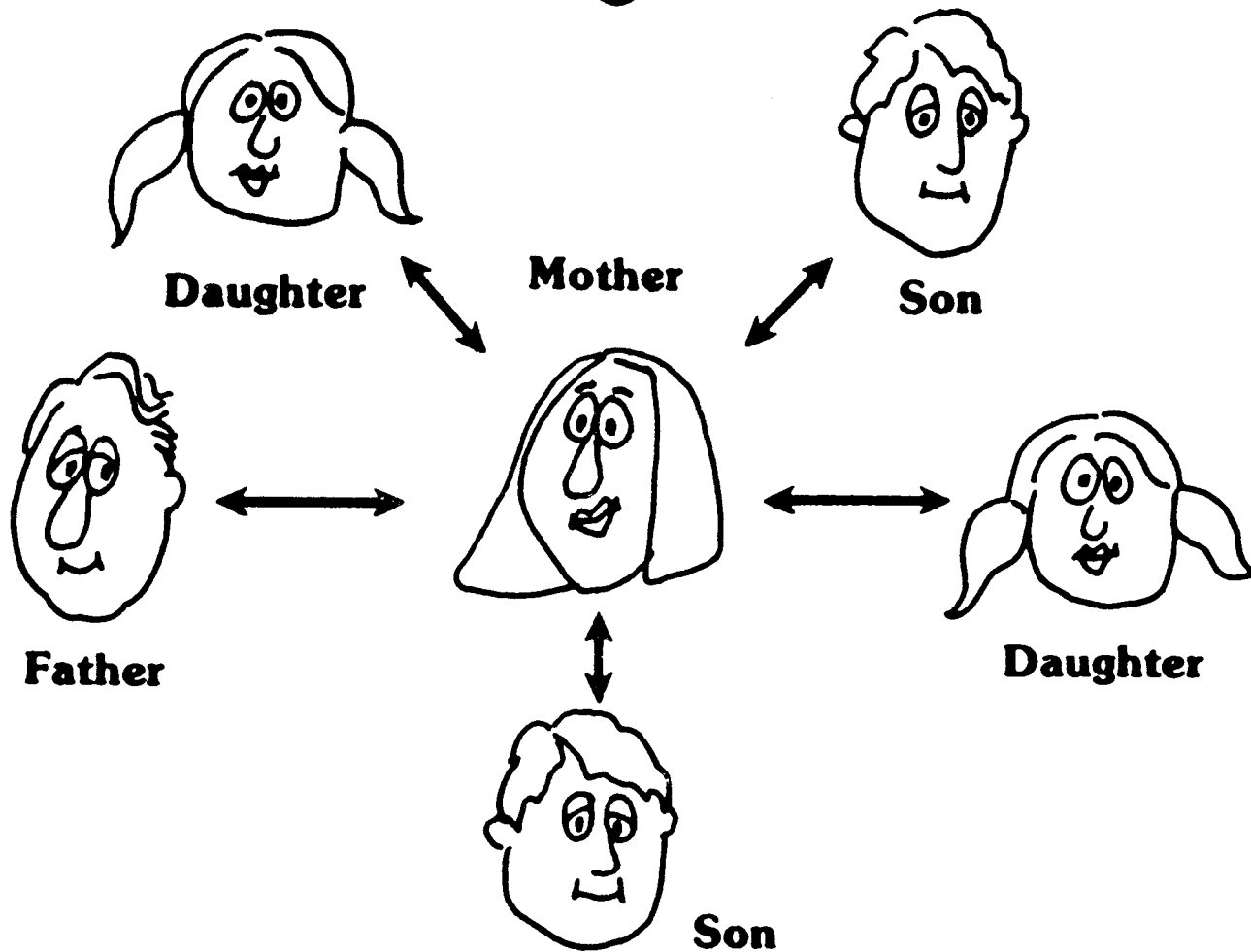
Untimely Death

Birth of handicapped child

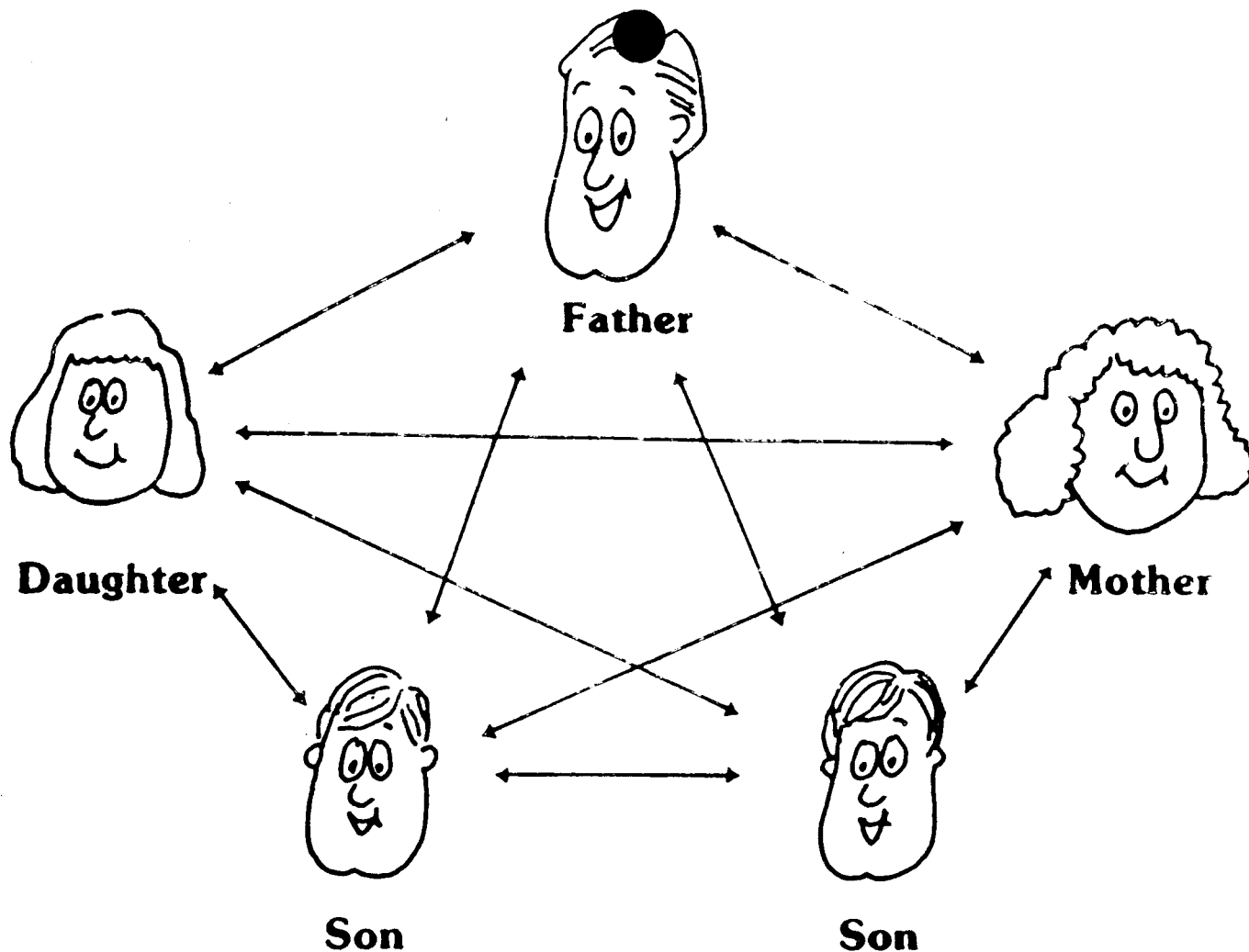
Development of Chronic Illness

Teen-age pregnancy

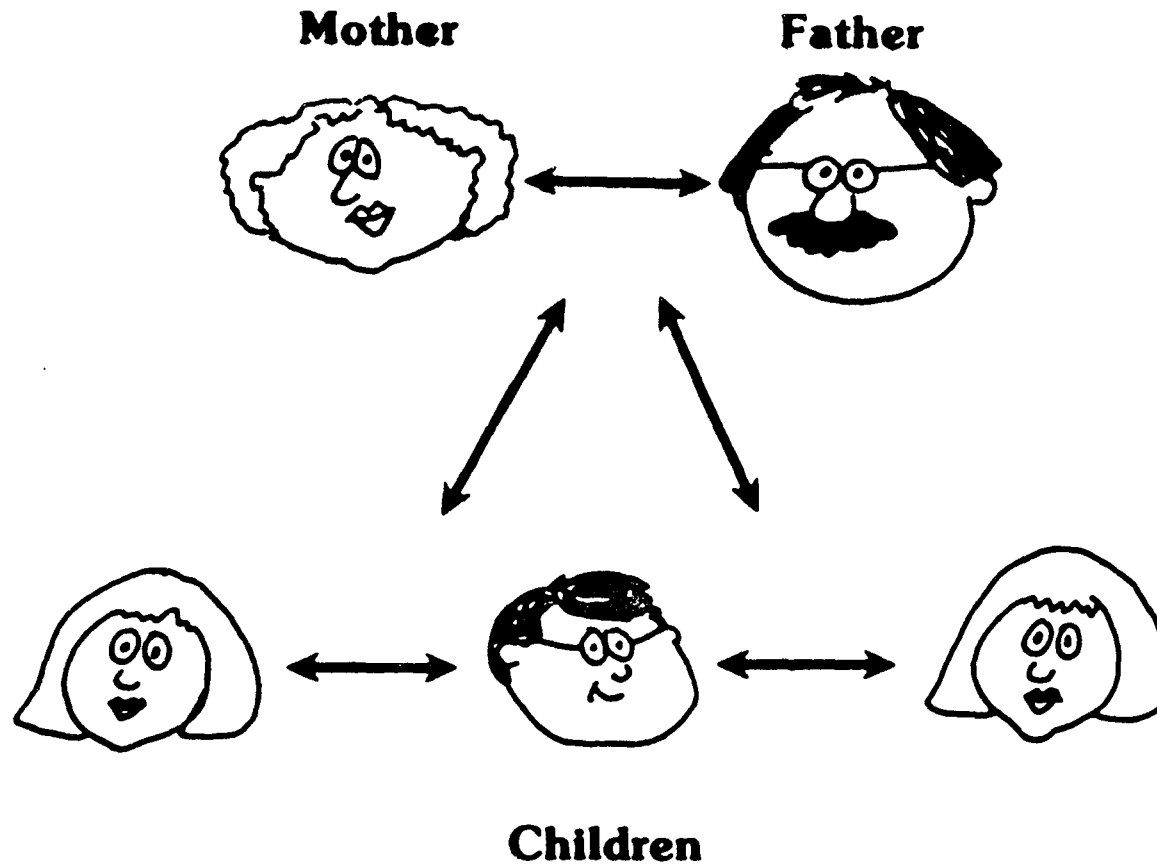
Substance abuse



Wheel Communication Pattern
Sattelite Affection Pattern



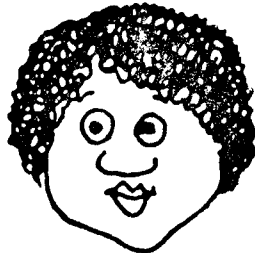
Switchboard Communication Pattern
Cloverleaf Affection Pattern



**Two-Tiered Family Power Structure
(A Modified Chain of Command)**



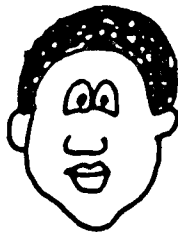
Father



Mother

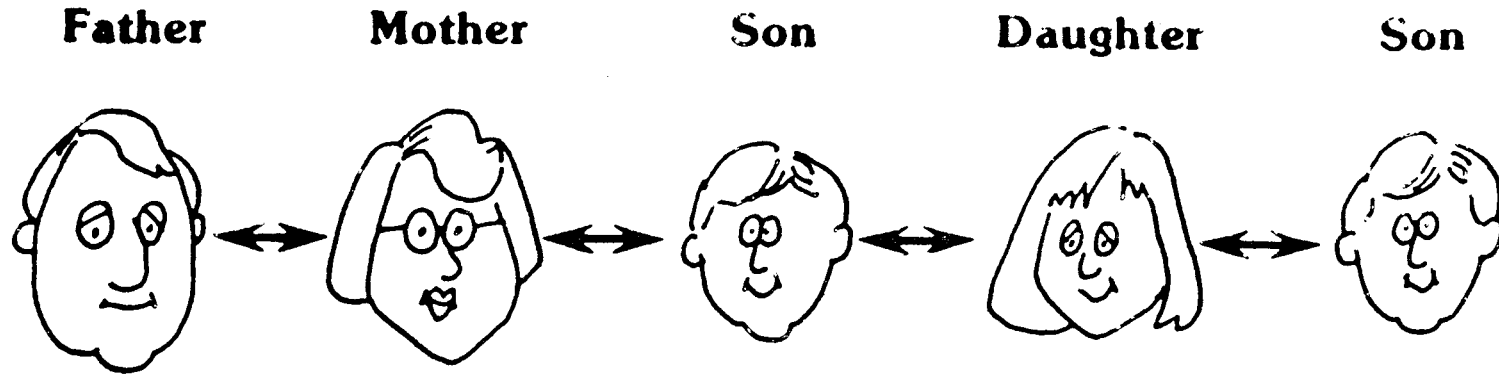


**Oldest or
Favored Child**



**Younger or
Less Favored Child**

**Vertical Family Power Structure
(A Chain of Command)**



Horizontal (Democratic) Family Power Structure
(Everyone Has Equal Status)

Group Exercise

Session I

Group Activity

THE FARM FAMILY

To Leader: The objective of this activity is to provide participants with an experiential exercise through which they can become more sensitive to the interactive nature of family patterns when they are trying to resolve conflict situations.

The following exercise is included: a farm family that must decide on whether or not the family will take out a loan to update milking equipment. Though the role play is a farming situation, it is still general enough that any audience can relate to the process that is called for. Leaders may wish to construct a role play that is more highly specific to the audience being addressed, i. e., one that portrays an unemployed family, a divorced family, etc., by simply using this exercise as a model and changing the situation and roles.

Procedure:

Break audience into groups of five. Four members will play family parts. The fifth person will act as an observer of the family interaction as they work to resolve their "problem." The observer is to take notes as the family group interacts. Allow approximately 10 minutes for the interaction to evolve. Follow up for 5 or 10 minutes by allowing the group to discuss with the observer the kinds of patterns that seemed most obvious and then bring the group back together for another 5 or 10 minutes with a general group discussion of what they learned.

Family Observer

THE FARM FAMILY

OBSERVER: Pay close attention to the following aspects of the interaction that you observe between the family members as they work to resolve their "problem." Make notes that can be shared with the family following the actual role play. Record bits of conversation that seem to support your observations.

Power - Do you notice any serious imbalances in the power structure of this family? Is one member overly aggressive in getting his/her way? Do all members seem open to at least considering the ideas of others? Does everyone appear to have equal "input"?

Communication - Do you notice any "put-downs" of one member to another? Do any of the members use sarcasm or ridicule? Is there verbal hostility? Blaming? Is anyone ignored by the others?

Affection - Are there any obvious signs of affection? Do there seem to be any alliances between certain members? Are there members that seem to be left out? Is there visible support of one member for another? Do the members seem to care about one another's feelings? Ideas?

Roles - What are the overt roles being played here? Are they played out in a traditional or flexible manner? What kinds of covert roles do you observe being played?

Group Exercise

FATHER

THE FARM FAMILY

SITUATION: The family is at breakfast, and the conversation is centered around whether or not it would be advisable to take out a fairly good-sized loan right now to replace some outdated milking equipment. The role you are to play follows....

FATHER: You have been in the farm business all your life and now are "semi-retired" from a cash crop/dairy operation you are running along with your two sons. The oldest son, who handles the cash crops, has been fairly reliable and so has the younger one you sent to Michigan State University. The problem is, the youngest son who is responsible for the dairying aspect of the farm has been pressing you to update the dairy equipment, and you aren't quite sure that you want to take out the kind of loan he is pressing for. The farm hasn't been doing all that well, though you're keeping your head above water. The only kind of loan you can get is a variable interest rate, and you've seen a lot of area farmers go under when interest rates sky-rocketed a couple of years ago. Despite the fact that you want to allow your sons more "say" in financial matters, you still feel you need to keep a firm hand on the major financial investments.

You are very traditional about husband/wife relationships and are feeling increasingly uncomfortable about your wife's "sticking her nose in" the farm operation, which she seems to be doing increasingly. Previously, she has been what you consider a real "help mate." Lately, she is beginning to irritate you.

TASK: You and your family must decide whether or not to take out this loan.

Group Exercise

MOTHER

THE FARM FAMILY

SITUATION: The family is at breakfast, and the conversation is centered around whether or not it would be advisable to take out a fairly good-sized loan right now to replace some outdated milking equipment. The role you are to play follows....

MOTHER: You and your husband own a fairly good-sized cash crop/dairy farm that you are running with the help of your two sons. Jim, your oldest son manages the crop operation. Dan, your youngest son, has just graduated from Michigan State University's Agriculture College and has been pressing to replace some outdated dairy equipment. You feel he knows what he is talking about and that some changes really do need to be made if the farm is to remain competitive with others in the area. You feel, also, that your husband and older son have a monopoly on the decision-making that goes on and would like a greater voice in the operation of the farm for yourself and your younger son. You have always tried to play the role of keeping everyone happy and have usually deferred to your husband. This time, actively express your support for your younger son's ideas and try to tell your husband and older son about some articles you've been reading in FARM WIFE about staying financially competitive. Press to be more involved in moving the decision in your younger son's direction.

TASK: You and your family must decide whether or not to take out the loan.

Group Exercise

OLDER SON

THE FARM FAMILY

SITUATION: The family is at breakfast, and the conversation is centered around whether or not it would be advisable to take out a fairly good-sized loan right now to replace some outdated milking equipment. The role you are to play follows....

OLDER SON: You never got a chance to attend college (actually you never really wanted to.) You are running the cash crops on a family farm along with your father and a younger brother who just graduated from Michigan State University's Agricultural College. He is running the dairy operations on the farm and driving you crazy with all his new-found "college crap"... wanting to update milking equipment that has been just fine as far as you're concerned. In fact, you really believe that the farm ought to phase out the dairy operations that have not been all that profitable and put more of the money into cash crops. Press for that point.

TASK: You and your family must decide whether or not to take out a loan.

YOUNGER SON

THE FARM FAMILY

SITUATION: The family is at breakfast, and the conversation is centered around whether or not it would be advisable to take out a fairly good-sized loan right now to replace some outdated milking equipment. The role you are to play follows.....

YOUNGER SON: You have just graduated from a four-year agricultural program at Michigan State University and feel the farm that you run with your father and older brother has become outdated. Your father is "semi-retired" and says he is transferring the running of the farm to you and your brother. You are handling major responsibility for the dairy aspect of the business. You resent the fact that your father still insists on making all the major financial decisions. Even more, you resent the fact that he seems to lean toward siding in with your oldest brother who manages the farm's cash crops. You get really angry when your oldest brother accuses you of trying to use all that "college crap" in the dairy operation. You would like to break off farming with the family and set up your own operation but feel you could never swing it financially. You feel you have to continually press your brother and father to support what you're trying to do. You are really concerned that your brother is trying to force you out of the operation by just being as nasty and uncooperative as possible.

TASK: You and your family must decide whether or not to take out this loan.

CAMERA READY HANDOUTS:

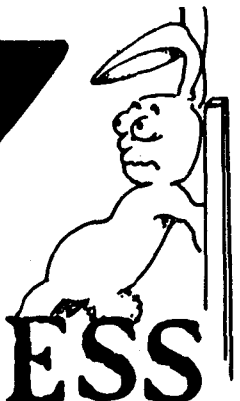
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Monitoring Family Stress Levels

Family Communication in Time of Stress

THE STRESS PRESS



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STRESS TOPS FAMILIES' CONCERNS

Volume 1, No. 3

1982

In a recent survey of 40,000 families by the Family Services Association of America, family stress is now reported as the greatest problem families now face - moving from a seventh place spot in a 1977 survey. This may not be surprising in light of the critical social changes affecting families in the last decade. We have seen significant increases in the numbers of single-parent families, dual-employed families, male and adolescent unemployment, and family mobility. Raging inflation and declining growth in the gross national product have spelled economic disaster for many families, particularly those heavily into debt. While the women's movement has created new expectations of what men's and women's roles are to be within the family, actual behavior changes have failed to keep up with those new perceptions, causing considerable conflict.

According to University of Minnesota researchers, YOUR FAMILY MAY BE ON STRESS OVERLOAD IF:

- .There is frequent bickering and/or blaming
- .A noticeable breakdown in communication
- .Increased anger, criticism, ridicule
- .Increased rules and regulations
- .Decreased independence
- .Children's behavioral difficulties at home and/or at school
- .Parent's difficulties at work

YOUR FAMILY IS ON STRESS OVERLOAD IF:

- .There is physical and/or verbal hostility
- .Spousal or child abuse
- .Runaways
- .Divorce or separation
- .Emotionally disturbed member
- .Stress-related physical health problems
- .Substance abuse (including alcohol)
- .Inability to, or termination of, work

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT A NATURAL CAUSE OF STRESS?

The continuous change that is necessary within families to support both individual member growth and family growth is stressful in itself. Donna Sweehey, M.S.U. specialist, has indicated that in addition to normal everyday frustrations, families face additional tensions at very predictable times. Early in the marriage, adjustments may be necessary dealing with in-law interference, loyalty divisions between spouses and their parents, new work and social routines, sexual adjustments, and financial problems.

As children arrive, there are again routine adjustments and new demands and responsibilities. Job anxieties continue to be a source of stress during this period, and the family may be faced with such additional stressors as moving, health fears and realities related to the children's development, and new concerns with children's adjustments to the school setting. Spousal relationships, which have been "put on the back burner" while attention to child-rearing becomes paramount, may begin to suffer.

Middle-life pressures may result from increased demands for independence from the children, competition in the work place, increased social pressures, anxieties about aging parents, or frustration over personal growth of family members. The specter of loneliness due to looming divorce or the children leaving home may become particularly stressful.

Families in later life are also subject to pressures. There may be stress caused by underload, rather than the overload suffered earlier. Health problems may promote excessive anxiety, as can retirement fears/problems, financial pressures, too much distancing from a spouse, and continued concern over aging parents.

MONITORING FAMILY STRESS LEVELS

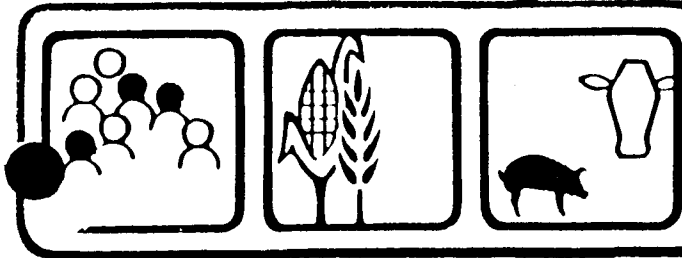
Just as individual tension can rise to dangerous proportions when not monitored, pressure in families can also get out of hand. We know that stress levels may be out of control when there is increased arguing among family members, members are spending more time away from the family, there is increased conflict with relatives, or one or more members is exhibiting emotional problems. Other signs include feeling overwhelmed when managing the children, consistently ignoring tasks or chores that need to be taken care of, members that are dependent on alcohol or drugs, physical or emotional abuse among members, and the development of alliances between certain members which excludes others.

Stress in families can be controlled or compounded. The following can serve as a check to see what happens when your family is under pressure. Check all that apply:

WHEN THERE IS A PROBLEM IN OUR FAMILY, WE....

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support one another | <input type="checkbox"/> Get uptight and yell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fall apart | <input type="checkbox"/> Stop talking and withdraw |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consider everyone's viewpoint | <input type="checkbox"/> Take sides |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Look for a scapegoat to pin it on | <input type="checkbox"/> Look consciously at <u>every</u> alternative, whether it seems reasonable at first or not |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leave the decision-making up to one person | <input type="checkbox"/> Seek outside counseling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ignore the problem until it changes or goes away | <input type="checkbox"/> Hold grudges |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase use of chemical substances, alcohol | <input type="checkbox"/> Become aggressive or violent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use guilt, fear, or threat tactics to control one another | <input type="checkbox"/> Cover it up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moralize, rationalize | <input type="checkbox"/> Talk about it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formulate a plan and act on it | <input type="checkbox"/> Become sarcastic with one another |

What kinds of behaviors above are positive? Which ones need to be replaced by more constructive behaviors? Is the family able to make these changes itself? Which behavior should be acted on first?



HE-FS-2465 — 1984
Ronald L. Pitzer
Family Life Specialist

Family Communication in Time of Stress

The healthy way to deal with stress or to work through feelings of loss or sadness is to talk about it with someone — a family member, a close friend, a pastor, or a professional counselor. Many persons who experience stress or loss deny or ignore the normal feelings of anger, guilt, fear, and sorrow which accompany these experiences. Such denial can lead to emotional or physical difficulties. At a minimum, it is likely to lead to a breakdown in communication with others, thus blocking the natural means of recovering from the stress, grief, or change.

Talk It Out

A first principal of communication for a person undergoing stress, then, is *talk it out*. Don't bottle it up. Confide your feelings and worry to some level-headed person who is likely to understand and care and who you can trust. Just knowing that someone is aware of our stress, hurt feelings, worries, or difficult decisions and cares about us can mean a great deal. Burdens shared with a caring person are often lighter to carry. As someone once said: "A joy shared is doubled; a sorrow shared is halved." You may have at least one such person among your informal support network — your husband or wife, father or mother, brother or sister, or a friend. If not, you may need to reach out to a more formal helper — clergy, family doctor, social worker, counselor, or psychologist.

Reaching out to some receptive listener is urgent. Talking things out helps you relieve the tension, see your situation in a clearer light, and often, see what you can do about it. Harvard psychologist Gerald Caplan says that persons who weather a crisis well are not ashamed to express their fears, anxieties, and sorrow, are eager to explore possible solutions with others, and are able to accept — even enlist — the help of others. The "good copers" consider talking it out and asking for help a sign of strength and maturity rather than of weakness and overdependence.

Just Listen

The other side of the coin in communication and stress is listening. To talk it out requires a listener. Unfortunately, family members and friends are often notoriously

poor listeners — not because they are unskilled or indifferent or uncaring, but because they care so much that they want to ease the stress or unpleasant feelings, take on the burden, solve the problem, or offer advice. That is noble. However, even if sound and eventually followed, such advice may not feel helpful at the moment of intense feeling or great stress. At such times, "just listening" can be a powerfully important contribution.

It's important that a person under stress be allowed to vent his or her feelings. If you are the listener, this means that you allow the person to talk, to yell, or to cry. How you respond to someone feeling stressed is important. Advising, analyzing, or judging by saying things like "Don't get so emotional," or "Try to get organized," or "It's silly to worry about it," is not very helpful.

What stressed people need is someone to listen, to support, and to allow feelings to be expressed. It's helpful to ask short, neutral questions or express concern and willingness to listen — for example, "Would you like to talk about it," or "You sound upset," or "I can see that would bother you."

Sometimes a person can find the cause of stress and see the most likely solution simply by talking it out. At other times, a person may need help seeing the source of the problem or in seeing alternatives for solving it. In those cases, your experience, wisdom, and objectivity may be valuable. Either way, facing up to the problem and getting feelings out in the open are the first steps in managing stress.

So don't underestimate the value of "just listening." Listening is perhaps the most important communication skill. Yet many of us don't listen as well as we might — because we are busy; because we allow ourselves to be distracted; because we don't take our children, parents, or spouse seriously; because we allow our prejudgments to distort our receiving; or because we want to help so much.

Watch Your Interpretations

It's important to realize that as listeners we *always* interpret what is said. That is, when we observe some behavior or action on the part of another, when we hear

Session II

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

SESSION II

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

SESSION GUIDE

CONTENTS IN THIS UNIT:	PAGE
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F. CAMERA READY HANDOUTS	II - 12

GOAL: To broaden participants' understanding of the importance of nonverbal communication in a family's total communication process.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To increase their understanding of how nonverbal signals operate within families to communicate affection and hostility between members.
2. To review the components of the communication process and recognize the nonverbal channels of this process.
3. Gain experience in recognizing the non-verbal characteristics of four listening types: The hostile, disinterested, distracting, and active listener.
4. How family members' perceptions of nonverbal cues can differ and how these different perceptions can impact on behavior.

**Implementing Objectives: Suggested Format and Time Allowances
for Presentation:**

1. Complete a warm-up exercise. Ask group to generate two lists of nonverbal cues, one that indicates affection cues and one that indicates hostility cues. Compare to list provided, "Nonverbal Cues That Signal Affection or Hostility Between People". (Objective 1). 10 minutes
 2. Though a mini-lecture, provide information to participants about nonverbal channels of communication and the transmission of underlying thoughts and feelings vis-a-vis these channels. (Objectives 1 and 2). 30 minutes
 3. Form groups of four persons and complete exercise, "Non-Verbal Behavior of Four Listening Types". (Objectives 3). 20 minutes
 4. Divide groups of four into sets of two persons. Complete experiential exercise #2, Non-Verbal Communication. (Objective 4). 20 minutes
 5. Conclusion. Ask for reactions to exercises. Summarize points made. Remind participants of the topic for the next session. 10 minutes
- Total time allotted for this session: 90 minutes

Materials Needed:

1. Name tags and markers
2. Refreshments (optional but desirable)
3. Mini Lecture notes
4. Overhead projector and overheads (optional)
5. Handouts and experiential exercises
6. Extra pencils

Overheads Provided:

Camera-Ready Handouts and Experiential Exercises:

Handouts:

- Nonverbal Cues That Signal Affection or Hostility Between People
- Nonverbal Communication

Experiential Exercises:

- Non-Verbal Behavior of Four Listening Types
- Non-Verbal Communication

Suggested Background Reading for Leaders:

Hamachek, Donald E. ENCOUNTERS WITH OTHERS, INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND YOU. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982. Chapter 5, pp.192-210.

Bolton, Robert. PEOPLE SKILLS. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1979. Chapter 6, pp.78-88.

Galvin, K. and Brommel, B. FAMILY COMMUNICATION. Glenview, Illinois: Scott Foresman, 1982. Chapter 1, pp.1-24.

Mini Lecture

MINI LECTURE

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Key Points Contained in This Lecture:

- A. Effective communication is both verbal and nonverbal.
- B. Families develop their own set of shared meanings and nonverbal signals.
- C. Interference factors can distort the processes of transmitting and receiving nonverbal messages.
- D. Some important channels for communicating nonverbally are social space, body language, facial expressions and eye contact.
- E. Whenever there is ambiguity between verbal and non-verbal communication, more importance should be attached to non-verbal signals.
- F. There are non-verbal characteristics which can be attached to hostile, disinterested, distracting, and active listeners.

Introduction

Effective communication enables family members to translate what they are thinking and feeling into the verbal and nonverbal symbols that make contact with each other. Information about thoughts and ideas are simultaneously transmitted along with information about feelings and attitudes.

The subtle power of nonverbal communication is often overlooked. A person cannot not communicate. The behavior of that person provides a steady stream of information about what he/she is thinking and feeling. Nonverbal cues not only give information about a person's feelings, but often indicate how the person is coping with those feelings. It has been estimated that in normal conversation between two people, only one-third of the meaning is communicated on a verbal level, and nearly two-thirds is communicated on a nonverbal level. (Hamochek, 1982).

Metacommunication

Communication of meaning occurs on two levels. Metacommunication occurs whenever people choose to communicate about their communication: that is, to give verbal or nonverbal instructions on how their behavior should be interpreted.

When two people talk, each is relating information to the other but simultaneously each person is also commenting on another level on how the information should be understood. This simultaneous "between-the-line" relationship-talk or metacommunication is often nonverbal. When a mother says, "When are you going to pick up those clothes?" she is asking an informational question. But there is another level of meaning. It is up to the child to determine if, by her nonverbal tone, she is really questioning at what time of day he will remove the articles, or if she is telling him to get them out of there in the next thirty seconds.

Metacommunication assumes great significance in relational situations. Nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, gestures, or vocal tones are as important as comments such as "I was only kidding" or "This is important". Sometimes mixed messages are sent when the metacommunication disqualifies the original message. For example, a person says, "Oh, you two go ahead and have a good time, I'll be fine here by myself". If the tone of voice indicates disappointment, the listener is left with confusion.

Shared Meanings

Nonverbal signals do not always mean the same in every family. Families develop their own sets of nonverbal shared meanings. For example, in one family the space at the head of the table may be set aside for the head of the house and symbolize status or power. In another family, that space may simply be convenient to the kitchen and used by whoever cooks the meal. If giving a handmade gift at Christmas is considered a special sign of caring, a knitted Christmas stocking may be more highly valued than an expensive necklace.

Being a member of a family in a particular household provides general filters for the meanings attributed to both verbal and nonverbal signals. Repetition of behaviors and symbolic acts increase our ability to assign meaning that is shared by other members. Membership in a family over time tends to build this set of shared meanings. Therefore, the child who hears his father calling can tell by the tone of voice what to expect. The teenager

who comes in late from a date knows by facial expressions what kind of response is forthcoming from parents. **Here, ask the audience to share signs of nonverbal communication they remember experiencing in their own families of origin. Have they continued any of these in their families today?**

Channels of Communication

The process of communication is complex. It involves a sender, a receiver, and a channel or means for transmission of a message. Nonverbal messages are transmitted over many different channels: personal space, facial expression, eye contact, voice, and body gestures. Although each of these channels is subject to a certain amount of interference (or noise) on the part of the receiver or the sender, the sum total of these signals is usually strong enough to confirm or refute the words we hear. "Noise" is any element which interferes with the transmission of the message. For example, emotional noise can manifest itself where either the sender or receiver feels inadequate, superior, or hostile. Social noise, such as a sender's or receiver's religious or cultural beliefs can impact on what is communicated. We might observe physical noise in the form of a receiver reading a newspaper, a sender playing with strands of her hair while talking, or children fighting nearby as a husband and wife try to work through a conflict. As can be seen, a message may be distorted by the sender's noise, the receiver's noise, or noise in the channel.

Social Space

Psychologists talk about the "bubble around us" or the amount of space we allow between ourselves and others. This space expands and contracts depending on where we are, our state of mind, who we're with, and the circumstances of the event. For example, the space we tend to want walking along the street among strangers is often much greater than the amount of space we need at home with family.

Society has certain standards for social space. Observations made of middle-class Americans indicate four distance zones: intimate distance (0-18 inches), personal distance (18 inches to four feet), social distance (4-12 feet), and public distance (12 feet and further). Physical contact is reserved for special acquaintances, family, or under special circumstances with strangers.

Touch is a powerful means of communication. The messages we convey with touch vary according to the timing and duration of touches, as well as what

we say when we touch someone. Most of us learn our touch habits from our families and their cultures. People who are clumsy with touch often come from families in which touching is taboo. The language of touch, just like verbal language, appears to be more natural to some persons. People appreciate others who are sensitive to nonverbal cues and feel comfortable with a pat on the back or an arm around the shoulder at just the right moment. Most people tend to avoid asking to be touched. The tension of an escalating marital argument could often be cut if one partner were to say, "I'd like you to put your arms around me."

Body Language

A person's posture and body movement can speak volumes about feelings, self-image, and energy level. Family discussions can come abruptly to a halt if one member suddenly stands up and looks at his/her watch. Like other nonverbal signals, gestures and body movements can be interpreted in various ways, depending on the situation. Some body postures, however, are more readily interpreted.

Some body language signals are indicators of resistance, anger, and anxiety. **(Ask group to generate as many as possible and then share list on Overhead -Negative Signals).** Other signals indicate more positive, open, and warm feelings.

Facial Expressions

The face is considered to be the primary source of information about the emotional state of a person. The importance of the face in human communication is the ability of facial muscles to change the face's appearance. The brows, forehead, eye area and mouth are most used to express inner feelings.

We learn at a very young age to read facial cues, sometimes using this understanding to know when to approach or when to avoid a person. However, we can easily make mistakes in our interpretation of facial expressions. Some reasons we make mistakes are:

1. What we see isn't always what is actually felt. A person may show an expression that is different from what he/she really feels. For example, a husband is fearful and anxious but he laughs and smiles as though nothing is wrong; a wife is burning with anger, but her controlled face keeps it hidden from others.

2. Some people are good at inhibiting their facial expressions. They have been described as having a "poker face". On the other hand, some faces are easier to read than others for the simple reason that some people are more expressive than others.

3. Another problem we have in interpreting facial expressions is the receiver (observer) may fail to pick up on the cues available and totally misunderstand. For example, your neighbor comes to you for advice; because you are highly uncomfortable about being asked for your opinion you smile and joke around, totally "missing" the concerned look on her face.

Eye Contact

Eye contact makes powerful statements about intentions, attitude and mood. It indicates in a very strong way how involved we are or want to be with another person. Lack of eye contact says much about attitude and inner feelings. Studies show that two people usually look at each other during a conversation from 25-75% of the time, with 30% of the time spent in mutual looking.

Our culture maintains that looking at another person indicates heightened interest in the other- either liking, including sexual interest, or aggressiveness. In practically every interpersonal situation, there is what has been called a moral looking time - the amount of time that we can hold someone's gaze without being accused of being rude, aggressive, or intimate. The longer we look, the more involvement we indicate, (either negative or positive involvement). For example, recall the intense eye contact your parents made with you when scolding or criticizing you.

Seeing the whole picture

Each of the nonverbal signals we have discussed can be misinterpreted by the receiver because of a variety of interference problems. However, when considered together, the sum total of these signals is usually strong enough to confirm or refute the words we hear. Nonverbal signals are picked up as a behavioral package, each contributing to the final meaning a person gives it. Therefore, if a person's body language, tone of voice, hands, facial expression and eye contact are in sync with what is spoken, we can be sure communication is straightforward; if not, say we can be fairly sure this person is attempting to hide his/her true feelings. Whenever there is some conflict, we should be more inclined to pay attention to what is being communicated non-verbally.

Spotting the hostile, disinterested, distracting, and active listener

Just as people have certain personality types, they tend to listen in fairly predictable ways, behaving non-verbally in a mode that supports one of four listening states: hostile, disinterested, distracting, or active.

The hostile listener "spars" more than listens and responds with statements that are likely to surprise, anger, irritate, or confuse the other person. This type of listener may throw off conflicting cues to another person. For example, body language, tone of voice, facial expressions, and eye contact may signal a wish to be positively involved while what is said is purposely (or subconsciously) hostile or designed to create negative emotions in the other person--anger, guilt, anxiety, fear, or uncertainty.

Disinterested listeners can be spotted in spite of themselves. Because what they're listening to does not absorb their interest, they tend to seek visual, tactile, or cognitive absorption somewhere else. They may drink, eat, smoke, play with objects, look elsewhere, and move body parts rhythmically. They may shift positions frequently or yawn to capture more oxygen.

The distracting listener not only throws people off track with meandering verbal statements but behaves non-verbally in ways that tend to draw the speaker's attention away. **(Overhead)**.

Active listening calls for non-verbal behavior that indicates to the speaker, "I really am interested in understanding what you're saying". The listener communicates this by squaring up his/her body to the speaker's, smiling and nodding the head when appropriate, looking directly at the speaker, and refraining from using any distracting movements. Unless these non-verbal signals are demonstrated, verbal skills by themselves are likely to be ineffective.

OVERHEADS PROVIDED:

Communicating Comfortably

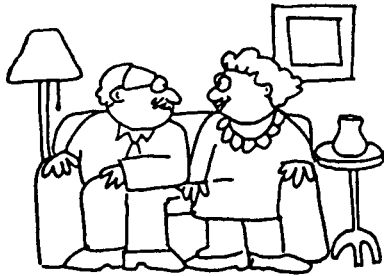
Emotional Noise

Physical Noise

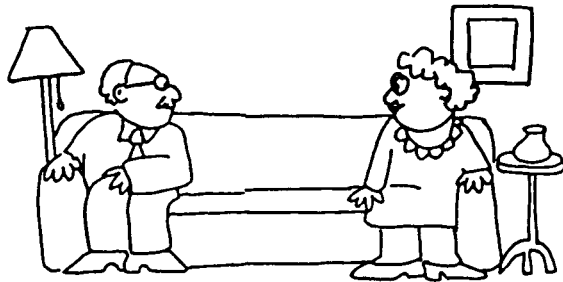
Noise

Social Noise

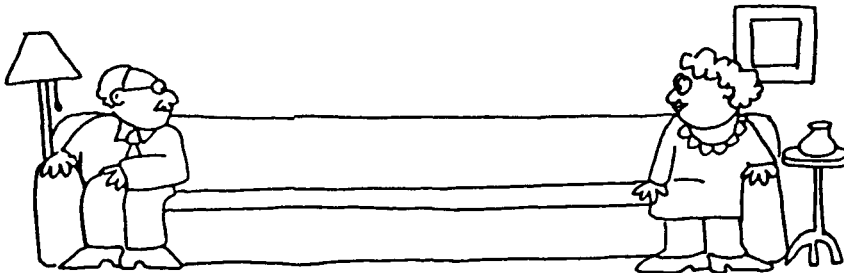
Communicating Comfortably



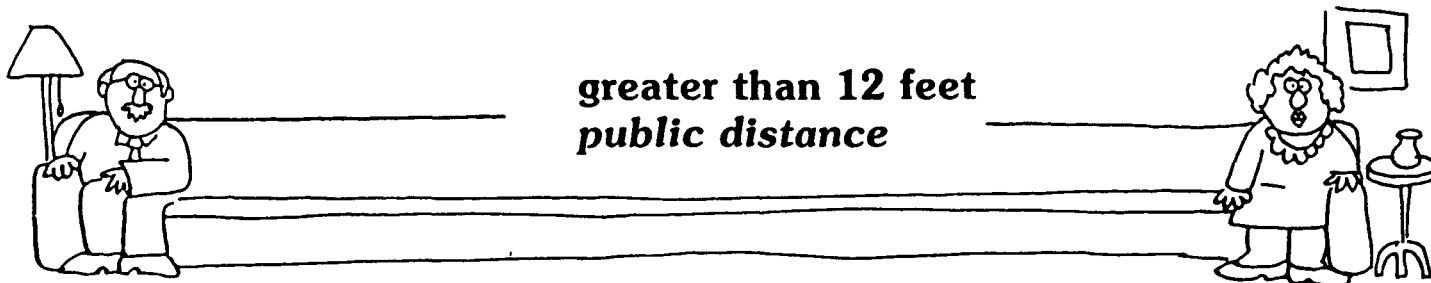
0 to 18 inches
intimate distance



up to 4 feet
personal distance



up to 12 feet
social distance



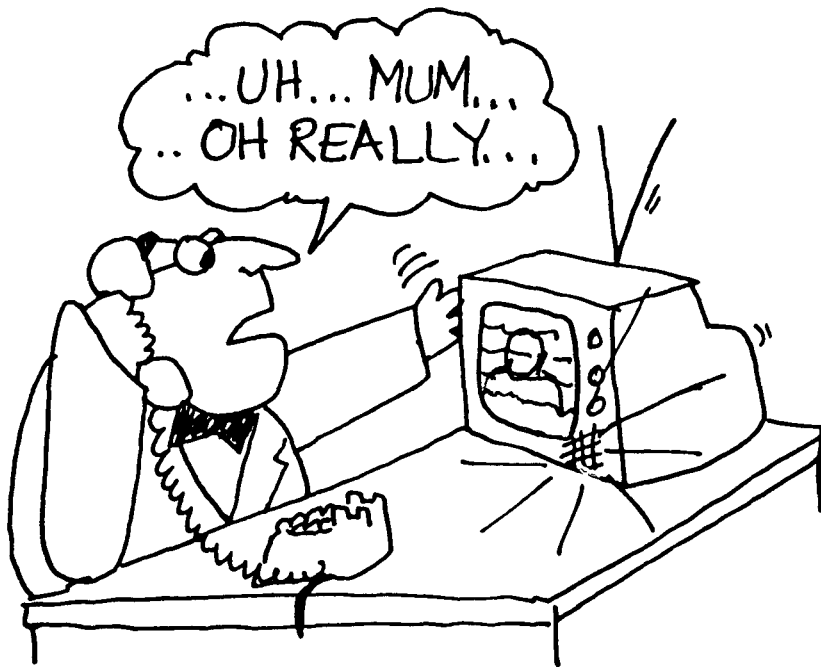
greater than 12 feet
public distance

Emotional Noise

- State of Mind
- Self Esteem
- Worries
- Fears
- Feelings of Inadequacy
- Feelings of Superiority
- Nervous Feelings



Physical Noise



- **Background Sounds**
- **Annoying Mannerisms of Sender**
- **Hearing Acuity Problems**
- **Articulation Problems**
- **Difficulty with the Language**
- **Trouble Finding the Correct Words**



“Noise”

Any element which interferes with the transmission of a message is called “Noise”. Interference can be present in many forms.

Social Noise



- **Prejudices**
- **Relationship with Receiver**
- **Religious Beliefs**
- **Cultural Traditions**
- **Ethnic Priorities**

Group Exercise

Experiential Exercise #1

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION EXERCISE

Discuss the following situations. Can there be different interpretations?

1. Paula has an appointment to meet Shirley at 9:00. Paula finally arrives at 9:25. Paula smiles and waves hello. Shirley stands leaning against the wall with arms folded over her chest.

Shirley perceives _____ .

Paula perceives _____ .

2. Andrea is talking to Linda's date at a party. Their conversation is both innocent and trivial. They are standing close together and looking at each other for long moments. Linda has been watching them.

Linda perceives _____ .

Andrea perceives _____ .

3. Harry comes in from work, throws his jacket on the chair, his hat in the corner, and his keys on the table. He starts telling Marge, his wife, the problems he's had today on the job. Marge avoids looking directly at him, glances at the jacket and continues getting dinner ready.

Harry perceives _____ .

Marge perceives _____ .

4. On the elevator, June and Patty are talking and laughing until a woman gets on at the next floor. She frowns, avoids their eyes and looks at her watch, then at the numbers as the elevator moves up. The two friends move to the wall and are quiet.

June and Patty perceive _____ .

The woman perceives _____ .

5. You and your son are having a discussion at the kitchen table. Across the table your son shifts his chair so you see him from a side view, crosses his legs, presses his hands closed, and stares at the table.

Your son perceives _____ .

You perceive _____ .

Experiential Exercise #2

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

To Leader: The following exercise is meant to provide experience to participants in identifying non-verbal clues when communicating with another person. Directions for the exercise are as follows.

1. Divide group into sets of two people who will then become Person A and Person B.
2. If both males and females are in the group, Person A will be female. Person B will be male.
3. Hand out role-playing sheets to each person.
4. Allow 20 minutes for the exercise, moving around the room to observe how people are interpreting their roles.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

PERSON A

Directions: This exercise is meant to provide you with experience in identifying non-verbal clues in another person with whom you are communicating. The other person may "feel" very different about the situation than what he or she is verbalizing. Respond as genuinely as possible as the discussion moves along, acting as you would if it were "real life." See how many non-verbal clues in your partner you can pick up in each situation. Note these in the place provided and then discuss them briefly with your partner before moving on to the next situation.

Situation #1: You and your husband are discussing what needs to be done in redecorating the living room. You are REALLY excited, since he has finally agreed that it probably should be done and it's something that you've wanted for a long time. Show him how grateful you are. Let him know that you would like the whole thing to happen quickly because your mother and father are coming to visit and probably won't visit again for a couple of years. Discuss with your husband the floor-to-ceiling makeover you have planned, the kind of furniture you would like to see in the room, and the stores you want to visit.

CLUES YOU NOTE IN YOUR HUSBAND: _____

SITUATION #2: Your fifteen-year-old son has been getting in later and later, and last night you thought he looked as if he had been drinking. You are concerned that he's getting in with a rough crowd. You feel he is becoming somewhat belligerent and trying to gain more independence than you think he can handle. You approach him about setting a curfew hour that you want him to respect.

CLUES YOU NOTE IN YOUR SON: _____

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

PERSON B

This exercise is meant to provide you with experience in identifying non-verbal clues in another person with whom you are communicating. The other person may "feel" very different about the situation than what he or she is verbalizing. Respond as genuinely as possible as the discussion moves along, acting as you would if it were "real life." See how many non-verbal clues in your partner you can pick up on in each situation. Note these in the place provided and then discuss them briefly with your partner before moving on to the second situation.

Situation #1: You and your wife are discussing what needs to be done in redecorating the living room. You're not very excited about it, to say the least! She has been "nagging" about it for a long time, and you have finally agreed just to get her off your back. You believe the money could be spent differently and would rather see it spent on a new car you feel is needed. However, you haven't brought it up because you think she would "hit the ceiling" if you mention it. Also, you have the uneasy feeling that, economically, you and your wife have not been able to save the money you should on your salary. Your parents have been hinting that they saved something even when money was very tight. You're growing increasingly embarrassed that you haven't.

CLUES YOU NOTE IN YOUR WIFE: _____

Situation #2: You are 15 years old and trying to gain a little bit of independence from your folks. How late you should stay out is getting to be a real problem. Your friends' parents let them decide, but your parents want you to be in at a certain time. Your mother is starting to put pressure on you, and you feel you have to hold your ground or she'll never let you grow up.

CLUES YOU NOTE IN YOUR MOTHER: _____

CAMERA READY HANDOUTS:

Nonverbal Cues That Signal Affection or
Hostility Between People

Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal Cues That Signal Affection or Hostility

Affection

Looking directly at the person
Offering a cigarette, cup of coffee
Having relaxed posture
Smiling
Sitting close to other
Leaning towards other
Making casual physical contact
Taking person's coat
Offering chair
Shaking hands
Exhibiting open facial expression
Giving pat on back
Squeezing hand
Winking
Laughing with the person
Maintaining steady eye contact
Waving
Throwing kiss
Hugging other
Putting arm around other
Kissing
Rubbing arm
Squaring body up toward
other person's

Hostility

Glaring at the person
Refusing to shake hands
Using harsh tone of voice
Physically abusing other
Yawning
Interrupting repeatedly
Sitting relatively far away
Ignoring other person
Looking coldly
Staring
Shaking fist
Laughing at the person
Looking away while listening
Stiffening at a touch
Backing away
Frowning
Using loud angry tone
Shrugging off attempted hug
Clenching fists
Unresponsive looks
Ignoring needs of other
Slamming door
Assumes "fencing" position



NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

1. **Be cautious about assigning too much meaning to a single gesture.** Nonverbal signals are picked up as a behavioral package, each contributing to the final meaning a person gives it.* A person may greet us with a warm smile, but if he or she extends a limp hand of welcome and looks away, we wonder about the sincerity of the smile. Look for the overall pattern. All forms of expression--verbal, postural, facial, and spacial must be considered.
2. **Be sensitive to the space you keep between yourself and others.** Generally, too great a physical distance keeps others psychologically distant also. Make an effort to allow the space between yourself and others to be consistent with your feelings.
3. **Practice letting your face express what you feel inside.** We typically look at another's face first of all. The face is a great message board. Use it to communicate your true feelings.
4. **Make eye contact work to your advantage.** Eye contact is an invisible bridge between people that can help make for better interpersonal connections.
5. **Remember that touch is a powerful means of communication.** The invisible bridge can become a more tangible bridge through the language of touch. If you would like to be perceived as being as friendly as you feel, reach out and touch people more often.

Source: Hamechek, Donald. ENCOUNTERS WITH OTHERS.
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982.

Session III

EFFECTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

SESSION III

EFFECTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

SESSION GUIDE

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GOAL: To increase participants' understanding of and ability to use effective listening skills.

Objectives: Participants will

1. Recognize the importance of effective listening in the process of communication in the family.
2. Recognize environmental and human factors that impact on our ability to listen effectively.
3. Review the skills involved in effective listening.
4. Practice effective and non-effective listening skills in order to develop an appreciation for the difference.

Implementing Objectives: Suggested Format and Time Allowances for Presentation:

1. Provide a warm-up exercise.

Ask participants to mill around the room for a couple of minutes, making sure to pass by everyone present. Greet each person nonverbally. This may be a handshake, a smile, a wink, a hug, or any other nonverbal way they may think of to say hello. They are not to talk at all during this time.

After a few minutes, ask each participant to find someone he/she doesn't know and sit down with that person. (If a participant knows everyone present, he/she should find the person he/she knows least well). Each partner should take three minutes to introduce him/herself to the other, telling something about him/herself.

10 minutes

2. Through the Mini-Lecture, provide information to participants about 1.) The environmental and human factors that impact on our listening ability and 2.) The skills of listening effectively. (Objectives 1, 2, and 3)

40 minutes

3. Provide practice in effective listening through small group exercise. (Objective 4).

30 minutes

4. Wrap up. Share copies of "Guidelines For Improving Your Reflective Listening".

10 minutes

Total time allotted for session:

90 minutes

Materials Needed:

1. Name tags and markers
2. Refreshments
3. Mini Lecture notes
4. Overhead projector and overheads
5. 3 x 5 cards (5 sets of 9 are provided. If larger groups are expected, prepare more ahead.)
6. Handouts and experiential exercise

Camera-Ready Handouts:

What's So Hard About Listening?
Guidelines for Improving Your Reflective Listening

Suggested Background Reading for Leaders:

Bolton, Robert. PEOPLE SKILLS. Prentice-Hall, 1979.
Chapter 3, Listening Is More Than Merely Hearing
Chapter 4, Four Skills of Reflective Listening
Chapter 5, Why Reflective Responses Work



Mini Lecture



MINI LECTURE

EFFECTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

Key Points Contained in This Lecture:

- A. Effective listening within the family supports member adaptation to stressful life events.
- B. Listening includes processes of attending, following, and reflecting.
- C. Reflective listening can help the receiver to see the other's point of view and help the sender by giving him/her opportunities to clear up any misconceptions about what he/she is saying.

The Importance of Listening

As professionals, we can do a great service by modeling good listening skills as we work with families in crisis. It is often the case that in families with chronic problems few people are good listeners. It can be devastating to a relationship to repeatedly attempt to talk with a person about a problem only to realize that the other person is not listening, and that the responses you are hearing are automatic and mechanical. Episodes of this kind of communication break-down can be destructive to marriage and family relationships. The way we listen and respond to families in stress is vital to helping them see different ways of dealing with each other as well as alternative solutions to their problems.

A study of persons of varied occupational backgrounds showed that 70% of their waking moments were spent in communication. Of that 70%, 45% was spent in listening. Since opportunities for listening are so numerous, poor listening is a major cause of miscommunication. The cohesiveness of family relationships, the quality of friendships, and effectiveness at work all hinge on our ability to listen.

Effectively listening to others is not easy. There are many environmental and human factors that make it difficult. **Here, ask audience what they've observed in others and what they've experienced that makes it hard to be a good listener. List these on a board, easel, or newsprint. Then, give each person a handout, What's So Hard About Listening. Before going on with rest of lecture, discuss any that group did not think about.**

Listening skills enable a person to truly understand what is said to. These skills include particular ways of responding so that the other person feels his/her thoughts and feelings have been understood. When these listening strategies are used effectively, people in stress are helped to clarify issues related to the challenge or crisis they are facing, structure alternatives, and develop a plan to act on the problem. Good listeners do not supply ready solutions; they only facilitate the "out-loud" thinking in the other person necessary to move adaptation along. This requires the listener to assume a non-judgemental position, making it safe for the speaker to express what he/she is really feeling without fear of censorship, being made to feel foolish or guilty, or loss of confidentiality.

As we've discussed, poor listening is a barrier to communications among family members. Therefore, any efforts to improve listening can work wonders in human relations. It not only shows you are tuned-in and interested, it also facilitates the speaker so that he/she can get beyond the superficial and really express the important thoughts and feelings of the moment.

The Process of Listening

Listening, a learned behavior, is a complex process that involves three major clusters of skills: attending, following, and reflecting.

Attending skills are those involved in paying close attention to the other person. They include turning toward the speaker, using other appropriate body language, establishing and maintaining eye contact, and maintaining a nondistracting environment. When a husband grunts hello, acknowledging his wife, yet remains deeply involved in reading the newspaper, chances are good he is not listening to his spouse. When a father is telling his teenage son about being careful with the sliding door he just fixed, but the son is distracted by a TV show in the background, we can be sure the son isn't tuned-in to the father's message.

Following skills include using effectively the techniques of "door openers", "minimal encouragements", inappropriate questions, and perhaps most important - silence. Let's look briefly at each one of these.

Door openers are actually invitations to another person who seems to need to talk about something. For example, a husband who suspects his wife is troubled about something could say, "You don't seem like yourself today. Want to talk about it?" A parent suspecting a child has had some trouble at school might ask, "How are things going at school lately?"

Using minimal encouragements is helpful in conversations that tend to be difficult for the speaker, or where the speaker has some reluctance to talk. Examples are: "Tell me more." "Oh?" "I see." "Go on."

One of the primary tasks of a listener is to stay out of the other's way so the listener can discover how the speaker views his situation. Unfortunately, what happens many times is that the conversation is interrupted by questions which focus on the intent and concerns of the listener rather than on the speaker's orientation. When this happens, questions are a barrier to communication because the speaker is diverted. For this reason, infrequent questioning is a following skill to practice. When the listener feels a question is necessary, open, rather than closed, questions are more effective. For example, "Could you tell me more about what you mean?" or "How did you feel about that?" would be more facilitative than questions that simply require a yes or no.

Silence is a skill worth investing time in developing. The use of silence in a conversation is remarkably effective in pursuing and following the meaning carefully. Often, there seems to be an embarrassment about a short pause, and listeners try to fill the gap too readily.

The art of good listening also involves the ability to respond reflectively. Another word for reflecting is paraphrasing. When we listen carefully enough so that we can tell the speaker what he just said in our own words, we are paraphrasing. For example, a husband comes in from working on his car and says, "I just can't understand it. I thought I knew what the problem was." His wife says, "That's really discouraging." She refrains from giving her opinion or making a judgemental comment about what he said. He feels that she has heard him and understands his feelings. He is encouraged to say more. "Right; I put a lot of time into that car and now there's more money we'll have to shell out." Her response is again reflective: "You're worried about the money that we'll have to spend getting it fixed."

This is a skill which takes some practice. It is not easy to do in the beginning because it takes concentration and a good deal of effort to keep from giving our own opinions about what the speaker is saying. It is important to remember that while it may feel awkward and phoney when you first begin to use the method, this feeling fades as you practice and get better at it.

In the example given, the wife listened for the feeling words and nonverbal cues. When she reflected back she summed up his feelings into 'discouraged' and 'worried'. The words she used matched the intensity of feeling she heard in his messages.

Why is Reflective Listening So Useful?

Finding the right words to express what we want to say can be a problem. We are often at a loss to say just what we mean. Listening reflectively helps because it gives the speaker a chance to rephrase and correct the impression of his/her first statement if it is somehow misinterpreted.

Stressed people sometimes code their messages in order to protect their inner thoughts and feelings from being exposed. (**See overhead, "Coding My Message"**). Sometimes it takes a professional to spot the hidden signs of distress and pleas for help in what we are hearing from family members in crisis situations. Decoding is always guesswork and sometimes we guess wrong. Reflective listening makes it easier for the sender to correct our misperceptions.

A speaker may not present the real problem. What we hear may be a series of remarks that have little to do with the real issue. This technique is appropriately called "Beating Around the Bush". The effective listener who suspects this is the case works through this stage by reflecting and waiting for an indication from the speaker that there is a more important problem. Listening reflectively is more likely to encourage the speaker to zero in on the real problem.

A pitfall in using reflective listening is that it is not always appropriate. We need to make wise choices about when it would be helpful and when it isn't necessary. When we "sprinkle" reflective listening around indiscriminately, people can begin to feel they are being "techniqued" rather than listened to. These points are clarified further in a handout I want to share, Guidelines for Improving Reflective Listening. Go through handout with group.

OVERHEADS PROVIDED:

Communication During Our Waking Hours

Negative Body Language (Anger, Anxiety, Opposition)

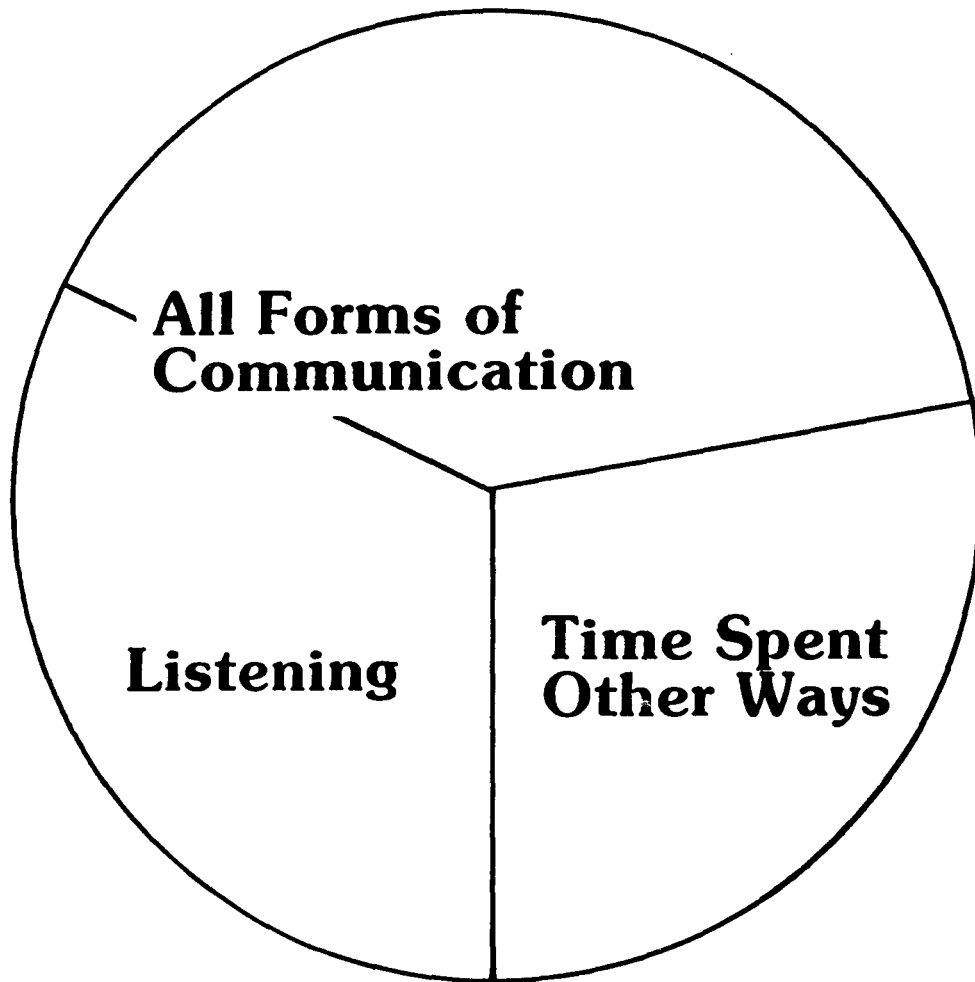
Negative Body Language (Boredom)

Negative Body Language (Distracting)

The Skills of Listening (Following)

The Skills of Listening (Attending)

The Skills of Listening (Reflecting)



Communication During Our Waking Hours

Negative Body Language

Human Beings Signal Anger, Anxiety, or Opposition by:

- **Cold or Clammy Hands**
- **Tightened Jaw**
- **Arms Folded Across Chest**
- **Fencer's Position (side view)**
- **Intense Eye Contact**
- **Perspiring**
- **Tightened Muscles**
- **Hunched Shoulders**
- **Shallow Breathing**
- **Clenched Fists**
- **Altering Interpersonal Distance**



Negative Body Language

Boredom is Indicated by:

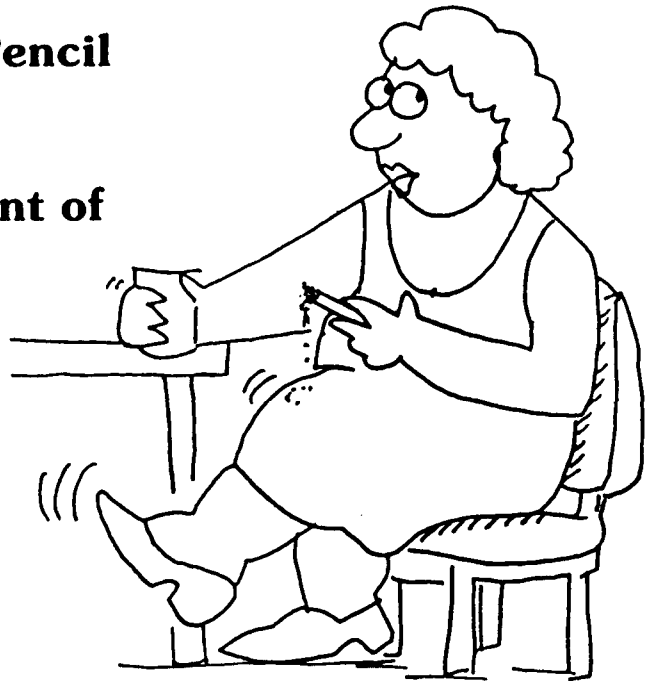
- **Foot Jiggling**
- **Leg Swinging**
- **Finger Tapping**
- **Yawning**
- **Gum Chewing**
- **Smoking**
- **Eating**
- **Knuckle Cracking**
- **Cleaning Nails**
- **Playing with Hair**
- **Handling Objects**
- **Reading**
- **Watching TV**
- **Shifting Positions**
- **Nodding Off**



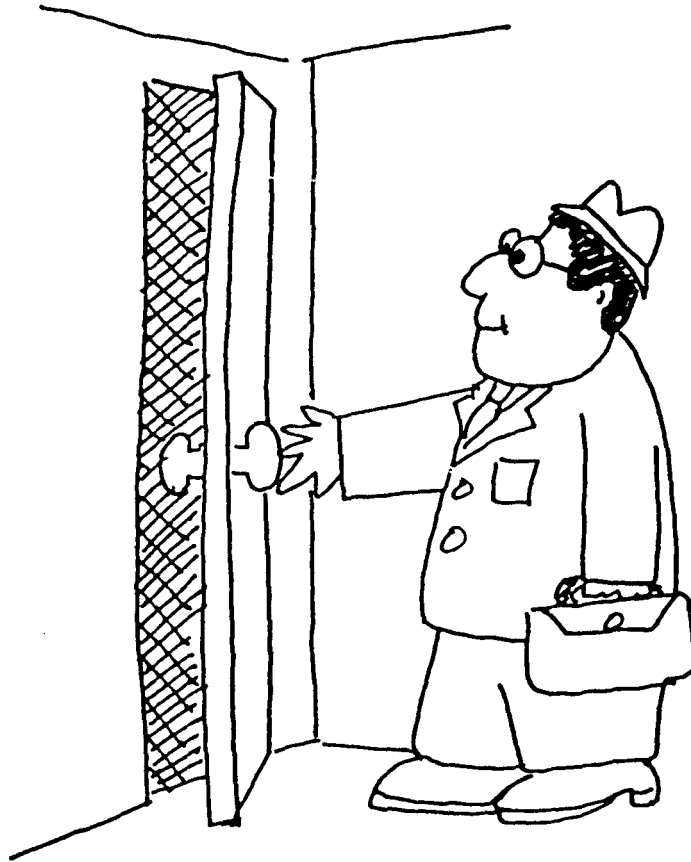
Distracting

People Distract Others by:

- **Lint Picking**
- **Rummaging Through Things**
- **Scratching**
- **Playing with Clothing, Hair, or other Objects**
- **Interrupting**
- **Tapping Fingers, Pencil**
- **Clicking Pens**
- **Rhythmic Movement of Body Parts**
- **Sniffing**
- **Eating; Drinking**
- **Smoking**



Following Skills



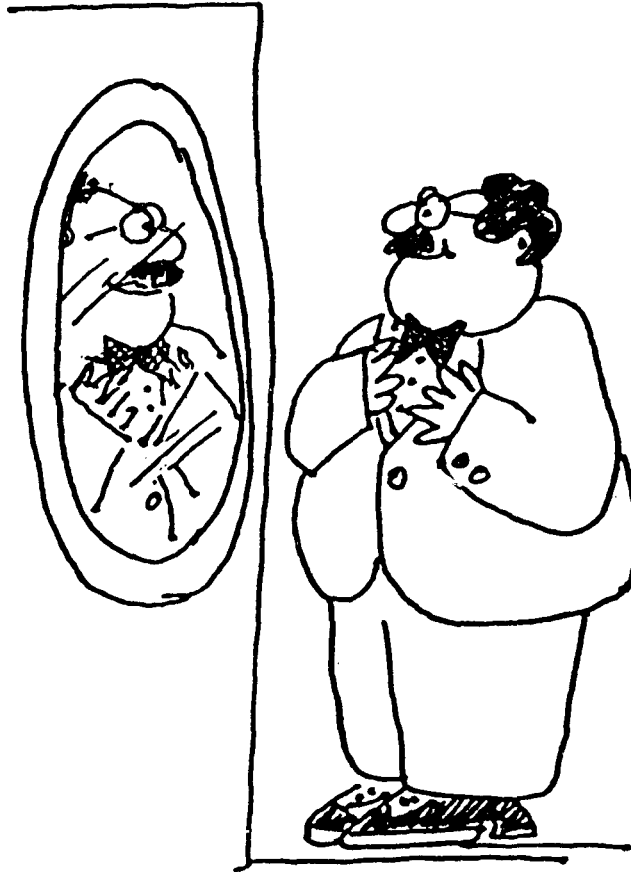
- **Door Openers**
- **Minimal Encourages**
- **Infrequent Questions**
- **Attentive Silence**

Attending Skills



- **A Posture of Involvement**
- **Appropriate Body Motion**
- **Eye Contact**
- **Nondistracting Environment**

Reflecting Skills



- **Paraphrasing**
- **Reflecting Feelings**
- **Reflecting Meanings**
(Tieing Feelings to Content)
- **Summative Reflections**



Group Exercise



Experiential Exercise

"Practicing Listening Skills"

To Leader: The purpose of this exercise is to give participants experience in playing a variety of listening roles.

1. Divide large group into smaller groups of five.
2. Each person in the small group will have experience playing five different listening roles:
 - A. Speaker
 - B. Interrupter
 - C. Reflector
 - D. Door Opener
 - E. Encourager
3. Give each group a set of 9 cards, including 5 Speaker cards, 1 Interrupter, 1 Reflector, 1 Door Opener, 1 Encourager.
4. Have group place 4 Speaker cards face down.
5. Shuffle rest of cards and distribute to group.
6. Person who receives the Speaker card will begin after the Door Opener starts. The rest of the group will play the roles assigned to them. The speaker will talk about the topic indicated on the card for approximately 5 minutes. The Door Opener will watch time.
7. After five minutes, the Door Opener will call time. Everyone is to pass cards to his/her right. The person getting the Speaker card will draw a new Speaker's card from the downturned pile.
8. The group will repeat this exercise until all have had an opportunity to play each role.
9. The last five minutes can be used to discuss the exercise, either in a large or small group format.

To Leader:

These "cards" will be needed for the experiential exercise, "Practicing Listening Skills." You will be dividing the large group into smaller groups of five. Xerox off enough cards to provide each small group (5 people) with a complete set of 9 cards. Have these precut before your meeting

SPEAKER

Your topic is:

Your spouse has told you that he/she is interested in another person and is planning on leaving you.

SPEAKER

Your topic is:

You have received a telephone call from your child's teacher saying that she wants to discuss your son's bullying of smaller children on the playground.

SPEAKER

Your topic is:

You have found out that the solar home you have recently purchased leaks and will need very costly repairs.

SPEAKER

Your topic is:

You have just been told that your application to graduate school has been denied.

SPEAKER

Your topic is:

You have just found out that your spouse has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease.

INTERRUPTER

Interrupt the discussion, asking mostly closed questions that require single yes or no answers.

DOOR OPENER

You have two jobs: 1) to get the discussion rolling by asking the speaker a question. An example might be, "You seem pretty quiet. Anything wrong?" Use a different door opener each time the exercise is played anew.
2) Keep time and signal to group when 5 minutes are up.

ENCOURAGER

Your job is to encourage the speaker to talk about what he/she is thinking and feeling. Remember to do this by using good eye contact and phrases such as, "I see....Oh?....Go on....Tell me more about...."

REFLECTOR

While the speaker describes his/her feelings and thoughts, use reflective statements that paraphrase what the speaker has said or state how you believe the person is feeling. (Example: "That has to be tough to deal with." and "You're worried about taking out a loan.")



CAMERA READY HANDOUTS:

What's So Hard About Listening?

Guidelines for Improving Your Reflective Listening



WHAT'S SO HARD ABOUT LISTENING?

Poor listening skills lead to break-down in communications. Here are some reasons why this may happen:

Distraction

-external preoccupation; neglecting to focus attention on the sender

Self-Consciousness

-internal preoccupation; concerned with own thoughts

Interaction-Consciousness

-focusing on the elements of the conversation instead of what is said

Message Anxiety

-fear about what is going to be said resulting in distortion of what is actually said

Length of Sender's Remarks

-'leakage' -the longer the message, the greater opportunity for inattention to detail, especially about the middle of the message
- 'rounding off' -longer messages tend to be tailored to fit our own needs, that is, we reduce the differences between what we already know (or think we know)and what is being said; ignoring subtle differences

Past Reinforcement for Communication Patterns

-allowing imperfectly transmitted messages to go by without challenge

Hearing What We Expect to Hear

-failing to listen past the first part of the message because we "know" what is going to be said

The 'Halo' Effect

-evaluating or judging what is said according to very simplified categories of agree/disagree, like/don't like, good/bad

Group Pressures and Filtered Listening

-distorting individual interpretations in the direction of the group opinion

Source: Excerpted from Gerard Egan, Encounter: Group Processes for Interpersonal Growth, Wadsworth, 1970.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPROVING YOUR REFLECTIVE LISTENING

Don't fake understanding.

Vary your responses.

Don't tell the speaker, "I know how you feel."

Focus on the feelings.

Choose the most accurate feeling word.

Develop vocal empathy.

Strive for concreteness.

Provide nondogmatic but firm responses.

Reflect the feelings that are implicit in questions.

Reflect the speaker's resources.

Accept that many interactions will be inconclusive.

Reflect during brief interactions.

WHEN TO LISTEN REFLECTIVELY

Before you act.

Before you argue or criticize.

When the other person experiences strong feelings or wants to talk over a problem.

When the other person is speaking in a "code".

When another person wants to sort out his feelings and thoughts.

During a "direct mutual conversation".

WHEN NOT TO USE REFLECTIVE LISTENING

When you are not able to be accepting.

When you do not trust the other to find his own solution.

When you are not "separate" from the other.

When you use listening as a way of hiding yourself.

When you feel very pressured, hassled or depleted.

Source: Bolton, Robert, People Skills. Prentice-Hall, 1979.

Session IV

FIVE VERBAL RESPONSE STYLES

SESSION IV

FIVE VERBAL RESPONSE STYLES

SESSION GUIDE

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GOAL: To enhance participants' understanding and use of the five most common response styles.

Objectives:

1. To differentiate between five response styles commonly used in the communication process.
2. To determine which of the response style(s) he/she feels most comfortable using at the present time.
3. To recognize the impact of each response style on the sender/receiver relationship.
4. To review appropriate and inappropriate uses for each of the response styles.

Implementing Objectives: Suggested Format and Time Allowances for Presentation:

1. Provide a warm-up exercise, "Ways We Are Similar/ Ways We Are Different".

Ask everyone to find a partner that he/she does not know, or doesn't know well. Give each pair a copy of the exercise, and ask each pair to fill out as many things as they can in the next 5 minutes.

For the remaining 5 minutes find out which pair had the most in the similar category. Which has the most in the different category? What kinds of information were people willing to share with each other?

10 minutes

2. Provide time for each participant to fill out the "Listening and Response Styles Questionnaire".

Set it aside. (Objective 2).

15 minutes

3. Provide information about response styles through mini-lecture. (Objectives 1, 3 and 4).

25 minutes

4. Complete group participation exercise. (Objectives 3 and 4).

30 minutes

5. Wrap-up. Elicit comments about the exercise. Provide copies of Handout, "Ways for Interacting: Five Common Response Styles". Go over rules for each style. (Objectives 1 and 4).

10 minutes

Total time allotted for session:

90 minutes

Materials Needed:

1. Name tags and markers
2. Refreshments (Optional but desirable)
3. Warm-up exercise copies and extra pencils
4. Mini Lecture notes
5. Handouts

Camera-Ready Handouts:

- .Ways We are Similar/Ways We are Different
- .Listening and Response Styles Questionnaire
- .Examples of Response Types
- .Identifying the Intent of the Response
- .The Listening and Response Styles Scoring Key
- .Ways for Interacting: Five Common Response Styles
- .Effects of Responses

Suggested Background Reading for Leaders:

Homochek, Donald. ENCOUNTERS WITH OTHERS. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982. Chapter 5, The Psychology And Art of Good Communication Skills.

Bolton, Robert. PEOPLE SKILLS. Prentice-Hall, 1979. Chapter 7, Improving Your Reflecting Skills.

Edited and transcribed tape of EMAT Training, July 1985, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.



Mini Lecture

MINI LECTURE
FIVE RESPONSE STYLES

Key Points Contained in This Lecture:

- A. There are two broad categories of verbal responses: confirming and disconfirming.
- B. The five most commonly used responses are: evaluative, interpretive, supportive, probing and understanding.
- C. Each of the five response styles has an impact on communication and on the relationship between the people.
- D. Each of the five response styles differ in the intention they communicate and are appropriately used in particular situations.
- E. Each response style is neither good nor bad; overuse of any one style can produce problems in communication.

The verbal response styles we use do make a difference, and that difference is most clearly seen in the effect it has on others. What we say, when, and how we say it can have a negative or a positive impact. People can be turned-off or tuned-in to what we say. When we communicate, we do more than simply exchange verbal and nonverbal information. We also convey messages that tell others how we feel about them. Family stress can play havoc with feelings, especially with members whose self esteem is low. The ways we choose to respond to them and the impact of what we say can enhance or detract from self worth, a key to motivation and action.

Two Categories of Responses

Depending on the response we give, we can either "confirm" or "disconfirm" a person. That is, when we use confirming responses, we make that person value himself/herself more. For example, if Helen says: "Boy, managing

these bills is tough! It takes me a week to balance the checkbook." Her husband, Joe, answers with a confirming response, "You can say that again. I used to hate it."

When we use disconfirming responses, we tend to cause the person to value himself/herself less. If, instead of telling Helen, "You can say that again. I used to hate it." Joe had said, "What are you talking about? That's easy stuff." Helen feels really put-down.

A more subtle put-down, but equally damaging, might occur if, instead of responding to Helen's remark, Joe says, "I'm looking for the TV section, have you seen it?" Joe is simply ignoring Helen's expression of frustration.

Five Common Response Styles

Hand out, What Would You Say? Tell participants, "Here's a situation. Look at the responses and choose one that you might use."

"Which responses are confirming? Are there any disconfirming responses? Which ones?"

Research conducted by Carl Rogers and F. J. Roethlisberger to study how people communicate with each other face-to-face identified five response styles commonly used; they made up about 80% of all responses in the studies. The other 20% were individualized and not used frequently enough to make an additional style.

Note to Leader: Good examples of the different response styles as they could be used in response to farm family crisis situations can be found in the edited and transcribed tape of Michigan State University Extension Management Assistance Training, July, 1985, in Background Material Section. If you feel confident about your ability to respond spontaneously, you could have the audience throw out statements that might be heard in a crisis situation. Respond to several, using each response style several times in a row. After each sequence, say all evaluative, have the audience write down feelings they had as you used that particular response style. This is a good method for "hooking" participants into understanding that responses can cause very negative or very positive feelings, even when the situation is not real.

Evaluative Responses

This is a response that indicates we are making a judgment about the goodness, rightness, or appropriateness of another's situation. It frequently tells the other person what he/she ought to do. If overused, it is one that tends to be viewed as disconfirming. Unfortunately, this kind of response is the one used by most people, in most situations.

When Sandra comes to her mother and says, "Mom, I just can't stand school anymore", her mother responds, "You should put more time into doing your homework, maybe then you'd get more out of it." This may be good advice, but Sandra's mother didn't indicate she heard the frustration her daughter expressed. Sandra is turned off and may seek help from someone else, or continue to be even more depressed about her immediate problem.

Even compliments are evaluative. That's why it is difficult for many people to accept one; that is because you are making a judgement about them, and judgements can be negative as well as positive. Evaluative responses are often used too frequently at the beginning of a relationship when their impact on others can be to cause defensiveness.

Interpretive Responses

An interpretive response tells the person what we think the situation really means, or how and why he/she feels as he/she does. It is more of an attempt to interpret the underlying meaning of a situation, rather than to tell the person directly what he/she ought to do about it.

If overused, this kind of response is also viewed as disconfirming. Most people tend to react negatively when someone implies he knows more about them than they do; this tends to make them defensive and discourages them from revealing more thoughts and feelings for fear these will also be analyzed. However, if the relationship between the people is strong already, interpretive responding can be an tool for gaining insights into the situation.

Supportive Responses

This response style helps the other person know he/she is not alone in her/his feelings. It doesn't talk the person out of the feelings; it offers support and reassurance. While there are times when people need to feel reassured as to their value and worth, supportive responses are often ways of saying, "You shouldn't feel as you do." When used too often supportive

comments can encourage the person to dismiss them as phoney and; to feel as if the responder has no idea of the gravity of the situation.

Probing Responses

Probing responses ask questions for various reasons and generally are viewed as confirming to the speaker. However, closed probing responses ask for yes or no answers. They assume the speaker can be rational and provide a real answer at a very emotionally-charged time. Open probing responses encourage answers that may include some thinking about solutions, or taking different points of view. They can lead the speaker into providing more information but also ask him/her to begin looking at alternatives. (For example: "What would you like to have happen the next time?")

Understanding Response

An understanding response tells the person you are trying to understand his/her thoughts and feelings. It paraphrases what the speaker said, can let the sender know you really heard what he/she said, says you are working on understanding the meaning, and tells the sender you are willing to have him/her correct your perceptions of what you heard.

Appropriate Uses of Each Style

Aim for a balance of usage. It was found that people who use one style as much as 40% of the time, are perceived as using that style constantly. The different styles are neither good nor bad, but when they are overused, people tend to stereotype them. For example, the constant evaluator may be viewed as judgemental. The perpetual interpreter may be seen as an intellectual bore, a "know-it-all". The constant supporter may be seen as indiscriminately positive. The ever understanding person may be viewed as wishy-washy, unable to help.

(Share Handouts - Effects of Responses) In the early stages of a relationship, "understanding responses" can indicate an interest in the person and enables the listener to see the other person's perspective. After a level of trust has been established in the relationship, only then are use of "supporting", and "probing responses" appropriate. Support is often effective if the person needs to feel accepted. Probing can help the person see the implication of his statements and get a clear definition of the problem. "Interpretive" and "evaluative responses" are best avoided until later stages of the relationship have been firmly rooted. "Interpretive responses" are one form of confrontation, and tend to make the person

defensive. "Evaluative responses" can be useful under circumstances where the listener wants to disclose his/her own values or attitudes.

Questions for Stimulating Discussion:

1. How do you feel when a person judges you?
2. What is your reaction when a person who doesn't know you well tries to interpret your motives or feelings?
3. How can you use this knowledge of response styles to make your work with stressed families more effective?
4. Is there any one of the styles which is particularly appealing to you? why?

Group Exercise

GROUP PARTICIPATION EXERCISE

To Leader: The purpose of this exercise is to have participants determine which response style they prefer and, perhaps, tend to overuse. Participants will need the Listening and Response Questionnaires they originally completed

Identifying the Intent (supply handouts to group) **15 minutes**

Have the large group break up into smaller groups (of 3 or 4). Pass out copies of "Identifying the Intent of the Response".

Ask each small group to go over the "Listening and Response Style Questionnaire" together and decide which style each of the responses represents, using this sheet for marking their answers. Discuss any differences of opinion.

Questions for Discussion:

Are there any that are difficult to categorize?

Which ones appear to fit into more than one category?

Using the Scoring Key (supply handouts to group) **15 minutes**

Have large group reassemble. Pass out copies of "The Listening and Response Styles Scoring Key".

Have participants score his/her own "Questionnaire" individually, recording only the "most helpful" responses that had been previously chosen. Add the total of each response style used and record totals at bottom.

Questions for Discussion:

Look at the response styles you chose as most helpful to use. Do you notice a pattern in your choices?

How has the above discussion influenced your likelihood of trying one or more of the other styles?



CAMERA READY HANDOUTS:

Ways We are Similar/Ways We are Different

Listening and Response Styles Questionnaire

The Listening and Response Styles Scoring Key



Examples of Response Styles

Identifying the Intent of the Response

Ways for Interacting: Five Common Response Styles

Effects of Responses



WAYS WE ARE SIMILAR/ WAYS WE ARE DIFFERENT

You have only 8 minutes to complete this task. In what ways are the two of you similar? Write down as many as you can think of.

Write down the ways you are different.

Listening and Response Styles Questionnaire

Directions: Assume that in each of the 12 series of statements you are about to read that the person in each instance is talking directly to you. Choose one response of the five associated with each instance that you think you would probably be most helpful and facilitating. Place a plus (+) by that response. Then, choose the one that you feel would probably be least helpful and facilitating. Place a zero (0) by that response.

1. **David.** "I'm determined to be a success, and I know I can do it if I just work hard enough. I may have to work eighteen hours a day and stay chained to my typewriter, but if that's what it takes, I'll do it. My home life and my family may suffer, but it will be worth it in the end. I will be a success, and that's all that matters."
 - a. You seem to be a person who wants badly to succeed at your job. That is understandable, but it may stem from your insecurity about your own competence and ability.
 - b. I guess we all, at some time or other, go through a period where we want to achieve success. Lots of people worry about whether their family will suffer while they work so hard. I'm sure everything will turn out all right for you and your family.
 - c. I think you are right. Hard works always pays off. Keep at it!
 - d. You see yourself as a very ambitious person. Yet you're unsure about whether you want your family to suffer because of the long hours you believe you will have to work in order to be successful.
 - e. Can you tell me a little more about why success is important to you? What will you do when you've achieved this success? Will you be happy? Will it give you all that you want out of life?

2. **Roger.** "I never seem to have enough time to do the things I enjoy. Just as I'm ready to go enjoy a nice game of golf or tennis, my brother reminds me of some writing I need to do, or my wife saddles me with household chores. It's getting harder and harder to have the fun out of life that I expect to have. It's depressing!"
 - a. Wanting to have fun is OK, but don't you think you should do some work too? I certainly wouldn't play golf if I thought that later I would regret not having worked. Life does have responsibilities.
 - b. It's upsetting that your work and household responsibilities are increasing to the extent that you don't have time for the fun and recreation you want.
 - c. Maybe your leisure activities are just a way of getting out of the unpleasant jobs you should do.
 - d. I'm curious. How much time do you spend on your favorite sports?
 - e. You're in a busy time of your life right now. I bet you will have more leisure time as you get older.

3. **Frank.** "I never have any luck with cars. Every car I've ever gotten has been a lemon. Not only have I paid handsomely for the cars, but just when they are out of warranty, something major goes wrong. The car I have now needs a new engine. What's wrong with me? Why should I have all the bad luck?"
 - a. You're wondering if it is your fault somehow that every car you own breaks down and has to have costly repairs. All the money you have to pay for car repairs depresses and angers you.
 - b. Your anger about the poor quality of the cars you have owned is being turned against yourself and experienced as depression. Aren't the companies that made the cars to blame?
 - c. What kind of cars do you buy? How many cars have you owned?
 - d. Everyone has bad luck sometimes. I'm sure the next car you own will be more reliable. It's really not your fault the cars have turned out to be lemons. No one can tell how much repair a car will need when he first buys it.
 - e. You're always buying foreign cars. What you need is an American car that has a good warranty.

4. **Edythe.** "My older brothers pick on me constantly. They are always telling me what to do. I get pretty tired of their always harping at me to stand up straight or checking out my dates before I go out. What's worse, they tell things about me that are embarrassing. I've complained to my mother, and she tells them to stop, but they just keep on."
- How often do you have serious talks with your brothers? Have you tried telling them how you feel?
 - You feel angry at your brothers because they pick on you, tell you what to do, are inconsiderate of your feelings, and want to pass judgment on your choice of dates, is that it? And you also feel helpless to change the situation, don't you?
 - I think you ought to be more understanding of your brothers. After all, they would not do it if they did not care about you.
 - Relax. Older brothers often act like that for a while. It's traditional. Once they see you have grown up, they will get off your back.
 - You resent being treated like a child. Part of establishing your independence as a person is feeling angry at people who don't treat you like an adult.
5. **Helen.** "When I was younger, I used to fight my parents because I wanted to get married. Now I'm married and I keep thinking of how good it was to be single and have no responsibilities to tie me down. I can't go anywhere without a bunch of kids clinging to me. It's rough, and there's nothing I can do about it."
- I understand how you feel. I often feel that way too. But before long your children will grow up and then you will have all the freedom you want.
 - Let's explore how you arrange your time. How often do you wish to go somewhere without your children? How often do you hire babysitters?
 - You feel resentful and trapped because being married and having children don't allow you the freedom to go places and do things when you want to.
 - You say you fought your parents to get married. Now you feel resentful about the loss of freedom. Could it be that you are really angry at your parents for not stopping you from getting married in the first place?
 - Sounds to me as if you are stuck. You will just have to put up with the situation until your children are grown.
6. **Keith.** "I'm really depressed. I have a good job and I make an adequate salary, but I'm not happy. I guess working is not all it is cracked up to be. I have some money saved. I did not do too well in school before, but maybe I will quit work and go back to school. I don't know what I should do."
- How long have you felt this way? Have the feelings just started recently, or have you always felt depressed about what you were doing?
 - In other words, you're depressed and puzzled because your job isn't fulfilling, but school wasn't either, and they are the only two alternatives you see yourself as having.
 - Depression is often anger turned against oneself. Perhaps you're angry at yourself for not feeling fulfilled by what you are doing.
 - If you didn't do so well in school before, you probably won't do any better now. You should be satisfied with having a good job; many people don't you know.
 - Lots of people have trouble making up their minds. There are a lot of people who don't like their jobs and who really don't want to go back to school. You don't need to feel depressed.

7. **Dale.** "I wish I could find a way to finish college without going to classes. I register each quarter, intending to go, but I get sidetracked and end up dropping out. I've been enrolled for six years. My parents would kill me if they knew how many credits I need to graduate!"
- It sounds as if you're just wasting time and money. You should probably just stop trying to go to school and get a good job instead.
 - You feel guilty because you keep letting your parents think you are trying to finish college when in fact you are doing other things. It bothers you not to meet their expectations.
 - Possibly if you tell me a little more about how you get sidetracked and what it is that you do while being sidetracked, we can get a clearer idea about what is involved.
 - Many people have trouble finishing college. It's not unusual. Maybe you should quit. Your parents will understand if you explain things to them.
 - Let's see if I understand you correctly. You're upset because you can't seem to finish college even though your parents really want you to, and you're worried about how they would react if you quit going to school. Right?
8. **David.** "All this work is driving me crazy! It seems as if I spend every waking moment working. I don't have any time to relax with my friends and family. No matter how hard I work I never seem to get caught up. I have so many responsibilities. I don't know how I'm going to get everything done."
- Don't feel so bad. I'm sure that if you just keep at it, you'll get things done and have the leisure you need.
 - You're obviously trying to do too much. What you need to do is cut down on your commitments so you'll have more free time.
 - You feel frustrated and angry that your work doesn't get finished and you can't enjoy your family and friends more; you work hard, but your responsibilities always seem to increase faster than your ability to meet them.
 - Can you tell me more about the specific nature of your responsibilities, the way you schedule your time, and how you acquire new responsibilities?
 - How you spend your time probably reflects your true values. Perhaps you prefer your work over your family and friends. Could it be that you consider your work more important than enjoying life?
9. **Roger.** "I never seem to get anywhere on time. I don't know why. People bug me about it and sometimes they get pretty angry. I try to keep a schedule, but it never seems to work out. I have an important golf game coming up and I'm afraid I'm going to be late for it. I don't know what to do to change."
- In other words, you feel frustrated with yourself because you always seem to be late and somewhat worried about the way other people react to your lateness.
 - I'm wondering if you have investigated ways of managing your schedule more effectively. How often are you late? Are there some things you are always late for and other things you are never late for?
 - You are obviously not very organized, and of course people will be angry when you treat them with such inconsiderateness. Perhaps you should ask someone more punctual to pick you up when you have an important engagement.
 - I really wouldn't worry. Being late is not so bad. I'm sure that no one is really angry about such a little thing as arriving late.
 - Being late is sometimes caused by passive-aggressiveness, where you want to punish other people but also are afraid to take responsibility for your actions.

10. **Frank.** "I just never seem to have any money. I have a good-paying job, but it seems as soon as I get my pay check, it's gone. Then I have to scrimp and save the rest of the month. Now my car needs a new engine and I don't know where I'm going to get the money to pay for it."
- Tell me more about how you manage your money. Have you tried budgeting? What are your major expenses?
 - You're feeling depressed on account of your chronic lack of money and your unsureness of how you are going to pay for your needed car repairs.
 - You may be wasting money on nonessentials. I think if you tried keeping a budget, you would be able to manage much better.
 - I'm sure the money for your new car engine will turn up. Don't worry. You have always managed in the past.
 - Depression such as you are experiencing often comes from a feeling of being helpless to solve your problems. Once you feel that you have some control over your financial problems, you'll feel better.
11. **Edythe.** "I just hate to bring my dates home to meet my family. I don't mind my boyfriends meeting my parents, but I wish there was some way to keep my older brothers out of the act. The way they give my dates the third degree scares my dates away. It's embarrassing."
- Embarrassment is often caused by older siblings, especially when they view you as a little girl. We have to plan to get them to see you as an adult and start treating you as one.
 - It sounds as if they are pretty inconsiderate. Most people have siblings who embarrass them at some point, but your brothers sound as if they are really out of line.
 - Just wait. I bet that soon you will meet someone who won't be scared off by your brothers.
 - You feel angry about the way your brothers embarrass you by questioning your boyfriends, and you want to avoid such situations while at the same time allowing your parents to meet your dates.
 - Just what do your brothers do to your dates? What specific questions do they ask?
12. **Frances.** "I don't know about my children. David works too hard, Roger plays too much, Frank is always broke, Edythe married someone none of us have met, Helen got married too early, Keith quit school to work and now wants to quit work to go to school, and Dale isn't close to graduating after six years of college. You do your best and look how they turn out! It's enough to make a person give up."
- You are worried about your children and yet feel helpless to change them. Each child seems to have some problem and you are unsure how well their lives will turn out.
 - Can you explain further how you feel about your children?
 - Don't worry. I'm sure they will turn out all right. All parents must worry about their children some time or another.
 - Tell your children to straighten out. Either they listen to their mother or else they aren't worth talking to.
 - You have certain expectations for each of your children, and they aren't living up to what you expect. These expectations are upsetting you.

The Listening and Response Styles Scoring Key

This scoring key identifies which of the five response styles--(a) Evaluating and advising, (b) Interpreting and analyzing, (c) Supporting and reassuring, (d) Probing and questioning, (e) Understanding and paraphrasing--are associated with each of the responses on the questionnaire. Please score your responses and enter the frequency of your responses in the "frequency of response" section on the bottom of this page.

<i>Item</i>	a	b	c	d	e
1.	<i>I</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>P</i>
2.	<i>E</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>S</i>
3.	<i>U</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>E</i>
4.	<i>P</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>I</i>
5.	<i>S</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>E</i>
6.	<i>P</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>
7.	<i>E</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>U</i>
8.	<i>S</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>I</i>
9.	<i>U</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>I</i>
10.	<i>P</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>I</i>
11.	<i>I</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>P</i>
12.	<i>U</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>I</i>

<u>Response</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Evaluative	_____
Interpretative	_____
Supportive	_____
Probing	_____
Understanding	_____

0 - 3 Low Usage

4 - 7 Medium Usage

8 - 12 High Usage

Examples of Response Types

Here are some typical ways people respond to others.

Evaluative Responses (E)

I think what you should do is
You ought not worry about
I think you should listen to
You should learn to
You shouldn't get so upset over

Interpretive Responses (I)

You're thinking that way because
The reason you're saying that is
You're thinking along those lines because
You're hoping for
You're wishing that
You believe that

Supportive Responses (S)

Keep your chin up.
Look at the bright side.
Give him a chance, he'll come around.
Things are going to get better.
Don't give up.

Probing Responses (P)

Why do you think that's so?
Why do you feel so ?
Why did that happen?
What kind of plan do you have to ?
How do you feel when ?

Understanding Responses (U)

You're so upset about
Sometimes you're so angry you feel like
When you feel _____ it is difficult to _____
You're really down.
You feel happiest when

IDENTIFYING THE INTENT OF THE RESPONSE

Directions: Now that you have some understanding of how each of the five response styles are used, read each of the 5 responses for each situation and identify the kind of response used by marking:

- E FOR EVALUATIVE (JUDGEMENT)
- I FOR INTERPRETIVE (TELLING THE MEANING)
- S FOR SUPPORTIVE (REASSURING)
- P FOR PROBING (QUESTIONING)
- U FOR UNDERSTANDING (PARAPHRASING)

<i>Item</i>	a	b	c	d	e
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Wife: "My husband and I don't get along very well anymore. We used to be so close, but the job and all the money problems are really pulling us apart."

RESPONSES:

1. You should try to understand him more.
2. You're thinking this way because you're worried the problem may be more than money.
3. Things are bound to get better.
4. What kinds of money problems?
5. You're really upset that these things are changing your relationship.

Ways for Interacting: Five Common Response Styles

The five most common ways in which people respond to each other have been identified as:

1. **Evaluating/ Advising**
2. **Interpreting/ Analyzing**
3. **Supporting/ Reassuring**
4. **Probing/ Questioning**
5. **Understanding/ Paraphrasing**

Each of these response styles:

- communicates certain intentions
- can be helpful in facilitating an ongoing dialogue
- can facilitate solving problems and gaining insights

None of these response styles:

- can be labeled as bad when used appropriately
- can be called ineffective when used appropriately

Some of these response styles:

- are more helpful than others in building open relationships
- are better for helping others explore feelings and thoughts.

Evaluating/Advising (E)

- Makes a judgement about the relative goodness, appropriateness, effectiveness, or rightness of the sender's problem.
- Is the most frequently used response.
- Implies what the sender ought or should do.

Impact on sender:

When people feel like they're being evaluated, they tend to feel threatened and defensive because giving advice and passing judgment often communicates that the receiver is assuming his judgment is superior to that of the sender. People with problems are often feeling a sense of inferiority and reduced self-worth. Quick easy answers can make the sender feel even more inferior.

General Rule For Using Evaluative Responses:

Avoid evaluating and advising in the early stages of a relationship. Other responses can be more helpful.

Interpreting/Analyzing (I)

- Communicates intentions to teach or tell the sender what his/her problem really means.
- Tells the sender how the sender feels about the situation; imparts some psychological knowledge to the sender.
- Intends to point out some hidden reason that makes the sender behave as he/she does.

Impact on sender:

Most people tend to react negatively when someone implies that he knows more about them than they do. It tends to make them defensive and discourages them from revealing more thoughts and feelings for fear these will also be analyzed. People usually respond better when you help them think about themselves and their feelings than if you try to figure out what causes

them to do the things they do. It also frees you from having to be an expert about everyone's behavior.

General Rule For Using Interpretive Responses:

Avoid the temptation to interpret and analyze, particularly in the early stages of a relationship. Rather, spend more time listening.

Supporting/Reassuring (S)

- Indicates that the receiver wants to be supportive and sympathetic usually by reducing the intensity of the sender's feelings.
- Frequently end up communicating a lack of interest or understanding.

Impact on sender:

While there are times when people need to feel reassured as to their value and worth or supported in their reactions and feelings, support and reassurance are often ways of saying, "You should not feel as you do."

General Rule For Using Supportive Responses:

Do not reassure a person that "things are not so bad" when they really are. Do reassure a person that you'll try to help however you can.

Probing/Questioning (P)

- Reflects a desire for more information or to guide the discussion along certain lines in order to help both understand the problem better.
- Can be open or closed: open probing encourages people to answer in more detail while closed probing requires a yes or no answer.

Impact on sender:

Open questions encourage people to share more personal feelings and thoughts, while at the same time show an active interest in people's circumstances and problems.

General Rule For Using Probing Responses:

Ask open questions. Avoid "why?" questions particularly during the early phases of a new relationship. They have a tendency to make people feel defensive because they feel forced to give rational explanations for their behavior or for situations they may not fully understand.

Understanding/Paraphrasing (U)

- Indicates an intent to understand the sender's thoughts and feelings.
- Paraphrases what the sender has just said in the receiver's own words.

Impact on sender:

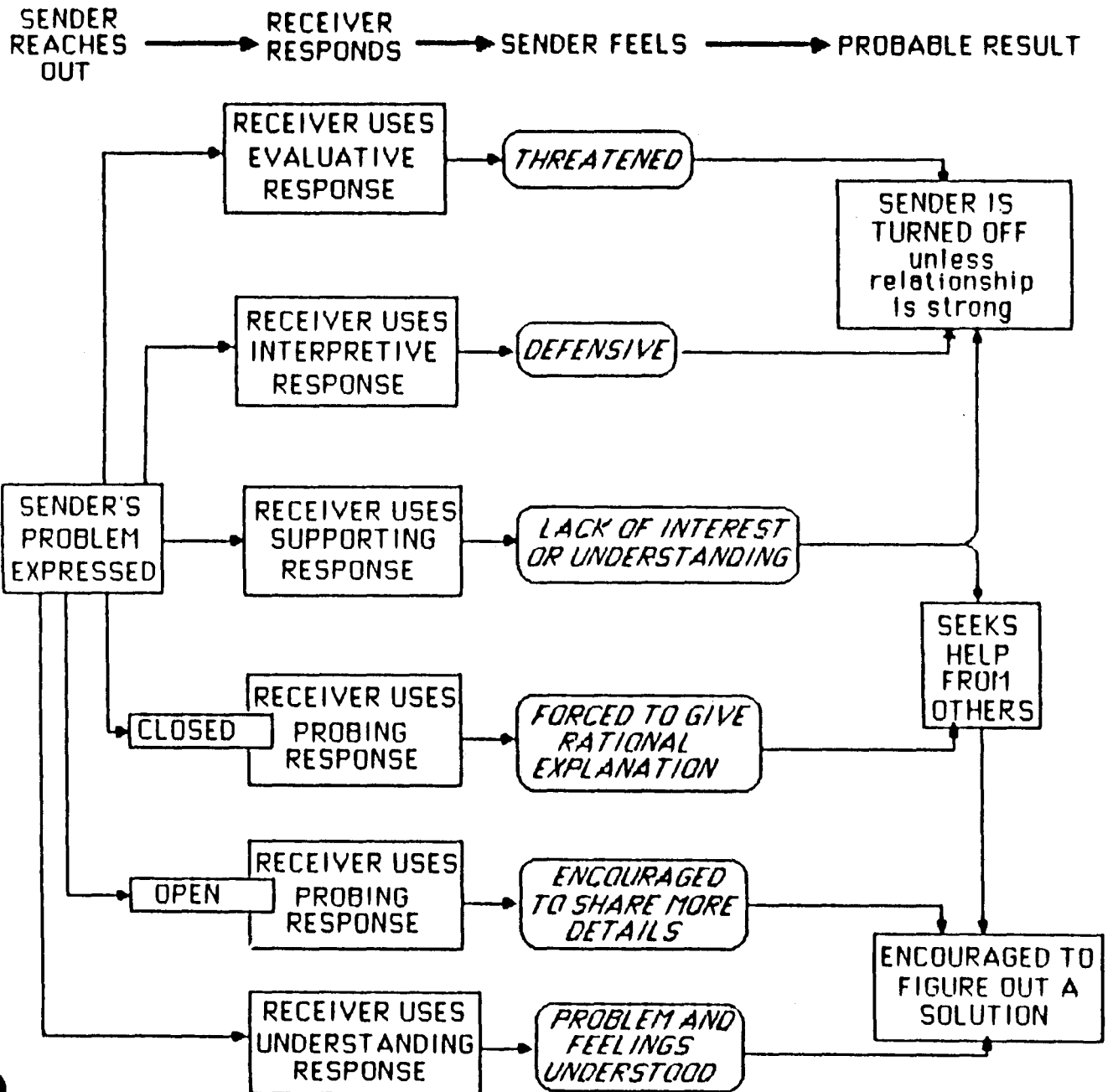
Understanding responses let the sender know you really heard him/her, show sender that you're actively working to understand, which can be very reassuring, and indicate to sender that you're checking out your understanding of what you heard in order to verify it.

General Rule For Using Understanding Responses:

Use as many understanding statements as you can in the early phases of a relationship. They help people feel that you're interested, that you're not judging or evaluating them, and that you are actively listening to them.

Effects of Responses

Each response can be effective in facilitating dialogue. However some of the responses are more helpful than others in building open relationships and in helping others look for solutions to problems.



Session V

**EGO STATES: UNDERSTANDING
COMMUNICATION TRANSACTIONS**

SESSION V

EGO STATES: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION TRANSACTIONS

SESSION GUIDE

CONTENTS IN THIS UNIT:	PAGE
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G. OVERHEADS	V - 14
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GOAL: To acquaint participants with the concept of ego states and the powerful manner in which they influence the communication transactions between two or more individuals.

OBJECTIVES;

1. To introduce participants to ego state terminology.
2. To help participants identify the voice patterns and body language that provide clues in detecting specific ego states.
3. To provide participants with practice in constructing an egogram.
4. To have participants become more knowledgeable about complementary and uncomplementary (crossed) transactions.
5. To enhance participants' ability to analyze complementary and uncomplementary transactions.

IMPLEMENTING OBJECTIVES: SUGGESTED FORMAT AND TIME ALLOWANCES FOR PRESENTATION:

1. Complete warm-up exercise, "People I Know." 10 minutes
2. Mini-Session #1. Provide information about the five different ego states, supplying examples of the kinds of voice patterns and body language that accompany each (Objectives 1 and 2). 20 minutes
3. Have participants work in groups of two to complete experiential exercise #1, "Completing an Egogram" (Objective #3). 20 minutes
4. Mini-Session #2. Provide information about complementary and uncomplementary or crossed transactions (Objective #4). 15 minutes
5. Hand out activity sheet, "Analyzing Communication Transactions." Again, working in groups of two, have participants move through each set of transactions, analyzing which ego states are involved in the transactions and whether the transaction set is complementary or uncomplementary (Objective #5). 10 minutes
6. Bring participants back to large-group structure. Discuss answers to activity (Objective #5). 10 minutes
7. Wrap up. Share handouts with participants. 5 minutes

TOTAL TIME ALLOTTED FOR WORKSHOP: 90 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Name tags and markers
2. Refreshments
3. Warm-up activity handout, "People I Know"
4. Mini-Lecture notes #1 (Ego States) and #2 (Complementary and Uncomplementary Transactions)
5. Overhead projector and overheads
6. Group exercises:
 - a. Constructing an Egogram
 - b. Analyzing Communication Transactions
7. Extra pencils or pens
8. Handouts:
 - a. Ego State Identification Chart
 - b. Response Styles and Ego State Corollaries

OVERHEADS PROVIDED:

.NURTURING PARENT	.FIVE EGO STATES
.CRITICAL PARENT	.EGO STATE PAIRS #1
.ADULT	.EGO STATE PAIRS #2
.ADAPTED COMPLIANT CHILD	.CRITICAL PARENT AND ADAPTED
.EGO STATE HOOKERS	CHILD

CAMERA-READY ACTIVITY SHEETS AND HANDOUTS:

- A. Warm-up Activity, "People I Know"
- B. Experiential Exercise #1, "Constructing an Egogram"
- C. Handout #1, "Ego State Identification Chart"
- D. Experiential Exercise #2, "Analyzing Communication Transactions"
- E. Handout #2, "Response Styles and Ego State Corollaries"

SUGGESTED BACKGROUND READING FOR LEADERS:

Hamachek, D. ENCOUNTERS WITH OTHERS. Chapter 5. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982.

Warm-Up Exercise

WARM-UP EXERCISE

PEOPLE I KNOW

TO LEADER: Run off half-page copies of the exercise. Have participants work in groups of two. Spend approximately 10 minutes on the exercise.

PEOPLE I KNOW

COMPARE NOTES WITH YOUR NEIGHBOR. WITHOUT USING ANYONE'S NAME, TELL ONE ANOTHER ABOUT:

- a) The most nurturing person you know. Give an example.
 - b) The most critical person you know. Why do you think this?
 - c) The most adult-acting person you know. What is one thing this person does that constitutes "adult-like" behavior?
 - d) Someone who is a lot of fun to be around. Why?
 - e) The most rule-oriented person you know. Give an example.
 - f) An adult you know who always wants to get his or her way. Why do you think this about that person?
-

PEOPLE I KNOW

COMPARE NOTES WITH YOUR NEIGHBOR. WITHOUT USING ANYONE'S NAME, TELL EACH OTHER ABOUT:

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- d) Someone who is a lot of fun to be around. Why?
- e) The most rule-oriented person you know. Give an example.
- f) An adult you know who always wants to get his or her way. Why do you think this about that person?

Mini Lecture # 1

EGO STATES: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION TRANSACTIONS

MINI-LECTURE #1 - EGO STATES

Key points contained in this lecture:

- A. Differences in personality can cause communication difficulties interpersonally.
- B. There are three major ego states in individuals: Parent, adult, and child.
- C. When one of these ego states dominates the others on a consistent basis, an individual may experience interpersonal problems.
- D. We can learn to strengthen our underdeveloped ego states in order to become more effective communicators.

Most people, at one time or another, have trouble with interpersonal relationships. A brother or sister really begins to irritate them. They may have trouble talking with a boss...or want to be a better parent...or a more understanding husband or wife. While small problems can sometimes be ignored for a while, continuing irritations in relationships need to be addressed so that they don't develop into more serious problems. This becomes even more critical when people must work together in trying to resolve a stressful situation.

One of the ways we can improve our understanding of other people and of ourselves is to become familiar with how differences in personality, i. e., ego states, operate in communication transactions between people. The concept of ego states grew out of Eric Berne's (see E. Berne, TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS IN PSYCHOTHERAPY, New York: Grove Press, 1961) ideas about personality and interpersonal communication. He called his approach "Transactional Analysis," or T. A. An important aspect of this approach was "structural analysis" or, more simply, studying individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behavior based on the way they send and receive messages.

Berne believed that all of us have three major ego states within us that can be directly observed; he called them the PARENT, the ADULT, and the CHILD. These states are consistent patterns of related thoughts, feelings, and actions. Some psychologists have expanded these three ego states into five: CRITICAL PARENT, NURTURING PARENT, ADULT, FREE CHILD, AND ADAPTED CHILD. Robert Fetsch, an Extension Specialist with the University of Kentucky describes these states as follows:

CRITICAL PARENT

The Critical Parent (CP) ego state is one of the five ego states available to you. For example, you might tell someone, "Leave me alone!" You are probably thinking something like: "I want to be by myself right now" or "I don't like him (or her)." At the same time, you might feel angry and act in such a way that indicates that you want to be left alone. Your voice may be assertive, condescending, or stern, and you might accompany what you are saying by frowning or pounding on the table. When you think, feel, and act in such a manner, you are using your critical parent. This ego state is the part of yourself that you inherited from authority figures when you were too little to think about protecting yourself from dangerous situations. So, you copied the actions of your parents or caretakers. This explains why today you look and sound just like they did when you were little. Take note of who you sound like when you talk to someone else in a tense situation. Chances are that you look and sound very similar to the way your parents or caretakers looked and sounded when they used their Critical Parent with you. You might even sound like a coach, police officer, or drill sergeant.

Besides using Critical Parent with others, you can use it against yourself. You might criticize yourself by thinking, "I should be friendlier, more patient with other people, thinner, more articulate when I want to say something...."

There is both a negative and a positive Critical Parent. Negative Critical Parent is bossy, cynical, fault-finding and demanding. Positive Critical Parent is assertive, persistent, outspoken, and determined.

NURTURING PARENT

Another ego state is the Nurturing Parent (NP). Just like it sounds, this is the part of your personality that takes care of yourself and others, like a

good, caring parent does of a small baby. When you listen attentively as a fellow employee tells you about his or her job dissatisfaction, you are using your Nurturing Parent. Whenever you are empathetic, encouraging, or supportive to someone else, your Nurturing Parent is high. Physicians, nurses, and therapists often use this ego state in their careers.

You can express your nurturance either positively or negatively. People who rescue others when they do not need rescuing and who keep others dependent upon them are using their Nurturing Parent in a negative manner. "Rescuers" are often complaining, soft-hearted, or prudish. On the other hand, people who use their Nurturing Parent in a positive manner might be described as kind, considerate, patient, praising, and understanding.

ADULT

The Adult (A) is the computer part of yourself. "What time is it?" "2:30 p.m." Any time you ask for and give straight facts, i. e., how...when...what...who, you use your adult. This ego state is matter-of-fact and logical. It lacks feelings. When our Adult ego state is high, we are calm, rational, and clear-thinking. Our voice will reflect this. Often, news reporters, weathermen, and data processors have a highly developed Adult ego state.

FREE CHILD

When you are in your Free Child (FC) ego state, you sound childlike, soft, loud, spontaneous, or uncensored. You might use words such as Wow! I won't! I want...phooey...nuts. This is the part of you that wants what you want when you want it! When you are in your Free Child ego state, you are more spontaneous, imaginative, uninhibited, natural, sexy, curious, or spunky. You giggle or have a good belly laugh more easily. Having a high Free Child is of value to artists, clowns, comedians, and other fun-loving people.

ADAPTED CHILD

All of us have learned to adapt to the needs of society. This is why you practice such rituals as saying "please" and "thank you" and ask questions like, "Did I do okay?" This is why you agree to drive your car or truck on the right side of the street in America and on the left side of the street in Britain. As a society, we get along better by agreeing to adapt to certain rules and regulations. Successful secretaries, enlisted men, and maids

have a highly developed Adapted Child ego state.

Adapted Child has both positive and negative aspects. People who are described as civilized, mannerly, cooperative, self-controlled or pleasant have developed positive aspects of their Adapted Child. Those who are described as overly compliant, moody, withdrawn, manipulative, defensive, stubborn, or rebellious have developed negative aspects. If you are accustomed to getting your way with others by pouting, by being defiant, or by having temper tantrums, you are using negative aspects of your Adapted Child.

EGO STATE HOOKERS

Many of us have trouble communicating with someone with whom we live or work. By drawing egograms of yourself and other, you can gain some clues as to what is going on between you. More importantly, you can gain some insights into how to be more effective both in relating to others and in avoiding being hooked by them.

HERE ARE SOME EGO STATE HOOKERS:

1. Helpless Adapted Child-Nurturing Parent
2. Rebellious Adapted Child-Critical Parent
3. Adult-Adult
4. Nurturing Parent-Free Child
5. Critical Parent-Adapted Compliant Child
6. Free Child-Free Child or Critical Parent

Have you ever had a 16-year-old (or a two-year-old) drive you right up the wall with his or her rebelliousness? If so, you have experienced being hooked. He or she hooked your Critical Parent by using Adapted Child. Watch out! If you habitually use your Critical Parent with him or her, you will get hooked often. It works almost every time.

Examples of ego state hookers are as follows:

1. If you use your helpless Adapted Child ("Gee, I'm so mixed up, I don't know what to do!"), you are likely to hook someone's Nurturing Parent ("Do this...").
2. If you use your rebellious Adapted Child ("You can't make me do it your way!"), you are likely to hook someone's Critical Parent ("Oh yeah? Do it my way or hunt for another job! Do it my way or no allowance...").

3. If you use your Adult ("How do I get to Paducah from here?"), you are likely to hook someone's Adult ("Go west on Parkway.").
4. If you use your Nurturing Parent ("You look upset! Tell me what happened!"), you are likely to hook someone's Adapted Child ("ah, gee, I dunno. No matter what I do, it doesn't turn out...").
5. If you use your Critical Parent ("Sit down and be quiet!"), you are likely to hook someone's Adapted Child - either compliant ("Okay.") or rebellious ("Bet you can't make me.").
6. If you use your Free Child ("Why don't we all go to the ice cream parlor and I'll treat everybody to an ice cream!"), you are likely to hook someone's Free Child ("Yippeel!"), or Nurturing Parent ("Are you sure you can afford it?") or Critical Parent ("I thought you were on a diet!").

So, if you are working with a rebellious person, and you notice that usually you come across with your Critical Parent, you might try switching to a different ego state. You might ask a thinking question without emotion from your Adult (probe) in an effort to hook his or her Adult. Or you might come from your spontaneous, energetic Free Child and see if you can hook his or her Free Child or Nurturing Parent.

Likewise, if you are giving a presentation and people look bored and disinterested, you might shift energy into your Free Child by suggesting that everyone stand up, stretch, and make various "stretching noises." Often, this will enliven group members by getting them to shift energy from Adapted Child to Free Child, particularly if you follow the stretching exercise with a group discussion about a relevant topic.

In short, if you notice that you are not getting the kind of response you want from others, you might experiment with alternative options by planning ahead what you could say or do from each of your five ego states. This is a way to increase your effectiveness in communicating with and relating to others.

Source of mini-lecture: Robert J. Fetcsch, Extension Specialist in Human Development and Family Relationships. Managing your Relationships with Egograms. University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service. H. E. 7-108.

Experiential Exercise # 1

Experiential Exercise #1

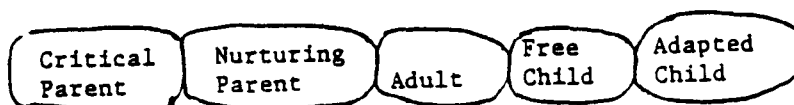
CONSTRUCTING AN EGOGRAM*

Before constructing your own egogram and that of someone in your immediate family or work setting, practice constructing one by reading the following case studies and then determining what part of that person's ego state you believe is dominant. Draw a vertical column over the appropriate ego state (this will be the highest column). Next, record your "hunch" about which ego state is probably the lowest in that person by drawing is as the lowest column. Then, fill in the remaining three columns according to clues given in the case study. Work with the person next to you if you wish.

Dora Doormat



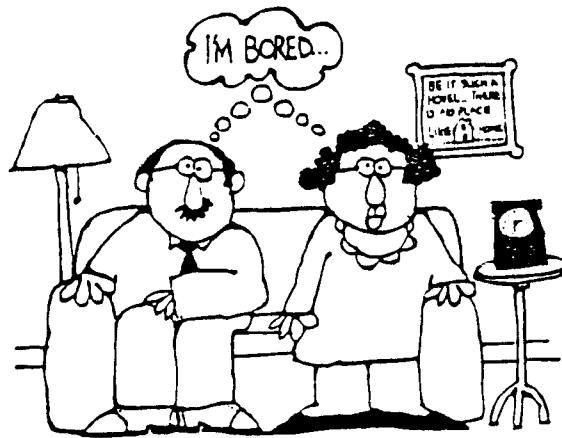
Dora was an unassertive person who never said "no" to anyone when asked to do something. She felt out of touch with her children and her husband and often felt taken advantage of by them, though she rarely expressed her dissatisfaction. This left her feeling depressed and isolated. Because she wanted her children's love, she often wavered in her discipline and tolerated their disobedience and disrespect, thinking that later on, when they were older, they would understand "where she was coming from." Though she saw herself as a walked-on doormat, she was not sure what she could do about it.



Dora Doormat's Egogram

Constructing an Egogram - Page two

Egograms are as unique to different people as are fingerprints. Probably no two are alike. In fact, there is no perfect egogram. Depending on your roles and career, you might choose to develop certain ego states more than others at different times in your life. Nevertheless, it would be unfortunate to have little or no energy in a particular ego state because you would then have fewer options for relating to others. In addition, if one of your ego states totally dominates the others, you are likely to have a "skewed" personality. Consider here the Budds.....



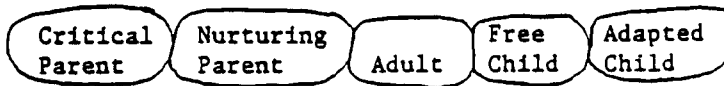
The Budds have been married for twenty-two years. During that time, their relationship has developed into one that is platonic but not very exciting. Henry, an elementary school teacher, has a well-developed ability to work with troubled children. He is feeling terribly bored at home. Erma is considered to be an excellent wife and mother and has contributed time to delivering "meals-on-wheels" to the elderly, an activity she is secretly tired of. She is afraid to express her feelings about this because everyone has reinforced her for being such "a caring person." Feeling depressed and constantly bored, she finds herself somewhat jealous of her husband's success and has become increasingly resentful of his growing work attachment.

Constructing An Egogram - Page three

To Do:

1. Construct Henry Budd's egogram (downward) and Erma Budd's egogram (moving upward).
2. Place a check on the ego states that seem out of balance for the Budds. Why do you believe too much energy is being poured into that state?
3. Which ego states appear to be "undernourished"?
4. Being able to shift energy into other ego states is the secret to providing balance to our own "egograms." Name several suggestions for the Budds.

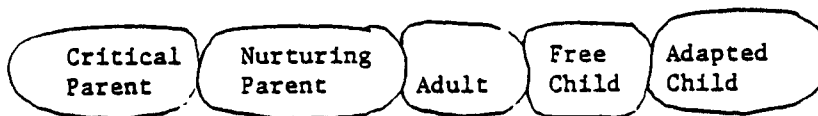
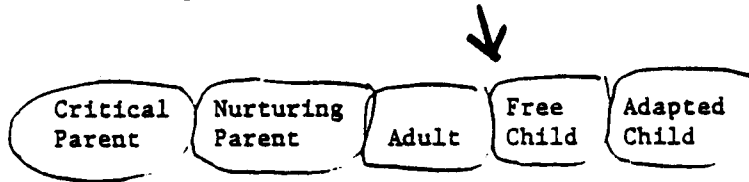
Henry Budd's Egogram



Erma Budd's Egogram

Constructing an Egogram - Page four

Now, draw your own egogram here:



Here, construct the egogram of someone with whom you often have conflict.

Draw some ego state "hooks" from your egogram to the other person's.

Discuss with the person next to you where you need to shift energy in order not to get drawn into conflict with that person in the future.

Mini Lecture #2

MINI-LECTURE #2

COMPLEMENTARY AND UNCOMPLEMENTARY TRANSACTIONS

Key points contained in this lecture:

- A. Communication transactions are both complementary and uncomplementary.
- B. When we receive communication that is unexpected or makes us feel angry or frustrated, our response to that person will usually result in an uncomplementary (crossed) transaction.
- C. The way to uncross or "fix" such a transaction is to use reflective listening, a probing response, or a supportive reply.

Donald Hamachek, author of *ENCOUNTERS WITH OTHERS* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982) has explained the concept of complementary and uncomplementary (or crossed) transactions as follows:

"Complementary Transactions (We're on the Same Track) A complementary or parallel transaction occurs when the message you send from a specific ego state elicits a more or less predictable response from a specific ego state in another person. It's the kind of communication between people that is direct, clear, and mutually reinforcing. A complementary transaction can occur between any two ego states. For example, two people may communicate parent to parent when expressing concern for someone, or adult to adult when exchanging information, or child to child or parent to child when living it up a little. We can communicate from any one of our three ego states to any one of the three ego states of the other person. You may get a better idea of how complementary transaction works by considering the examples in Figure 5-4.

...Nonverbal cues -- facial expressions, body language, gestures, tone of voice, and so forth -- all contribute to the final meaning of any transaction. We have assumed in the examples in Figure 5-4 (Overhead supplied) that the exchanges are straightforward, in the sense that the verbal and nonverbal components are congruent. When there is congruency between what is said and how it is said, and when the responses are pretty

much what is expected and appropriate, then we can say that the communication transaction is complementary. This does not, however, always happen. Sometimes, our message receives an unexpected or inappropriate response, and the lines of communication become what are called...

Crossed Transactions (One of us is discounted) You're talking to someone, and his or her response is what you've just said causes you to feel angry, or maybe frustrated, or perhaps like not even wanting to talk anymore. What you've just experienced (and haven't we all) is a crossed transaction. It happens when we get an unexpected response from the person we're speaking to. For example, let's say you ask me what time it is (adult/adult), and I say to you, "You should buy a watch and then you'd know," (my parent ego state to your child ego state). What happens is that I give you an unexpected reply from an ego state different from the one you're addressing. It is at this point that communication frequently breaks down. One person feels hurt or misunderstood, and the conversation abruptly ends or, frequently, both people get defensive and argumentative. Crossed transactions create many problems and are a frequent cause of conflict between husband and wife, parents and children, teachers and students, boss and employees, and so forth. A crossed communication begins with one person initiating a transaction and concludes with an unexpected response from the other person. The initiator is often left feeling discounted. The examples in Figure 5-5 (overhead supplied) may help you to understand this process better.

You can see from the examples that crossed transactions are most likely to occur when the receiver responds in some kind of feeling way (anger, frustration, hurt) to something the sender has said. A way to uncross a crossed communication is to use a response such as reflective listening, or a probing response, or perhaps a supportive reply. Any one of these responses lets the receiver know we've picked up the feeling tone of what was said which may help to uncross a crossed communication. For example, in the husband-wife transaction in Figure 5-5, the husband could uncross the transaction by responding to his wife's parental admonition with a supportive parental reply like, "I know check writing is no fun, and I'll make it a point to help out with it more in the future." This is his Nurturing Parent (NP) response directed at her Critical Parent (CP) reply. The chances are rather good that a reply of this sort will tend to sooth her ruffled feathers. Can you imagine what would happen if he were to reply, say, "Look, you do little enough around here as it is; the least you can do is write a few checks." (This response would be from his Critical Parent to her Child, which would keep the communication crossed and a potential cause of problems)." (Hamachek, 1982, pp. 238-240).

Experiential Exercise #2

Experiential Exercise #2

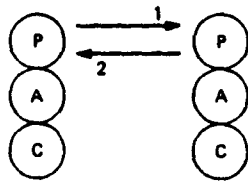
ANALYZING COMMUNICATION TRANSACTIONS

IN THE FOLLOWING COMMUNICATION TRANSACTIONS BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE,

- A. Identify the apparent ego state (CP, NP, A, FC, AC)* of the senders.
- B. Identify the ego state (CP, NP, A, FC, AC)* each sender is probably trying to target (hook) in the receiver (we will take for granted that the transactions are straightforward).
- C. Identify whether you feel the transaction is complementary or uncomplementary.

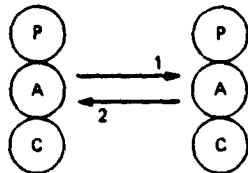
TRANSACTION SET	A Sender Ego State	B Ego State Targeted	C Complementary/ Uncomplementary
<p>1. Person A: Given what we're currently earning in the business, I think we ought to sell out while we still have a chance.</p> <p>Person B: You never did believe we could make it, did you?</p>			
<p>2. Person A: Let's forget all of this and go away for the weekend.</p> <p>Person B: I can't consider a vacation until we get this problem straightened out.</p>			
<p>3. Person A: Has John mowed the back yard yet?</p> <p>Person B: All you think about is how much work you can get out of him!</p>			

*Critical Parent (CP); Nurturant Parent (NP); Adult (A); Free Child (FC); Adapted Child (AC)



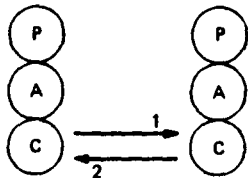
Nurturing parent/parent transaction:

1. I really enjoy teaching nursery school children; they're so lovable at that age.
2. Yes, I know what you mean. It's just a joy being around them.



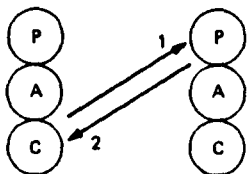
Information-exchanging adult/adult transaction:

1. I wonder which cars are getting the best gas mileage these days?
2. A recent issue of *Consumer's Guide* has the breakdown of those figures for twenty cars—check that.



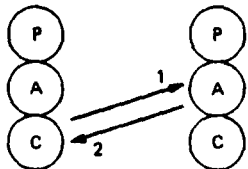
Fun-seeking child/child transaction:

1. Would you like to go to a party with me next week?
2. Sure, I'd love to—sounds like fun.



Child/critical parent transaction:

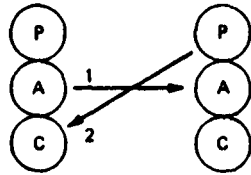
1. Homework, homework—I hate homework. I wish I could play outside rather than do these stupid problems!
2. If you would complain less and work more, you'd finish a lot sooner.



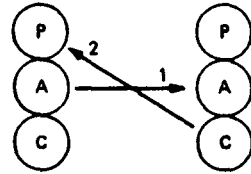
Child/listening adult transaction:

1. I wish I could go on a two-week vacation and just forget about the whole mess for a while.
2. Sounds like you've just about had it with the hassle at work and need a rest, huh?

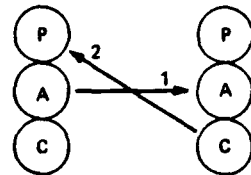
FIGURE 5-4. Examples of Complementary Transactions



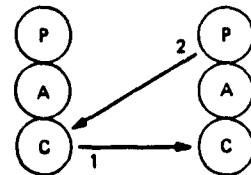
1. Husband: Do you remember if the rent check has been sent yet?
2. Wife: I think if you took more responsibility for writing the checks, you would know about things like that.



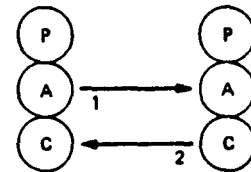
1. Boss: I need ten copies of this report in a half-hour. Can you do it?
2. Secretary: I can't do this and Dr. Fenwick's report, too. Everyone wants me to do everything at the same time!



1. Jack: I've got to get ready for that exam. How about if we go to the library to study and go to the movie tomorrow night?
2. Jill: Gee, you've hardly paid any attention to me at all lately.



1. Ted: Hey, what do you say we call Diane and George and have some fun tonight?
2. Mary: All you do is think about fun. Why don't you finish your work first?



1. Worker A: I wonder how we can finish this job in the fastest way possible before quitting time?
2. Worker B: Oh, the heck with it. Let's take a break and finish tomorrow.

FIGURE 5-5. Examples of Crossed Transactions

OVERHEADS PROVIDED:

Nurturing Parent

Critical Parent

Adult

Adapted Compliant Child

Ego State Hookers

Five Ego States

Ego State Pairs #1

Ego State Pairs #2

Critical Parent and Adapted Child

Nurturing Parent to Others



YOUR NAME

CRITICAL PARENT	NURTURING PARENT	ADULT	FREE CHILD	ADAPTED CHILD
-----------------	------------------	-------	------------	---------------

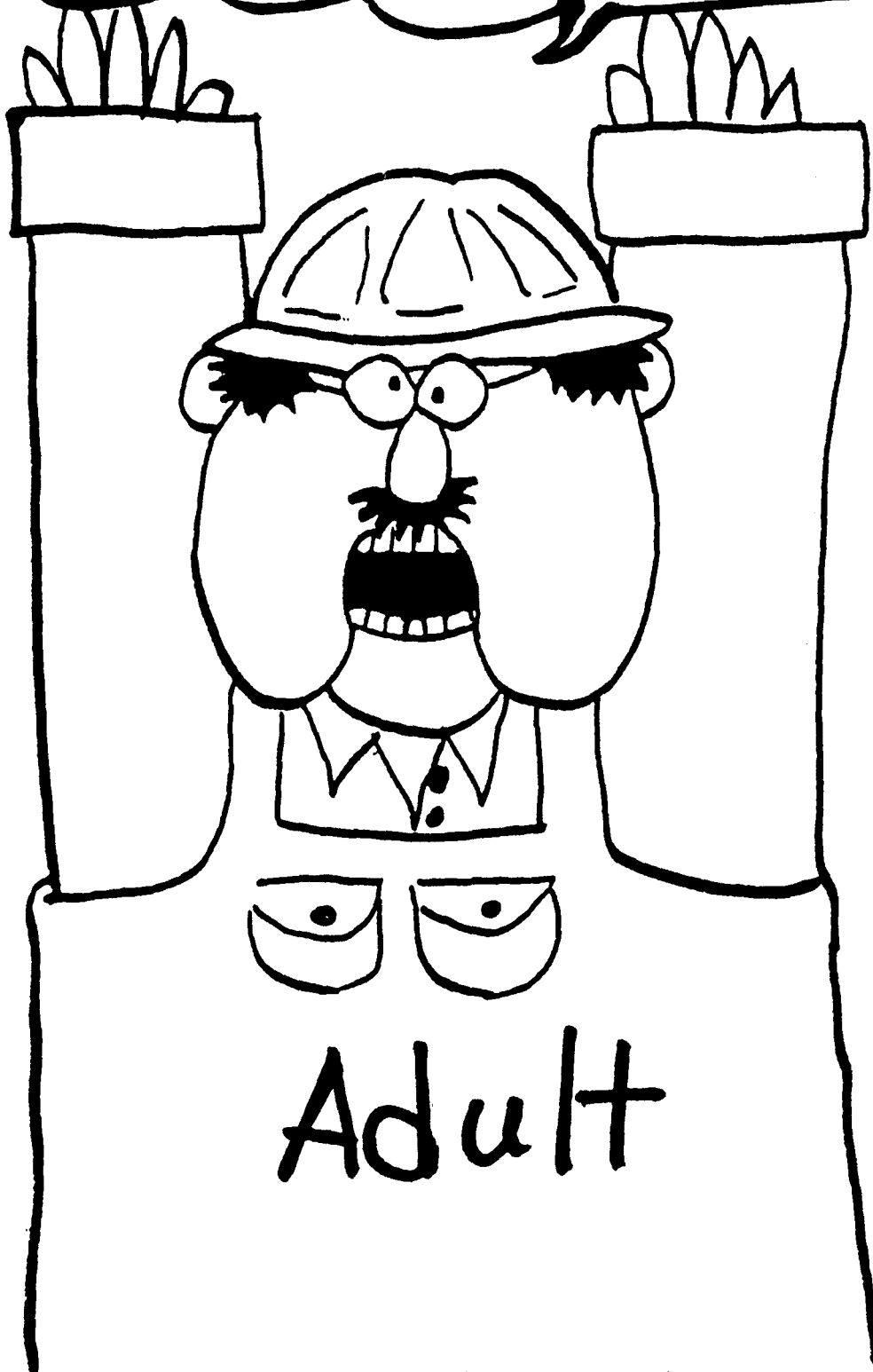
YOUR FRIEND'S NAME

CRITICAL PARENT	NURTURING PARENT	ADULT	FREE CHILD	ADAPTED CHILD
-----------------	------------------	-------	------------	---------------



Critical Parent

Just the facts,
Please.....



Adult

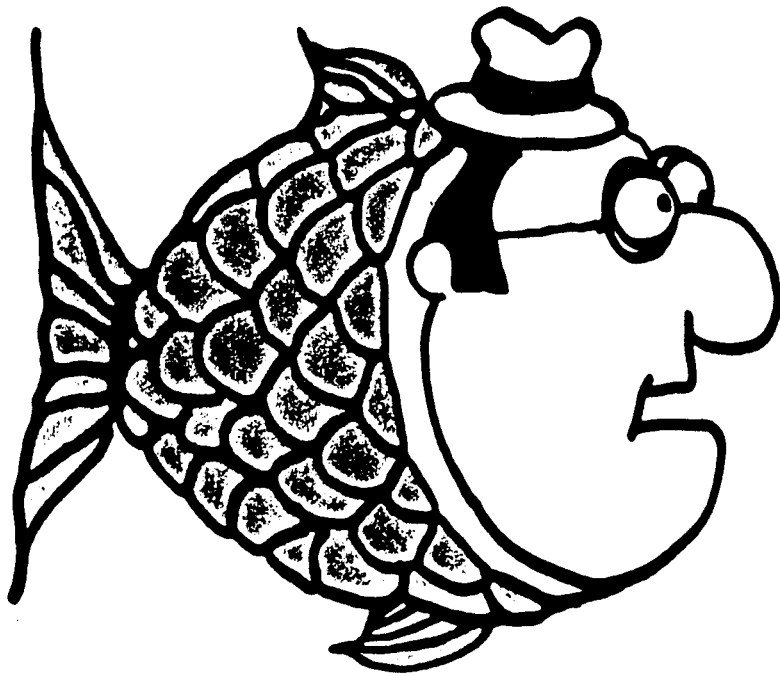
...THE PROBABILITIES ARE... I'M SORRY...
I THINK WE SHOULD... I'LL TRY TO...



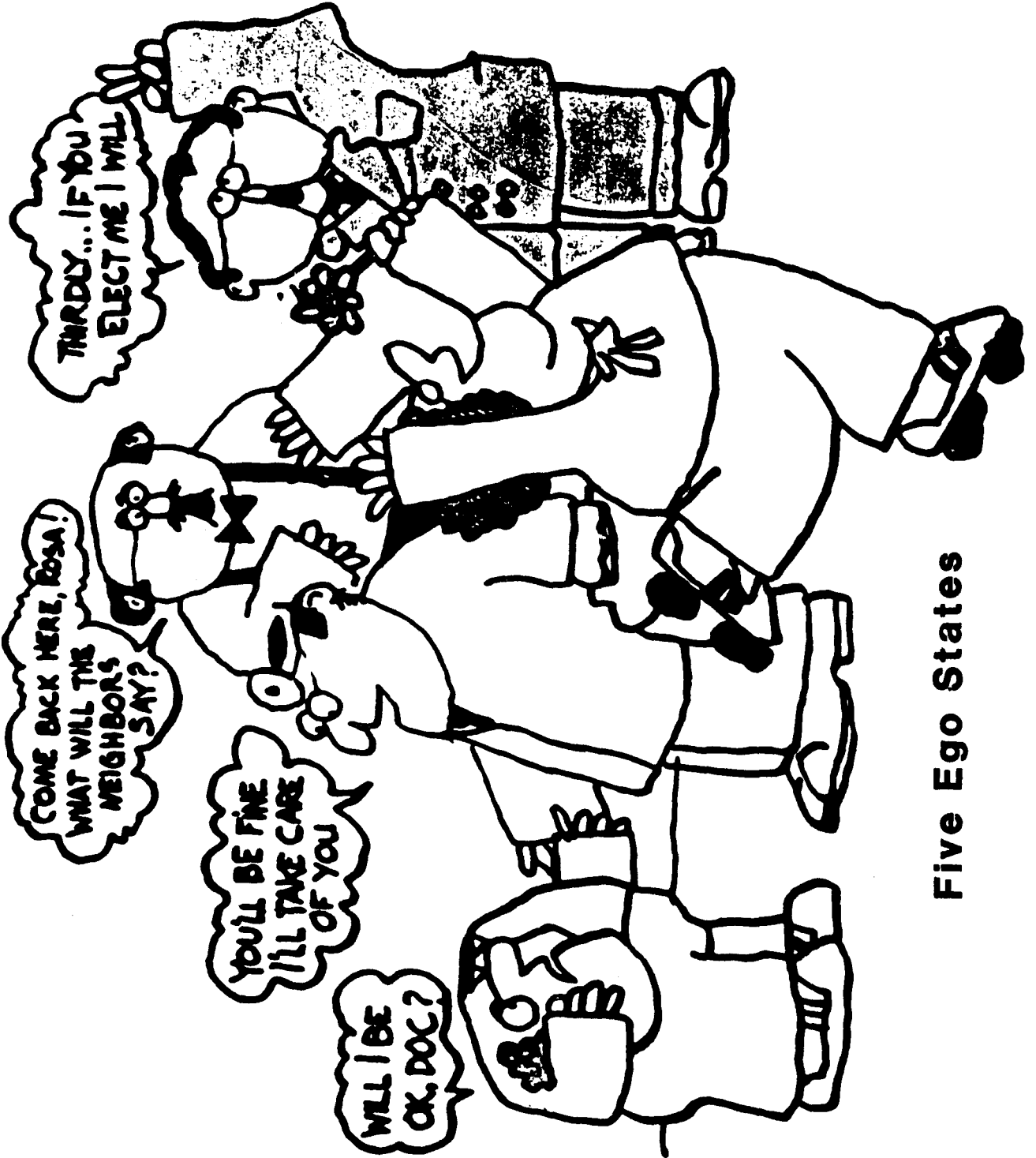
Adapted Compliant Child



Adapted Compliant Child



Ego State Hookers



COME BACK HERE, BOSS!
WHAT WILL THE
NEIGHBORS
SAY?

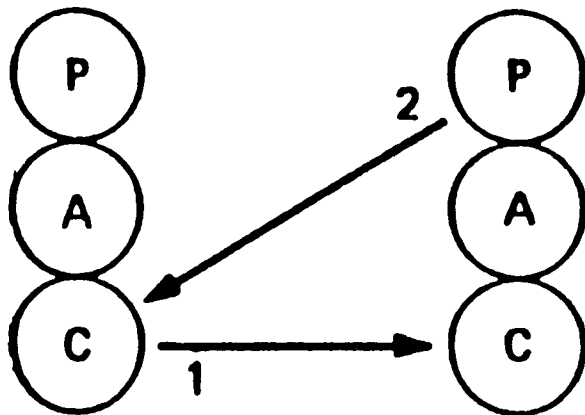
YOU'LL BE FINE
I'LL TAKE CARE
OF YOU

WILL I BE
OK, DOC?

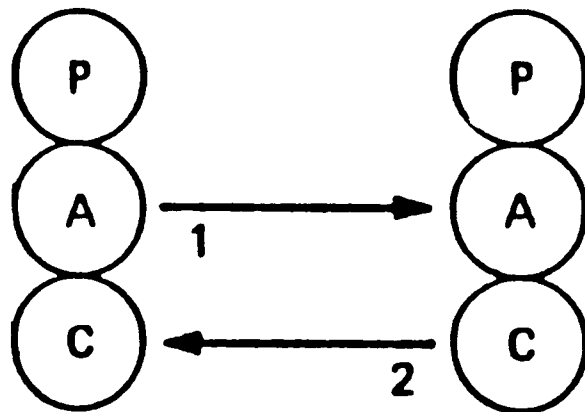
THIRDY... IF YOU
ELECT ME I WILL

THIRDY... IF YOU
ELECT ME I WILL

Five Ego States

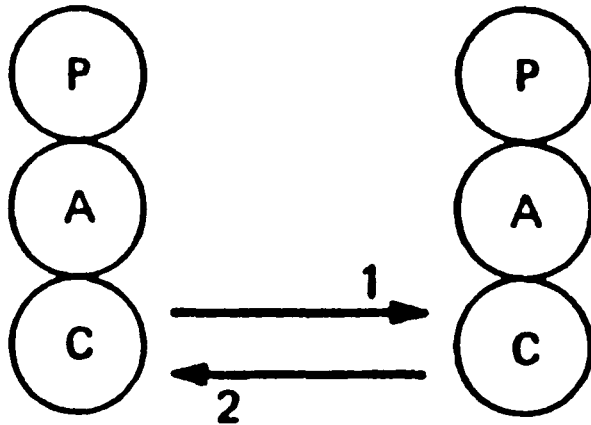


1. Ted: Hey, what do you say we call Diane and George and have some fun tonight?
2. Mary: All you do is think about fun. Why don't you finish your work first?



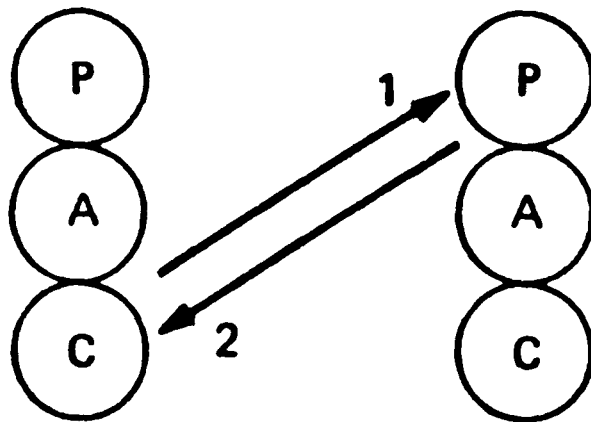
1. Worker A: I wonder how we can finish this job in the fastest way possible before quitting time?
2. Worker B: Oh, the heck with it. Let's take a break and finish tomorrow.

Examples of Crossed Transactions



Fun-seeking child/child transaction:

1. Would you like to go to a party with me next week?
2. Sure, I'd love to—sounds like fun.



Child/critical parent transaction:

1. Homework, homework—I hate homework. I wish I could play outside rather than do these stupid problems!
2. If you would complain less and work more, you'd finish a lot sooner.

CAMERA READY HANDOUTS:

Ego State Identification Chart

Response Styles and Ego State Corollaries

Ego State Identification Chart

	CP Critical Parent	NP Nurturing Parent	A Adult	FC Free Child	AC Adapted Child
Words & Phrases	never must You should . . . Don't be afraid. No, I won't. You are bad. Because I said so. What will the neighbors think?	nice cute You are a sweetie. I love you. You're an angel. I'll take care of you.	how when what who facts It's 2:30 p.m. I think . . . The probabilities are . . .	Wow! Ouch! I want . . . I won't . . . Gee whiz! Look at me now! Let's play! Phooey on this old job!	Please. I dunno. I can't. I'll try. Thank you. Did I do OK? Do it for me.
Voice Tone	assertive condescending stern	empathetic encouraging supportive	even, straight clear, without undue emotion	belly laughing free giggling	asking permission high, whining manipulating
Gestures & Postures	frowning, raising eyebrows pounding on the table shaking finger accusingly	consoling touch holding someone pat on the back smiling nodding head to imply "OK"	eyes alert interested direct, level eye contact directional pointing of finger	exuberant nose thumbing spontaneous tilted head	batting eyelashes pouting temper tantrums raising hand to speak
Descriptors	Protector assertive determined forceful outspoken Persecutor bossy cold fault-finding nagging	Allower generous kind praising understanding Rescuer complaining prudish soft-hearted temperamental	calm clear-thinking logical rational	curious imaginative natural sexy	Cooperator civilized cooperative mannerly self-controlled Manipulator defensive moody rebellious stubborn

RESPONSE STYLES AND EGO STATE COROLLARIES

The responses that we make to other people depend upon which of our ego states is operating most strongly at the moment we make the response. As can be seen in the following outline, evaluative, interpretive, and supportive responses are made when our Parent ego state is strongest. Probing responses are an outcome of our Adult ego state dominating the others, and the understanding response occurs when our Adult and Nurturing Parent ego states combine together in strength.

Interaction behavior takes one of four forms: deferring, demanding, defecting, or declaring. The first three involve an Adapted Child ego state. The last, declaring, involves communication that makes it clear to the other person through I-statements what you would like to see happen (ex. I need a hug right now....I need to get this kitchen cleaned up before your grandmother gets here). Declaring behavior calls for the sender to have a relatively high Adult and Nurturing Parent ego state.

RESPONSE STYLE	EGO STATE COROLLARY
1. <i>Evaluative</i> —judgmental about what is good, bad, or appropriate; many "you shoulds" are said	Critical Parent
2. <i>Interpretive</i> —telling others what their behavior "really" means and why they feel as they do	Critical Parent, when said critically or hurtfully, or Adult, when cited as information intended to be helpful
3. <i>Supportive</i> —an attempt to reassure and let the other person know he or she is not alone	Nurturing Parent
4. <i>Probing</i> —an effort to get information, to find out more	Adult
5. <i>Understanding</i> —reflectively listening, trying to understand more deeply the other person	Adult and Nurturing Parent (a combination of getting information and showing concern)
INTERACTION BEHAVIOR	
1. <i>Deferring</i> —giving in to the other person either because it is appropriate and necessary and we choose to or doing it even though we don't want to	Adapted Child
2. <i>Demanding</i> —literally demanding something from another person	Adapted Child, when screaming for own way, or Critical Parent when ordering others around or being overly aggressive
3. <i>Defecting</i> —leaving the scene, withdrawing, slamming doors, etc.	Adapted Child
4. <i>Declaring</i> —making it clear to the other person in I-statements what you want or would like to happen.	Adult and Nurturing Parent (a combination of giving information and doing it in a friendly, nonhostile way)

Session VI

COMMUNICATING DURING CRISIS

SESSION VI

COMMUNICATING DURING CONFLICT

Session Guide

CONTENTS IN THIS UNIT	PAGE
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B. Warm-up Exercise	VI - 4
C. Mini Lecture	VI - 5
D. Overheads	VI - 12
E. Experiential Exercise	VI - 13
F. Handouts	VI - 14

GOAL: To enhance participants' knowledge and skill level related to communication strategies that support conflict resolution in the family.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To help participants determine their own usual mode of behavior during conflict situations.
2. To increase participants' awareness of the consequences of positive and negative conflict.
3. To acquaint participants with positive management strategies for dealing with conflict.
4. To provide participants with an experiential exercise that will allow them to practice the skills defined.

IMPLEMENTING OBJECTIVES: SUGGESTED FORMAT AND TIME ALLOWANCES FOR PRESENTATION:

1. Warm-up exercise, completion of Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument (Objective 1). 30 minutes
2. Through mini-lecture share positive and negative aspects of conflict management strategies, including third-party management responsibilities (Objectives 2 and 3). 30 minutes
3. Complete experiential exercise, "Floating Another Loan" (Objective 4). 20 minutes
4. Wrap-up. Since this is the final session, leader may wish to ask each participant to share what he/she found to be the most valuable idea in the series of workshops on communication. 10 minutes

TIME ALLOTTED FOR WORKSHOP: 90 minutes

Materials Needed:

1. Nametags and markers
2. Refreshments
3. Warm-up exercise and extra pencils
4. Mini-Lecture notes
5. Overhead projector and overheads
6. Experiential exercise

Overheads Provided:

1. Family Conflict
2. Negative Conflict
3. Positive Conflict
4. Model of Family Conflict

Camera Ready Handouts and Experiential Exercises:

1. Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument
2. Scoring the Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument
3. Five Modes of Resolving Conflict
4. Making a Positive Confrontation

Suggested Background Reading for Leaders:

Galvin, K.M. and Brommel, B.J. FAMILY COMMUNICATION: COHESION AND CHANGE (Chapter 9, "Communication and Family Conflict")
Glenview, Illinois: Scott Foresman and Co., 1982 (in packet).

Bolton, R. PEOPLE SKILLS (Chapters 12, 13, 14) Englewood Cliffs, N.J.:
Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979 (in packet).

Warm-Up Exercise

WARM-UP EXERCISE

To Leader: The purpose of this exercise is to have participants determine their own usual modes of behavior when they are in a conflict situation.

1. Pass out the Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument.
2. Have participants move through the 30 statements, circling A or B (10 minutes).
3. Pass out scoring instrument. Have participants complete and total items to determine their predominant style (7 minutes).
4. Pass out handout, "Five Modes of Resolving Conflict." Describe the strengths and weaknesses of each mode (13 minutes).

Allow a total of 30 minutes for the exercise.



Mini Lecture



Communication During Conflict

MINI LECTURE*

Key Points Contained in This Lecture:

A. Conflict can be negative or positive and grow out of differences or perceived threats related to perceptions, values, lifestyles, goals, and resources.

B. Families differ in their ability and desire to work together to resolve conflict.

C. In structuring a necessary confrontation, timing and a cooperative approach will be important.

D. A three-step process for conflict resolution includes treating the other person with respect, listening until we "experience" the other side of the issue, and learning to state our views, needs, and feelings in an effective manner.

E. Third-party arbitrators can learn additional strategies for guiding distressed families toward successful adaptation.

To be human is to experience conflict. Differences in opinions, values, desires, needs, and habits are the stuff of daily living with one another (Bolton, 1979). Though most of us would rather avoid conflict, we can't if we are to maintain our significant relationships with others. This is especially true for families. Early warning signs that conflict is escalating in families is often seen in increased sarcasm, teasing, nit-picking, criticism, yelling, avoidance of one another, and stoney silences.

Whether family conflict is helpful or hurtful depends on the ways families choose to play out these conflicts. Conflict resolution can be positive or negative. Positive resolution is that which remains focused on ideas, issues, values, and principles. Negative conflict management is that which is based upon personalities, personality attacks, vindictiveness, and personal power struggles.

*Primary source: Donna Sweeney, Extension Specialist, Department of Natural Resources, Michigan State University.

Whenever a family finds itself conflicted, it becomes the right and responsibility of all members to work toward a positive solution. Trying to bring a conflict back to a legitimate basis once it has been allowed to deteriorate is very difficult. Each person must be prepared to make firm statements such as: "That is not the issue. The issue is...", or, "let's not point fingers. Our problem, rather, is...". These statements are firm and meaningful, yet do not point at any particular person. When we spotlight persons or personalities, rather than behaviors and issues, we are likely to provoke a defensive reaction. This only serves to escalate the conflict deterring positive resolution.

Almost everyone is aware of the results of negative conflict:

- It interrupts normal relations between individuals in the family.
- It provokes hurtful, personally-harmful effects on the self-concept of persons involved.
- It causes resentment and hostility.
- It makes rational discussion difficult or impossible.
- It robs the time and energy of everyone involved.
- It causes confusion and insecurity.
- It causes stress and resulting hardships.
- It causes possible break-up of relationships.

Many are not aware of the values of positive conflict, which are:

- It helps people understand what others feel is important.
- It helps define and clarify a variety of issues and values.
- It can lead to a confrontation, which can bring out ideas, issues, and values in a way which clears the air.
- It can result in new understandings or relationships that can bring new "life blood" or growth to the family.
- It can bring a sense of respect to all.
- It can be the start of defining adjusted or new goals, which are more satisfactory to everyone.

How do we get into conflict with others?

At times, we agree on the final goal but differ on how to arrive at that point.

Others seem to be threatening -- to our knowledge, perceptions, values, lifestyles, sense of "rightness," or "territory."

There may not seem to be enough of something (a resource) to go around -- tangibles (money, data, materials) or intangibles (time, talent, space, ideas...).

Communication on any of the above may be ineffective (or almost non-existent), which intensifies the problem and leads to hostility, resentment, polarization, apathy, defiance.....in short, escalated conflict!

Families differ in their ability and desire to work together to resolve conflict. When a high degree of commitment toward cooperation exists in a family, people are ready to accept each other and work together. Sometimes, however, family members may have problems in working together. These include:

1. Disagreement on defining the problem (perception).
2. Disagreement on how to solve the problem.
3. Bad experience with past conflict management efforts.
4. Too much expected from members (in tangibles or intangibles).
5. Fears: loss of independence, fear of rejection, fear of disrespect.
6. Personality conflict.
7. Differences in values and lifestyles.
8. Sense of imposed values.
9. Sense of imposed guilt.

(NOTE TO LEADER: Try to elicit from audience an example of each of these. Have your own examples ready also.)

Positive Management Strategies for Dealing with Conflict. Conflict management calls for confrontation between the persons involved. This is never pleasant but, with the use of certain management strategies, hostility and conflict can be minimized as a workable solution is reached.

Timing will be important. Though we may want to plunge right ahead with the confrontation, we would be wise to ask whether or not the other person is in any shape to discuss the problem and whether the relationship that exists can tolerate a confrontation at this particular time. We also have to assess whether or not the other person can do anything about the problem, whether there is enough time to work through any residual effects of bringing up the conflict, and whether we are expecting too much of the other person, the situation, or ourself.

Given this initial assessment and a subsequent decision to move ahead, we would next want to use a cooperative, rather than adversarial, approach. Putting people on the defensive is never a productive technique. It only makes them fight back harder or run away from the problem. During conflict and confrontation, gaining another person's cooperation will require the following:

1. Emphasizing mutual desire to solve the problem that exists.
2. Clearly spelling out the limited areas of cooperation needed and the time period involved.
3. Pointing out proven reasons for trusting each other.
4. Empathizing with one another; trying to encourage one another to express feelings; being sensitive to one another's fears; trying to see the other's point of view through their values; not judging.
5. Outlining benefits to be gained through cooperation.
6. Openly discussing any past problems and giving positive assurance that there is a genuine desire to work together.
7. Admitting mistakes that have been made in the past related to personality or value differences and assuming blame for them.

Bolton (1979) outlines a three-step process for conflict resolution:

1. Treating the other person with respect. This is both a nonverbal and verbal task. Respect or disrespect will be conveyed by the way I listen to the other person; the way I look at him/her; my tone of voice; my selection of words (put-down vocabulary, sarcasm); the type of reasoning I use. Because we are often threatened when someone doesn't agree with us, it takes a great deal of will power to fight our strong urges to denigrate the other person.

2. Listen until we experience the other side. Often, in conflict, we don't **really** listen. It takes all of our patience just to wait until the other person "has his say" so we can get on with our real reason for being there...to tell our side of the story. The goal of listening is to understand the content of another person's ideas, the meaning it has for him/her, and the feelings he/she has about those ideas. That means stepping into the other person's shoes for a bit, even if we don't like the fit of them. Carl Rogers had a rule: "Each person can speak up for himself only **after** he has first related the ideas and feelings of the previous speaker accurately, and to that person's satisfaction (Bolton, p. 220). **Leader: Here you could have participants take the time to tell each other something where, before the second person has a chance, he/she must repeat back what the other person has said to that person's satisfaction.**

3. State your views, needs and feelings. Now, after you've given the other person a legitimate and honest chance, it's your turn. If you still feel you need to pursue the conflict further, follow these guidelines:

.Be brief.

.Avoid loaded words and phrases.

.Say what you mean and mean what you say. Don't withhold important information and don't exaggerate. Focus on the issue, not on personalities or what happened in the past.

.Disclose your feelings. Get it off your chest. But do this tentatively, rather than dogmatically. Avoid words like "always" or "never" or words that accuse and evaluate, "You ought to know better" and "If I were you..."

.Maximize the positive wherever possible and minimize the negative as much as possible.

Third-Party Arbitration

Sometimes a third-party arbitrator is called in to help guide a family through a rather stressful event (for example, a financial adviser, divorce mediator, technological adviser, clergy, counselor). When this happens, the arbitrator will want to utilize all of the strategies we have talked about this far as well as attending to the following responsibilities:

The arbitrator should

collect all facts, information, data, etc.

probe both parties with open-ended, non-judging questions

help each side to "save face" whenever possible

discover common interests, ideas in any part of the conflict

reinforce any possible and positive positions taken by either party

negotiate any parts of the conflict which might be ready for
negotiation

facilitate adjustments between parties

summarize consensus areas



OVERHEADS PROVIDED:

Family Conflict

Negative Conflict

Positive Conflict



Model of Family Conflict



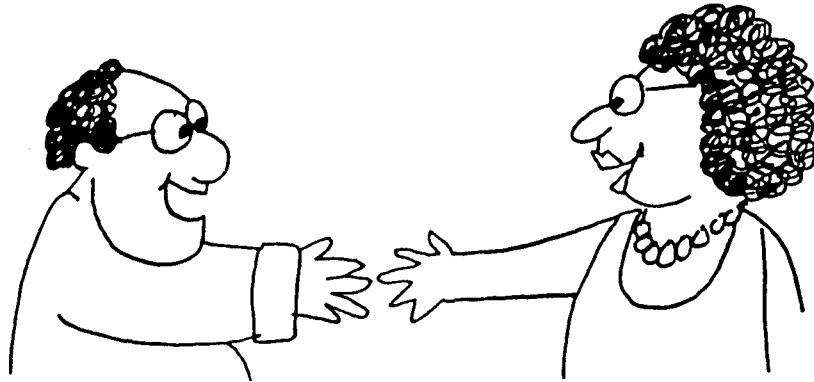
Family Conflict

Negative Conflict

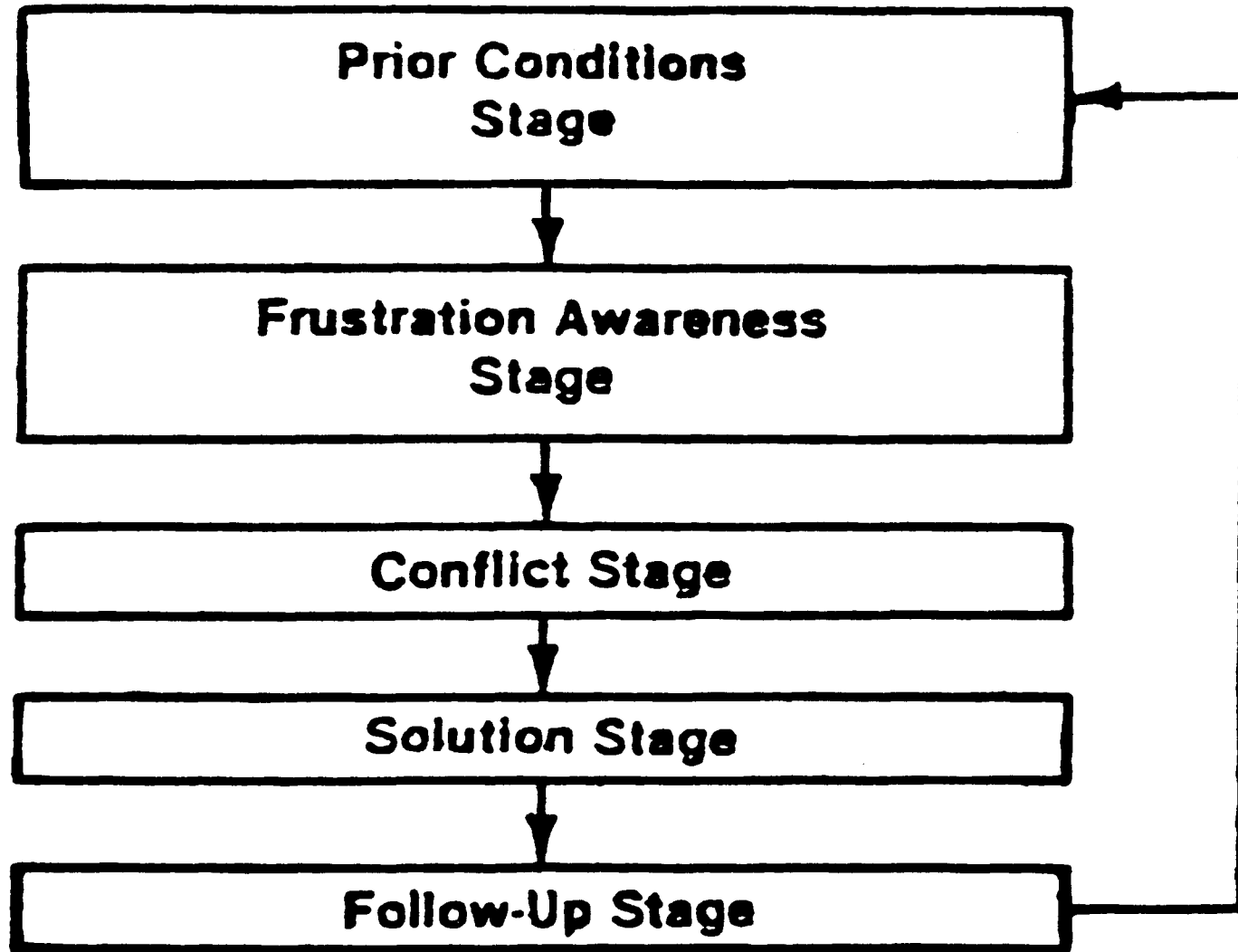
- **Interrupts normal relations between individuals and the family**
- **Provokes hurtful, personally-harmful to the self-concept effects**
- **Causes loss of self respect and/or respect for others**
- **Makes rational discussions difficult or impossible**
- **Takes the time and energy of everyone involved**
- **Causes confusion, insecurity, hostility, distrust, and alienation**
- **Causes stress and resulting problems**
- **Causes possible break up of relationship**



Positive Conflict



- **Helps people understand what others feel is important to them**
- **Helps define and clarify a variety of issues and values**
- **Aids a family in knowing what is really important to its members**
- **Can lead to a confrontation which can bring out ideas, issues, values in a way which clears the air**
- **Can result in new understanding or relationships which can bring new “life blood” to the family**
- **Can bring a sense of respect to all**
- **Can be the start of defining adjusted or new goals which are more satisfactory to everyone**



Model of Family Conflict

Experiential Exercise

EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE

"Floating a Loan"

To Leader: The following exercise is provided to give participants experience in practicing conflict management skills discussed in the mini-lecture.

1. Divide participants into sets of two persons.
2. Have sets choose someone to play a wife and husband.
3. Hand each person an appropriate role.
4. Ask participants to play through the roles in an aggressive, non-cooperative, and hurtful manner. Allow five minutes.
5. After five minutes, stop player sets. Ask them to share with one another their thoughts about their transactions (allow approximately four minutes).
6. Share with participants the handout, "Making a Positive Confrontation." Ask participants to look it over briefly and then to apply the principles to a new discussion of the same problem. Allow another five minutes for role-playing.
7. Again, have participants share with one another their thoughts and feelings about the second set of transactions (allow approximately four minutes.)

Total time allotted for exercise: 20 minutes

Husband

EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE

"Floating A Loan"

Situation: You and your wife have been married for 18 years. You have heard that the plant in which you're working may down-size next year. You feel you may be caught in that if you don't pick up some additional training that's being offered in another state. The training is expensive - \$1500 for a six-week course. You would also be required to pay for meals, lodging, transportation, and books. In addition, you will have to ask for a leave of absence from your own job for a month, necessitating the borrowing of another \$1500 for living expenses during that period. You see this as a way of insuring your not being laid off. Approach your wife about the possibility of asking her parents for a loan.

Wife

EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE

"Floating A Loan"

Situation: You and your husband have been married for 18 years. You know that the plant in which he works may be down-sizing and that he thinks he might get caught in it. You doubt that will happen, since he's been working there for so long. Seniority ought to count for something, as far as you're concerned! He's also been talking about getting some retraining in another state. That would mean a lot of money that you really don't have. He would have to be away from home for at least six weeks, leaving you to handle your three children, 17, 15, and 11 all by yourself. Your oldest son has become pretty belligerent and you don't think you can cope without your husband's help. Also, the only way you see you could get a loan would be to ask your parents. You and your husband have still not paid back a small loan you received from them two years ago, and you would be embarrassed to approach them again. Your husband wants to discuss the situation.



CAMERA READY HANDOUTS:

Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument

Scoring the Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument

Five Modes of Resolving Conflict



Making a Positive Confrontation

THOMAS-KILMAN CONFLICT MODE INSTRUMENT

Directions: Circle the letter on each pair of sentences which best describes your usual reactions.

When I am in a conflict situation:

1. A. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
B. Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things upon which we both agree.
2. A. I try to find a compromise solution.
B. I attempt to deal with everyone's concerns.
3. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
B. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
4. A. I try to find a compromise solution.
B. I sometimes sacrifice my own wishes for the wishes of the other person.
5. A. I consistently seek the other's help in working out a solution.
B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
6. A. I try to avoid creating unpleasantness for myself.
B. I try to win my position.
7. A. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
B. I give up some points in exchange for others.
8. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
B. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.

9. A. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
B. I make some effort to get my way.
10. A. I am firm in pursuing my goals.
B. I try to find a compromise solution.
11. A. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
B. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
12. A. I sometimes avoid talking positions which would create controversy.
B. I will let the other have some of his/her positions if he/she lets me have some of mine.
13. A. I propose a middle ground
B. I press to get my points made.
14. A. I tell him/her my ideas and ask him/her for his/hers.
B. I try to show him/her the logic and benefits of my position.
15. A. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid tensions.
16. A. I try not to hurt the other's feelings.
B. I try to convince the other person of the merits of my position.
17. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.

18. A. If it makes the other person happy, I might let him/her maintain his/her views.
- B. I will let him/her have some of his/her positions if he/she lets me have some of mine.
19. A. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
- B. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
20. A. I attempt to immediately work through our differences.
- B. I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for both of us.
21. A. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.
- B. I always lean toward a direct discussion of the problem.
22. A. I try to find a position that is intermediate between his/hers and mine.
- B. I assert my wishes.
23. A. I am very often concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
- B. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
24. A. If the other's position seems very important to him/her, I would try to meet his/her wishes.
- B. I try to get him/her to settle for a compromise.
25. A. I try to show him/her the logic and benefits of my position.
- B. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.

26. A. I propose a middle ground.
B. I am nearly always concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
27. A. I sometimes avoid talking positions that would create controversy.
B. If it makes the other person happy, I might let him/her maintain his/her views.
28. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
B. I usually seek the other's help in working out a solution.
29. A. I propose a middle ground.
B. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
30. A. I try not to hurt the other's feelings.
B. I always share the problem with the other person so that we can work it out.

SCORING THE THOMAS-KILMANN
CONFLICT MODE INSTRUMENT

Circle the letters below which you circled on each item of the questionnaire.

	Competing (forcing)	Collaborating (problem solving)	Compromising (sharing)	Avoiding (withdrawal)	Accommodating (smoothing)
1.				A	B
2.		B	A		
3.	A				B
4.			A		B
5.		A		B	
6.	B			A	
7.			B	A	
8.	A	B			
9.	B			A	
10.	A		B		
11.		A			B
12.			B	A	
13.	B		A		
14.	B	A			
15.				B	A
16.	B				A
17.	A			B	
18.			B		A
19.		A		B	
20.		A	B		
21.		B			A
22.	B		A		
23.		A		B	
24.			B		A
25.	A				B
26.		B	A		
27.				A	B
28.	A	B			
29.			A	B	
30.		B			A

Total number of items circle in each column:

Competing Collaborating Compromising Avoiding Accommodating

Five Modes of Resolving Conflict

A. COMPETING (forcing)

- Uses:
1. When quick, decisive action is vital--e.g., emergencies.
 2. On important issues where unpopular courses of action need doing--e.g., cost cutting, enforcing unpopular rules, discipline.
 3. On issues vital to company welfare when you know you're right.
 4. To protect yourself against people who take advantage of noncompetitive behavior.

B. COLLABORATING (problem solving: working with)

- Uses:
1. To find a joint solution when both sets of concerns are too important to be compromised.
 2. When your objective is to learn--e.g., testing your own views, understanding the views of others.
 3. To merge insights from people with different perspectives on a problem.
 4. To gain commitment by bringing together other's concerns into a consensual decision.
 5. To work through hard feelings which have been interfering with an interpersonal relationship.

C. COMPROMISING (sharing)

- Uses:
1. When goals are moderately important, but not worth the effort or potential disruption of more assertive ways of dealing.
 2. When two opponents with equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals--as in labor-management bargaining.
 3. To achieve temporary settlements to complex issues.

4. To arrive at quick solutions under time pressure.
5. As a backup mode when collaboration or competition fails to be successful.

D. AVOIDING (withdrawing)

- Uses:
1. When an issue is trivial, of only passing importance, or when other more important issues are pressing.
 2. When you see no chance of satisfying your concerns--e.g., when you have low power or you are frustrated by something which would be very difficult to change (national policies, someone's personality structure, etc.)
 3. When the potential damage of confronting a conflict outweighs the benefits of its resolution.
 4. To let people cool down--to reduce tensions to a lower level and to regain calm.
 5. When gathering more information outweighs the advantage of an immediate decision.
 6. When others can resolve the conflict more effectively.

E. ACCOMODATING (smoothing)

- Uses:
1. When you realize that you are wrong--to allow a better position to be heard, to learn from others, and to show that you are reasonable.
 2. When the issue is much more important to the other person than to yourself--to satisfy the needs of others, and as a goodwill gesture to help maintain a cooperative relationship.
 3. To build up social credits for later issues which are important to you.
 4. When continued competition would only damage your cause--when you are outmatched and losing.

5. When preserving harmony and avoiding disruption are especially important.
6. To aid in the job development of people under you by allowing them to experiment and learn from their mistakes.

MAKING A POSITIVE CONFRONTATION

Confronting someone about something on which you disagree is never pleasant. However, unless conflicts are faced and resolved, deterioration in a relationship usually results. Early warning signs that the conflict has gone on too long are increased sarcasm, teasing, nit-picking, criticism, yelling, avoidance, and stoney silences.

Conflict can be both positive and negative. Positive conflict resolution is based on ideas, issues, values, and principles. Negative efforts to resolve conflict usually centers on personalities, personality attacks, vindictiveness, and personal power struggles.

A three-step process for positive conflict resolution is as follows:

1. Treat the other person with respect.

2. Listen to the other person until you "experience" his/her side of the issue. Listen to the **content** of the other person's ideas, the **meaning** it has for him/her, and the **feelings** he/she has about those ideas.

3. State your views, needs, and feelings, but do it this way:

- A. Be brief.
- B. Avoid loaded words and phrases like "always" or "never."
- C. Avoid words that accuse and evaluate.
- D. Don't withhold important information or exaggerate.
- E. Focus on the issue, not on personalities or what happened in the past.
- F. Use "I-Statements," rather than blaming "you" messages:
 - 1) a clear statement of how you feel.
 - 2) naming the behavior that has caused you to feel that way.
 - 3) why the behavior or event is upsetting.

(example - "I am upset that you didn't tell me you were bringing company home for dinner. I didn't feel I had enough food to go around." instead of "You had no right to bring company home for dinner without checking with me first!")

Appendix A

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Articles:

Getting Physical Sends Out Messages

How Touching Works as a Status Symbol

Books included in packet:

FAMILY COMMUNICATION - COHESION AND CHANGE

PEOPLE SKILLS

Getting physical sends out messages

By Norma Peterson
Special for USA TODAY

At a corporate party, when Cordelia Anderson of Minneapolis greeted a male colleague with a kiss and a hug, the man responded with a startled "Isn't your husband with you?"

"Sure, my husband was with me," Anderson recalls. "I greet lots of people with kisses and hugs."

The incident, however, illustrates how touch can be a powerful — and sometimes confusing — medium of communication. What one person "says" may not be what the other "hears."

"The messages we convey with touch vary according to the timing and duration of our touches, as well as what we say when we touch someone," explains sociologist Elaine Yarborough of the University of Colorado, Boulder. She and communications professor Stanley Jones recently completed a study of the unspoken rules of touch.

An innocuous touch on someone's hand or arm can be misconstrued as a sexual move if we let it linger, Yarborough says.

Or one touch too many may be taken as an intrusion. Art Martin, a Boston-area teacher, knows the irritation aggressive touch can cause. "At school open houses, the parents who do a lot of arm stroking and grasping are usually the ones who also have a lot of half-baked ideas about how my class should be run," he says.

The language of touch, just like verbal language, comes more naturally to some of us.

Those who are fluent in the language can spread a lot of good will, says Carol Tomlinson-Keasey, a psychologist at the University of California at Riverside.

"These people seem to know exactly the right moment to take you by the elbow, put their arms around you, or give you a supportive hug or pat on the back," she says.

Scotty Cummings, a hair stylist in San Francisco, feels she is one of those fortunate folks. "I got a lot of touching from my family, and I like giving the same kind of support to others."

Cummings thinks her

adroitness with touch may have dictated her choice of profession. Hair styling is one of the lines of work in which touching is "allowed."

People who communicate effectively with touch are good, too, at responding to non-verbal cues such as a wan smile that announces a little supportive touch would be welcome, says Yarborough. We appreciate such sensitivity, she says, because in general, peo-

ple don't feel comfortable asking to be touched.

But they should, Tomlinson-Keasey says. "Let's say you're having a marital squabble and you want to get past it. You can really cut down the tension fast if you say, 'I'd like you to put your arms around me.'"

People who are clumsy with touch often come from families in which touching is taboo, says psychotherapist Anderson. "These people are usually

well-intentioned, but they're the ones who manage to stand too close or touch too abruptly or too intensely or at the wrong times. They make you feel very uncomfortable."

Studies by psychiatrist Mark Hollender at the University of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia have shown even more dramatic consequences of low-touch upbringings. Children who don't receive enough physical loving may grow up to

shun contact or become "touch junkies," he found. Several promiscuous women, for instance, told Hollender they used sex to entice men to hold them.

Anthropologist Ashley Montagu has observed that "children who are inadequately loved often become physically hostile as adults." They literally "rub people the wrong way."

Most of us learn our touch habits from our families and their cultures, and some cultures — Latin and some Middle Eastern, for instance — encourage touch more than others. But people from low-touch families aren't necessarily inadequately nurtured, emphasizes Tomlinson-Keasey.

"Verbal affection counts with children, too. Low-touch families can show their children a lot of caring and affirmation with verbal expression."

But culture and family conditioning aside, we all need touch and, one way or another, we get it, conclude Stone and Yarborough, who had their study participants keep daily track of their intentional and unintentional touches.

On the days the subjects reported few intentional touches, they reported high numbers of accidental touches, says Yarborough.

"We concluded people sneak in touches if they have to. They offer to help someone with packages or admire someone's outfit or find other legitimate excuses for touching."

How touching works as a status signal

Do not touch.

It's an unspoken business rule in the USA, experts say.

Workers worry that if they touch colleagues, their gestures may be misinterpreted as come-ons or as condescension.

Their concern is understandable, suggests Brenda Major, associate professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo who has done research on touching. Her studies show that people do assign significance to who touches whom.

"I found that touchers are

perceived by others as having high status, recipients of touch are perceived as having low status," she reports. In fact, in one of Major's studies, her observers gave the highest status to touchers, the next highest status to people who neither touched nor were touched and the lowest status to touchees.

Given these complex silent "rules," it's not surprising that much of the pin-stripe crowd avoids the issue by totally abstaining from touch.

But that, too, can be unfor-

tunate. Major's studies also show that touchers are perceived as warm, friendly, supportive people.

Some business people have discovered that the right touch can increase profits.

Barrie Stern, a supersalesman of home furnishings in California, began to suspect a few years ago that his success was due to his habit of gently touching customers' arms during sales pitches.

To test his theory, he divided his sales force into two groups. Those in one group

lightly touched the arms of customers, the other half did no touching. The touchers closed 8 of 10 sales, the abstainers only 3 of 10, Stern discovered.

But touch researcher Greg Risberg of Chicago discourages introducing touching into business because "it fosters manipulative rather than authentic, caring touch," he says.

Such touching also backfires, warns Major. Customers may resent having "the touch put on them," and take their business elsewhere.

Appendix B

USING FIVE VERBAL RESPONSES

USING FIVE VERBAL RESPONSES

The following was excerpted from a training session looking at response styles by Dr. Donald Hamochek of Michigan State University in July, 1985, during field staff training to work with distressed farm families.

- S = Situation
- ER = Evaluative Response
- IR = Interpretive Response
- SR = Supportive Response
- PR = Probing Response
- UR = Understanding Response

Tell you what I'd like to have you do . . . let's see how this works. I would like any of you to state something to me which you feel . . . you can invent, it doesn't have to be a real problem, but it's a problem. It can be the kind of thing that any farm family person may say to you during your interaction with them and what I'll do is respond to it. Pay attention to your feelings; pay attention to what happens inside of you given the various responses you will hear.

All right now, let's say that I'm a EMAT team person and I'm out there talking to farm families. What might you say to me? I'll start with, "How are things going for you? (Door Opener)"

S "The FHA won't give me a loan."

ER "Well what I think you should do is be more active in finding another alternative."

S "When is the government going to do something for us farmers?"

ER "I'm not worried about what the government's going to do because that's a very large bureaucracy and be more concerned with what you can do right now."

S "I've been in business for 27 years, and I've never been broke."

ER "Well I think that's a course that you should continue on." (laughs) I'm sorry.

S "I had a farmer say the other day, "I don't get any beer money."

ER "If he's in financial trouble, he probably shouldn't be drinking anyway."

S "My husband tells me to keep my nose out of the farming and stick to what I know."

ER "Well that may be good advice; I think that you should listen to him."

S "Well, what's wrong with me? My crops have failed the last three years, we're broke, and my husband's thinking about committing suicide."

ER "Well, that's not something you have to be concerned about. I think that getting all wrapped up in fancies about your husband committing suicide may be going too far. Let's focus on what needs to be done with the farm."

S "I got so depressed after this last windstorm that I just feel like waiking right away from the whole thing."

ER "You shouldn't feel depressed. You don't have to feel depressed. Being depressed is not going to do you any good. Looking for ways to solve the problem will do you much more good."

Now just take a moment, so you don't lose track of it. Perhaps on your answer sheet jot down #1 and a couple of adjectives that describe what you're feeling in relation to what you just heard. Just hang on to that for a moment now. Hit me with some more.

S "When are those deadbeats in Washington going to wake up to the real problems?"

IR "You think that because those guys in Washington aren't doing enough work that they're not standing behind you, and that this is what is causing your problem. I wonder if that's really the case."

S "My children have been raised with the thought of being on the farm, and now they're not going to have a farm."

IR "Well, I think the reason you're feeling that, because I know a little bit about your family history, is that you've always heard that kind of response from your dad whose constantly harped on what an awful thing it would be to be a failure. That isn't the way you should feel."

S "But John's always wanted to farm. That's been his life."

IR "I think the reason you're saying that is because you've always wanted to have a farm and have never really faced that. Driving yourself for your son, to be what you've wanted him to be."

S "I have no special skills, all I know is farming."

IR "You know I think the reason you're thinking along those lines is that you're looking for an easy way out, rather than facing the problem. You're acting as if there's no other skill available to you."

S "If we could just get a decent price we could stay in business."

IR "Well I think that probably you're hoping for some kind of windfall to salvage . . . Let's face it, it may have been bad judgement on your part to begin with and that's where we have to begin. . . with the judgements that you made about what the farm and when."

S "I have a question about your answer just now. You were telling him that it was just bad judgement to begin with. Well, if the farmer is feeling depressed, wouldn't that make him feel more depressed? Should there be that you come around and say well, maybe it was bad judgement but that's hindsight."

IR "I think the reason you're suggesting I've used bad judgement, it's possibly a way of looking at my responses and not looking at your own mode of interaction, which could be a way of avoiding deeper insights into what you say to people, by looking at what I say to people."

Just jot down #2 and write down several adjectives that you would associate with this last series of interactions I've had with people. What adjectives best describe that?

Let's try again now. Some more problem statements. Pay close attention to your own feelings. Yes?

S "I don't have enough time for this."

SR "Oh I think that you'll find that particularly during these summer months there's going to be plenty of time. Look at the bright side."

S "My father doesn't listen to any of my ideas."

SR "Give him a chance. I think that he wants this to be over with too. He'll come around."

S "A woman's place is in the home. She's not going to have an outside job."

SR "A lot of people do feel like a woman's place is in the home. I know that's true, I hear that a lot."

S "I'm kind of tired of listening to you. I think the reason I'm in this situation is because I expanded and you guys told me to. I don't know whether I want to believe anything you say now or not."

SR "You know things are going to get better, things will get better. Just hang in there, don't give up."

S "Our farm's been in our family for three generations, how can I let it go?"

SR "Boy, don't let it go, hang on to it. I think down the road you're going to see the sun rise again. Right now there are a lot of clouds. Stay with it."

S "I know I missed the last two year's payments of Federal Land Bank, but if PCA comes through with the \$100,000 loan, I know next year will be better."

SR "O.K., keep hoping."

S "The farm burned, I lost everything, and there wasn't any insurance on it."

SR "You know, I've lost things myself; it's really hard. It will get better. I can only tell you, you're at the bottom, but it's going to get better. You have nowhere to go but up."

S "My husband is so depressed he sleeps all afternoon, everyday."

SR "Look at it this way: At least when he's depressed he gets some sleep. He's going to have a more up attitude. I'd hang in there with it."

S "My husband works such long hours and the children hardly know their Dad."

SR "I think it's hard when the kids don't know their Dad. They'll come to know him though, give them time."

Again, write down a couple of adjectives. Try and describe your feelings now about the interactions that have gone on. How were you affected by that? O.K., try me again. Pay close attention to the first three responses

and then to the next three responses, so there's really two parts to this. So hit me with some more problem statements.

S "My kids are having headaches and not doing so well in school."

PR "Well, why do you think they're not doing so well?"

S "I'm 55 years old and I've seen the fruits of my labor my whole life. Now I'm going down the drain."

PR "Why do you feel so depressed about that?"

S "My husband used to make all the farm decisions and I was very supportive of him and he left two years ago. I have two sons that are undependable and the third one that farms is an alcoholic."

PR "Well, why did your husband leave? I wonder why your sons turned to drink like that?"

Now pay attention to the next three responses. In fact, you might just jot down at least one adjective. O.K., try a couple more problem statements.

S "It's been dry, I need a good year."

PR "What kind of plan do you have to make it a better year than you had last year?"

S "It's getting embarrassing to walk downtown."

PR "How do you feel when you meet some of the folks that you've know for a long period of time, what happens to you?"

S "My kids want some designer jeans and designer clothes, and I just can't afford that anymore. We just use hand-me-downs."

PR "I wonder what we can do to figure out how at least some of their needs might be met for some new clothes."

Once again, write down a couple of adjectives that describe how those interactions have affected you. O.K., we're going to do this once more. Again, pay attention to what happens inside you. So let's hear some more problem statements, the kind that you were confronted with out in the field there.

S "My dad who has no reason to say he doesn't care about us. All he cares about is the farm, and he's going down the tubes anyway."

UR "It really makes you frustrated when you put in so much effort and it's hard to see that there's any motivation hanging in there after so much has gone down the drain, as you say."

S "My son's coming home from college in a month and he wants to farm and I've always told him he'd be able to, but now it doesn't seem the farm can support another family."

UR "You've had so many dreams about your boy working with you and you're beginning to wonder whether it's such a good idea to include him in the farm because there's such a risk involved now."

S "When I went to PCA in February they indicated to me that there would be no problem rescheduling my loans. They've talked about it for the last 60 days, now they've decided they don't want to lend me any money at all. What do I do now?"

UR "Here you've put a lot at stake getting this extra money, so you could pay off some loans and, now that this is happening, you're really feeling frustrated and at your wits end about knowing what to do."

S "I'd like to shoot that John at PCA."

UR "Sometimes you get so angry at that guy at the loan office, you'd really like to harm him, wouldn't you? You're very angry at him."

S "When I take my corn to the elevator this fall, I'll go broke."

UR "When you think about going broke, that's a very despairing feeling isn't it?"

S "I don't understand why they won't lend me that money."

UR "Sometimes you don't understand. . . . In this case why they're not going to lend you money really is a feeling of despair, isn't it? You want to know. There's got to be a reason. You're searching for it, and there doesn't seem to be a good one, does there?"

S "There's no way I'm going to send my kids to public school."

UR "You really feel pretty angry about what may go on in public school, is that it?"

S "I believe my lender has it in for me."

UR "When you feel someone's not on your side, it really is difficult to have hope."

#5

Write down a couple of adjectives again. What was the effect of those short interactions on you? I think what I'd like to have you do for about 5 or 6 minutes in your groups, you've got these adjectives in front of you 1 thru 5. Talk to each other a little bit about what you have down. See what kind of correspondance, if any, you have of crossed adjectives. See what kind of agreement there is. Then we'll come back and debrief this. (Group interaction).

May I have your attention? Now let's see if we can be more specific about what's happened and why you feel like you do. What you see up here and you will have in hand shortly are explanations of each of these possible response styles, so don't worry about trying to take notes because they're really taken for you. What you have here are 5 of the most frequently and commonly used ways that people respond to each other, so research has told us.

Carl Rogers some years ago, as a graduate student, interviewed a large number of people and kept track of how they responded to each other and was able to identify 5 major categories. There were some others but they were so different they didn't fit into any particular category and they were used so infrequently as to not stand out by themselves. Now, what's interesting about this, among other things, is that what you're looking at is the frequency in which these are most often used. What I did with you in responding to the problem statements you gave me was to go down the list from top to bottom (E-->I-->S-->P-->U-->) which is exactly the wrong way to do things. When I want to start a relationship with someone, what I want to convey to that person is that I'm with them, I'm listening and so forth. Thus, I should start from the bottom and move to the top (U-->P-->S-->I-->E-->).

Another interesting outcome of this study was that if people, if a person uses any one of these response styles as little as forty percent of the time, others will hear that person using that response style almost a hundred percent of the time. You can only use it forty percent, but others will hear you using it a hundred percent. Don't forget, if you're using any one of these forty percent of the time that means the remaining sixty percent have to be dispersed over the remaining four. That's why that forty percent has such power in terms of what people hear.

So when this training is all done and over with, hopefully you will have some sensitivity to the response style that you may be attracted to without even knowing that you're attracted to it. For example, take #1, and we could begin to pass these out now, so that you will have in hand an explanation of each of these response styles and a general rule that grows out of that (referring to handout called "Ways for Interacting").

Evaluating and advising, it's probably the thing that one would least want to do during the early moments of a relationship. Why? Well, what were some of your adjectives in response to #1? What did you have down? Share them at random. Let me hear some.

Don't care
No empathy
Judgmental
Matter of fact
Frustrated
Simplistic
Cold
Detached
Boxed in

Do any of you have more favorable adjectives associated with this?

Nic words, no help.

Well, what I'm hearing from you folks is exactly what research tells us. And that is when people feel like they're being evaluated and they're being advised about something that's very personal to them, it tends to turn them off.

*2. Interpreting and analyzing: that's the second most frequently used response that human beings use in conversing with each other. The intent of this particular response is to tell the other person what he or she really thinks. Hence, it's interpretive. How do people feel when they feel like they're being interpreted? What did you put down for your adjectives in #2?

Concern
Know it all
Easy answers
Interested
Judgmental
Indifferent

How do you feel when someone is judging you or being judgmental?

Not very good
Defensive
Uncomfortable

That's why, in fact, some people are a little uncomfortable with compliments. You know how some folks get a little embarrassed, with that innocent, toe-digging behavior. When you break it down, what is a compliment? It is a judgement. In this case it's a positive judgement, but there's always an unconscious, perhaps not so unconscious, lurking sense that if you can tell me that how I look is good, that what I'm wearing is fine, you can also tell me that how I look is awful, what I'm wearing is not so good. And that's why, for some folks, compliments are difficult to take. It's a judgement. Better when you give a compliment to invite some short response. Like for example, "Hey, that's a very attractive hairdo." That might cause the person to feel uncomfortable. On the other hand, "That's a very attractive hairdo; where'd you get it?" invites a response. "It's a very attractive hairdo; how did you decide on that one?" Invite a little dialogue.

Keep in mind that none of these responses, we can say, are bad responses. It's more a question of when they are appropriate and when they are inappropriate. There are perfectly good times to do this or to do this.

Supporting and reassuring responses. This is essentially an effort on our part to tell the other person things aren't so bad after all. Things will get better. Don't worry so much. It has the effect, however, of reducing that

person's concern at this moment in time. Maybe it seems as if it's not as serious as the person may feel it is, so rather than feeling supported that may make the person feel like there's nothing more to say because you're not really listening. What did you put down for your adjectives?

Encourage
False hope
Optimistic
Turned off
Patronized
Unreal
Unbelievable

Well you can see the range of responses. They range all the way from optimistic and hopeful to, "It's a turn off". It depends now on what the person hears, but for the most part I'm hearing more adjectives that say it's not very helpful.

How about #4 here? You had two levels. With a probing and questioning response as you say there you've got either the open question or the closed question. The closed question typically asks for a yes or no response, for example, do you plan to do something about your farm financing?

Why questions typically invite defensive responses, because they demand reasonable, rational answers and sometimes at that moment there is no reasonable, rational answer and, more than that, sometimes a person feels that I don't want to be reasonable right now; I want to be irrational, I want to be angry, I want to feel all the things I feel and don't force me into this mode! What did you put down for 4a? What were your adjectives?

Cross-examine
Investigating
Communication stopper
Clarification
Blame yourself

Now the second part, 4b, those were questions which I tried to make more open-ended questions. What were your adjectives to those?

Pressure
Define problem
Sincere
Interested
Constructive
Concerned

See how the adjectives tend to differ when there's a more open-ended question asked? How can we do it? What can we do to resolve it? What and how questions are far less apt to arouse defensive responses. They get people looking at options. They don't feel they have to explain something. Rather, they have to think about what other ways there might be to approach the problem.

Finally, the Understanding or paraphrasing response. This is an effort now. It's the most difficult, but it's also the most effective. It takes the most practice, and it's simply an effort now to put into your own words what you heard that person saying, which is a very powerful way of communicating to that other party that you have listened. In fact, you have listened so well, that you're able to rephrase it.

Now there's two things essentially you can listen to in a message. You can listen to its content; that's obvious. Or you can listen to, simultaneously, the feeling. So every message has two parts. The content at one level and the feelings at another level. So what we try to do with an understanding response is to pay attention to both levels of the message. "My crop is failing; I'm going to go bankrupt!" You're really frustrated at the possibility of going under. That's a kind of hopeless feeling, isn't it? How different that is as opposed to, "Oh, don't worry about that so much, because I think we can do something about it." Maybe you can do something about it, but what's important right now is to start where that person is, rather than where you are. Where is that person? There's a lot of non-verbal and certainly verbal clues. The anxiety in the voice, the facial tension, the body posture, the raised voice, the sometimes obvious tears, all signs of there being high emotional input. When you can respond at that level, as many of you, I know, must during this time of crisis.

Speaking of crisis, I heard on my way over here this morning that on channel 4 this afternoon there's a special news program at 4:00 on why something like two or three farmers are going under. So, it's getting a lot of attention. So you're faced with farming folks out there who are confronted with severe economic and personal crisis and to know that they're listened to, that you're hearing them at this moment, without feeling, and this is so important, that you have to do something about it at this moment.

If I as a psychologist working with a client felt that everytime a client cried before my very eyes, fell apart before my very ears, I had to resolve it at that very moment I'm afraid I'd have to quit my work. The best I can do for that person is be there for him, with her, without judgement at that

time. Allow the individual to have all the feelings that are there; all the anger, all the despair, all the sadness and just be there. It must be hard. I felt like that myself. You're really down as far as you can go right now. It seems to you that there is no tomorrow, and that's exactly what folks like that are feeling and that's exactly what they need to hear in that moment in time.

Someone who simply accepts what they're feeling, without trying to interpret it and try to tell them why they're really feeling that way, without evaluating it and who refuses to tell them what they should do or what to do, without giving them phony support--things will be all right. Things are not all right at the moment it's happening. If you can simply accept that without feeling that you have to do major psychological surgery, it will be very, very helpful just to be patient and to allow the feelings to emerge and to use as much in the way of understanding and paraphrasing responses as possible. What did you have for your adjectives down here on #5? (Understanding response)

active listening
reassuring

Reassuring. How was it reassuring to you? Could you reconstruct that in your mind?

Because I felt that they understood my problems and they were right there with me. I didn't feel nearly so frustrated as I had in the beginning.

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