

Building Healthy Relationships Across Virginia:

A Facilitator's Guide for Teen Dating Violence Prevention

Unit 1:

Positive Personal Development



Positive Personal Development

Introduction



The activities in this unit encourage teens to examine how they view themselves and others, and foster both a sense of confidence and skills for positive interpersonal experiences. From adults and peers policing teen behavior for compliance with societal conventions to corporations trying to sell them something, a teen's self-esteem and sense of adequacy is under constant bombardment. The activities in this unit are meant to provide buffers against these pressures, helping teens explore the kinds of people they want to be, and building skills for respectful, constructive interpersonal experiences. Such activities help participants to create relationships that are characterized by compassion and joy, and recognize behaviors that contribute to abuse and pain.

For obvious reasons, most of the activities in this unit fit particularly well with those included in the Promoting Healthy Relationships unit. While those activities are specific to teen dating relationships and support the ability to identify the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships, the activities in this unit are a bit more general in scope.



Unit 1:

Positive Personal Development

Activities and Corresponding Handouts

Am I Someone Who...?

- Am I Someone Who...? Handout

Alligator River

- Alligator River Handout

Me Map

- Me Map Handout
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Cooperative Drawing

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Activities and Corresponding Handouts-- Page 2

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How I Handle Conflict

- How I Handle Conflict Handout

Problem Solving

- Help in Solving Problems Handout
- How to Have a Discussion (or Even an Argument)
That Isn't Abusive, Part 1 & 2 Handout

Am I Someone Who...?

Facilitator's Notes

Age: Middle or High School

Level: Introductory

Objective: To help participants consider what they value.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Am I Someone Who...? Handout

Instructions:

1. Distribute the Am I Someone Who...? Handout.
2. Encourage students to choose “yes” or “no,” and avoid “maybe.”
3. Allow 5 minutes for participants to answer statements.
4. Ask participants to pair with the person next to them. Share their answers for 6-8 minutes.
5. Ask participants, “What do these statements say about us?”
6. Ask participants, “What can we learn about ourselves or others?”
7. Ask participants, “How many pairs had the exact same answers to each question?”
8. Conclude by discussing the value of difference:
 - When we value differences, we open ourselves up to the possibility of learning; learning about others, other points of view, and ourselves.
 - Differences are not better or worse – just different.

Adapted from In Search of Values: 31 Strategies for Finding Out What Really Matters Most to You; Dr. Sidney B. Simon; Warner Books, 1993. <http://www.simonworkshops.com/>



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Am I Someone Who...?

Am I Someone Who...? is a fun learning exercise that helps you to consider some of your values. Have fun answering the questions and don't be surprised if you discover something new about yourself!

Directions: Circle "Y" for Yes and "N" for No. Even if you feel that your answer falls somewhere in between "Yes" and "No", choose the answer that is most true for you – most of the time.

Am I Someone Who . . .

- | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|
| 1. | Needs to be alone often? | Y | N |
| 2. | Would step in and defend someone who was being bullied? | Y | N |
| 3. | Is apt to judge someone by appearances? | Y | N |
| 4. | Can receive a compliment easily? | Y | N |
| 5. | Is capable of handling opinions different from my own? | Y | N |
| 6. | Would die for my beliefs and values? | Y | N |
| 7. | Is excited about trying new things? | Y | N |
| 8. | Believes everything I read? | Y | N |
| 9. | Is easily swayed by the latest fads? | Y | N |
| 10. | Goes out and compulsively buys? | Y | N |
| 11. | Needs a guy's (or girl's) attention to feel good about myself? | Y | N |
| 12. | Would marry for money or prestige? | Y | N |
| 13. | Spends a lot of time worrying about things without doing something about them? | Y | N |
| 14. | Might seriously consider joining a radical, revolutionary-type organization? | Y | N |
| 15. | Considers failure a bad thing? | Y | N |
| 16. | Falls in love right away? | Y | N |
| 17. | Is fully satisfied with what I have accomplished in life so far? | Y | N |
| 18. | Is afraid to share my true feelings with others? | Y | N |
| 19. | Has lots of energy? | Y | N |
| 20. | Thinks lying to avoid hurting someone's feelings is better than being honest all the time? | Y | N |

Alligator River

Facilitator's Notes

Age: Middle or High School

Level: Introductory

Objectives:

To help participants explore their value system.

Time: 25 minutes

Materials:

Alligator River Handout

Instructions:

1. Distribute Handout to participants.
2. Have one person (facilitator or volunteer) read the Alligator River story aloud, while participants read along.
3. Instruct participants to rank characters from most favorable (1) to least favorable (5).
4. Tell participants that they will not have to share their answers with anybody else, but to think about why they have ranked the characters as they have.
5. Remind participants that there are no right or wrong answers.
6. Discuss what “values” may have been used to determine participants’ answers (i.e. loyalty to friends, dislike of violence, etc.).

Adapted from 31 Strategies for Values Clarification by Simon, Howe, & Kirschenbaum, 1972. <http://www.simonworkshops.com/>



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Alligator River

Directions: Rank these characters from best (1) to worst (5): Abigail, Gregory, Sinbad, Ivan, and Slug. Give reasons for your decisions.

Once there was a girl named Abigail who was in love with a boy named Gregory. Gregory had an unfortunate accident and broke his glasses. Abigail, being a true friend, volunteered to take the glasses to be repaired. Unfortunately, the repair shop was across the river, and a flash flood had washed the bridge away. Poor Gregory could see nothing without his glasses, so Abigail was desperate to get across the river to the repair shop. While she was standing dejectedly on the bank of the river, clutching the broken glasses in her hand, a boy named Sinbad glided by in a rowboat. She asked Sinbad if he would take her across. Sinbad agreed to on the condition that, while she was having the glasses repaired, she would go to a nearby store and steal a transistor radio that he had been wanting. Abigail refused to do this and went to see a friend named Ivan who had a boat.

When Abigail told Ivan her problem, he said he was too busy to help her out and didn't want to be involved. Abigail, feeling she had no other choice, returned to Sinbad and told him she would agree to his plan.

When Abigail returned the repaired glasses to Gregory, she told him what she had had to do. Gregory was so mad about what she had done that he told her he never wanted to see her again.

Abigail, upset, turned to Slug with her tale of woe. Slug was so sorry for Abigail that he promised her he would get even with Gregory. They went to the school playground where Gregory was playing ball, and Abigail watched happily while Slug beat Gregory up and broke his glasses.

Best

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Worst

Me Map-- Building Positive Self-Esteem

Facilitator's Notes

Age: Middle School

Level: Introductory

Objective:

To help participants identify positive attributes about themselves..

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Me Map Blank Figure

Me Map Directions

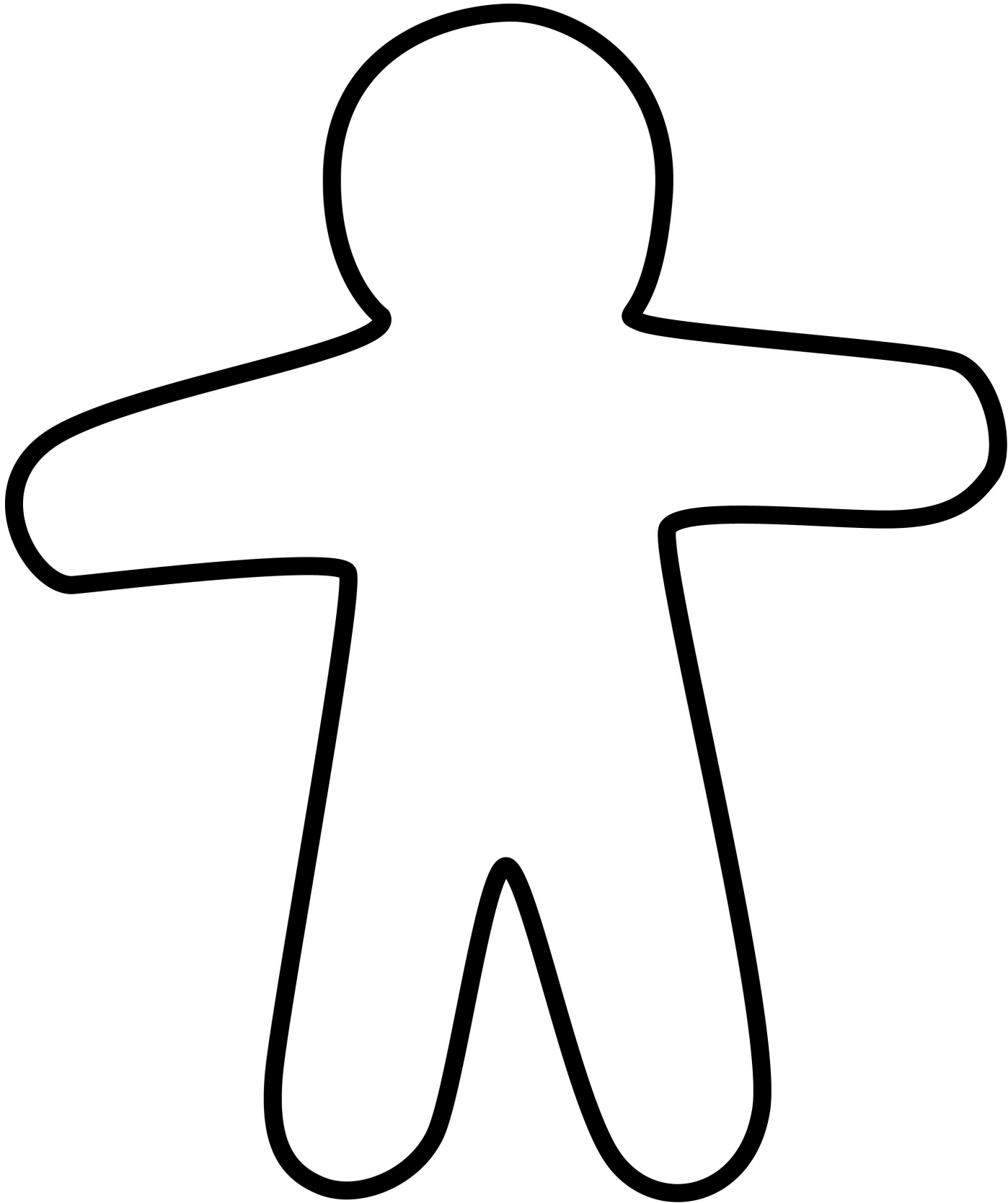
Crayons/Markers

Instructions:

1. Distribute one of each of the above listed materials to each participant.
2. Read through the instructions aloud with participants and tell them they will have about 10-15 minutes to create their Me Map.
3. When participants have completed their personal Me Maps, ask for a few volunteers to share their creations, being sure to validate whatever they've created.
4. Discuss with participants what they have learned from this activity.



Me Map



Me Map

Directions: Color this figure with colors and designs that are comforting and meaningful to you. When you have finished, write things about yourself around the edge of the figure, using the following statements as guidelines:



I am good at...



My greatest accomplishment to date is...



One possession I'd never give up is...



Some things I've always wanted to do or try are...



I want to become...



Something special about me is...

Cooperative Drawing

Facilitator's Notes

Age: Middle or High School

Level: Introductory

Objective:

Participants will identify the difficulties in clear verbal communication.

Time: 10 minutes

Materials:

One piece of paper and a marker/pen for each participant

Overhead projector (Method #2)

Transparency and wax pencil (Method #2)

Instructions:

Method #1:

1. Discuss what communication is: talking and listening. Instruct participants that they will be practicing talking and listening in pairs.
2. Put the group into pairs and give one person in each pair a piece of paper and a pencil.
3. Read the students the following instructions:
One person in each pair will draw a simple picture (for example, a cat), taking care not to let the other person see what they draw. That person (who we will call the “talker”) will then describe the picture he/she has drawn to the partner. The partner (who we will call the “listener”) will attempt to duplicate exactly what the talker has drawn, based solely on the talker’s verbal description. The talker may give direction by describing each individual part of the picture (“draw a medium sized circle in the middle of the page”) but cannot call objects by their name (“draw a cat in the middle of the page”). The listener may ask clarifying questions (“how big?”).
4. Allow two to three minutes and then ask several pairs to hold their pictures. Each pair will likely have very different drawings.
5. When they are finished, ask them to compare pictures and discuss the activity. Some questions to consider:
 - What was it like to have to talk/listen without seeing the other person’s picture?



- Did you expect the pictures to turn out the same?
- What are barriers to communication?
- What helps make communication effective?

6. [Optional] Allow partners to switch jobs, the listener now becomes the drawer/"talker", and the person who drew/described will now be the "listener".

Method #2:

1. Set overhead in front of group, keeping the machine off until after the exercise is completed.
2. Have transparency paper and wax pencil ready for participant volunteer.
3. Make sure each participant has a sheet of paper available.
4. Begin with a discussion on communication:
"What are some ways we communicate: verbally with words or sounds; non-verbally with body language or hand movement? Communication is a two way process. We must be able to communicate clearly and listen well. Why is good communication important in relationships? It enables us to express our needs and wants, as well as helps us understand our partners' needs and wants. What happens when we fail to communicate clearly? Let's see...."
5. Ask for a volunteer to come forward for an experiment in communication.
6. The rules:
 - State that the goal of this experiment is to have each participant draw the same exact picture as the volunteer, by following his/her instructions. As the volunteer is drawing this picture, stress that s/he must give very specific instructions to the rest of the group to draw the same picture.
 - The remaining group members may not ask for clarifications, make noises, or communicate in any other way.
 - The volunteer will draw a simple picture on the overhead. Allow two to three minutes. Tell the volunteer to be specific and descriptive; you want each participant to be able to recreate the picture exactly!
7. When the allotted time has expired, ask all participants to hold up their pictures. Turn on the overhead to project the original picture on board (or wall).
8. What were some of the difficulties? (As a listener: not loud enough, I didn't know how big/small to draw it. As a speaker: did I tell them which way to place the paper?)



Communication Styles Role Play

Facilitator's Notes

Age: Middle School

Level: Introductory

Objective:

To help participants identify styles of communication, and reinforce knowledge with fun and interesting role plays.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Communication Styles Handout

"Kendra's Responses" Role Play Scenarios: Pair #1, Pair #2, Pair #3, Pair #4

Instructions:

1. List types of communication on the board or a flip chart. (See Communication Styles Handout for descriptions.)
2. Distribute the Communication Styles Handout to participants, and briefly discuss each type with the group.
3. Ask for 8 volunteers to do role plays for the group. Split them into 4 pairs. Give each pair a scenario (#1, #2, #3, or #4) and a few minutes to rehearse aside from the class.
4. Read the following scenario to the group:

"Will and Kendra made plans to meet at a party at 8:00. The party was given by Will's friend. Kendra hardly knew anyone at the party, so she was very uncomfortable being there alone when Will was 45 minutes late."
5. Have rest of group identify which type of communication is being acted out.

The Role Plays:

Pair #1: When Will shows up, Kendra hugs him hello and acts like nothing is wrong. When Will says "Sorry I was late." Kendra says "It's okay." (passive)

Pair #2: When Will shows up, Kendra says hello and asks to speak with him alone for a minute. She says, "Will, you were 45 minutes late and I was really uncomfortable being here alone because I don't know anyone here. What happened?" She gives him a chance to explain and after Will apologizes she says "I accept your apology, but I don't like to be kept waiting. Next time please call if you're going to be late." (assertive)



Pair #3: When Kendra sees Will coming, she starts flirting with another guy, thinking that will teach him not to make her wait. (passive/aggressive)

Pair #4: When Will shows up, Kendra goes off on him. Before he even gets a chance to say anything, she's yelling at him in front of everyone, "Where were you? Who do you think you are making me wait for you for 45 minutes, you inconsiderate jerk! You can forget this party, we're leaving now!" (aggressive)

6. Ask participants which communication style they believe was most effective for Kendra.



Definitions of Communication Styles

Non-Assertive/Passive

Non-assertive (or Passive) behavior is the failure to stand up for your rights in a respectful and appropriate manner. It also involves standing up for your rights in a feeble or apologetic way. This enables your rights to be violated in two ways: (1) you disrespect yourself when you ignore your preferences and needs, and (2) you teach others that they can take advantage of you.

Non-assertive behavior pays off by allowing you to avoid potentially unpleasant conflicts with others. However, unpleasant consequences such as hurt feelings, not getting your needs met, and lower self-esteem are likely to result. The non-verbal parts of passive communication include poor eye contact, low voice level and scared-looking body posture.

Assertive

Assertive behavior is standing up for your legitimate personal rights without violating the rights of others. Assertive behavior is a direct, honest, and appropriate expression of your feelings, opinions, and beliefs. It involves respectfulness, good timing and tactfulness. High quality assertion also includes empathy and consideration for the other person. This means that assertive communication involves listening to others and dialoguing with them. The non-verbal parts of assertive communication include good eye contact, matter-of-fact voice tone, open body posture and an air of confidence and self-respect.

Aggressive

Aggressive behavior is standing up for your rights at the expense of others. It is direct but dishonest because you are not expressing your true feelings under your anger. Aggressive behavior violates the other's rights and may result in your losing your rights. The purpose of aggressive behavior is to dominate, control, humiliate, or put down the other rather than to simply express your honest feelings and thoughts. Like non-assertive behavior, aggressive communication leads to the loss of self-respect and esteem for the person expressing the aggressive behavior, and may hurt the feelings of the recipient of the behavior. The non-verbal parts of aggressive communication include cutting others off, staring them down, yelling or raised voice levels, and threatening or intimidating body posture.

Passive/Aggressive

Passive-Aggressive behavior is an indirect or sideways way of showing anger. It violates others' rights without the huffing and puffing of aggressive behavior. Nevertheless, it is a type of aggression, and it is dishonest. The purpose of passive-aggressive behavior is to manipulate others by making them feel guilty, or by passively resisting and avoiding whatever you do not want or like. It does not involve expressing your honest feelings and thoughts. The non-verbal parts of passive-aggressive communication can resemble either assertive or non-assertive behavior.

Kendra's Responses

(NOTE to Facilitator: Make 2 copies of this page, and then cut out each of the individual responses and put them in pairs. Hand both copies of Response #1 to the first pair of volunteers, both copies of Response #2 to the second pair of volunteers, and so on.)

Pair #1: When Will shows up, Kendra hugs him hello and acts like nothing is wrong. When Will says "Sorry I was late." Kendra says "It's okay."

Pair #2: When Will shows up, Kendra says hello and asks to speak with him alone for a minute. She says, "Will, you were 45 minutes late and I was really uncomfortable being here alone because I don't know anyone here. What happened?" She gives him a chance to explain and after Will apologizes she says "I accept your apology, but I don't like to be kept waiting. Next time please call if you're going to be late."

Pair #3: When Kendra sees Will coming, she starts flirting with another guy, thinking that will teach him not to make her wait.

Pair #4: When Will shows up, Kendra goes off on him. Before he even gets a chance to say anything, she's yelling at him in front of everyone, "Where were you? Who do you think you are making me wait for you for 45 minutes, you inconsiderate jerk! You can forget this party, we're leaving now!"

Gossip Game

Facilitator's Notes

Age: Middle School

Level: Introductory

Objective:

To show the importance of good and accurate communication and the destructive force of rumors in communication

Time: 5-10 minutes

Materials:

None

Instructions:

1. If group size permits, have participants form a circle. (If group size is large this can be done in rows. You can even split the rows and see what different messages you end up with at the end of each row).
2. Inform participants that you have a message that you will send to the first person by whispering it to them. They should then whisper the same message to the person beside them all the way until the last person.
3. The last person can choose to say the final message out loud, or they can whisper to you and you announce the final message.
4. Message:
Betsy and Brian went to the beach. They swam, ate seafood, and played Frisbee. They came back on Sunday and went to school on Monday.
5. More than likely the message will be severely altered. Use this as an example of how verbal communication can break down and become distorted.
6. Ask the participants what they should do differently to make the communication clearer (e.g., Ask questions, ask to have it repeated, ask for it louder and clearer, etc.)



“I” Messages

Facilitator’s Notes

Age: High School

Level: Introductory

Objective:

To introduce participants to the concept of using “I” Message communication skills and to allow them the opportunity to practice “I” messages.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

“I” Messages Handout

“I” Messages Worksheet

Instructions:

Method #1:

1. Distribute “I” Messages Handout.
2. Explain “I” messages, and solicit examples.
3. Distribute “I” Messages Worksheet.
4. Allow 5 minutes for participants to complete.
5. Read each scenario aloud, and seek responses from volunteers.

Method #2:

1. Divide participants into dyads (2) or triads (3), and assign a scenario to each group.
2. Allow 5 minutes for discussion.
3. Bring group together, and ask each smaller group to share their scenario and their response.

Adapted from Colorado School Mediation Project. <http://www.csmmp.org/>



“I” Messages

Using “I” messages is very important when communicating.

Use this formula:

Feelings + Information + Thoughts + Wants

Here is an example of an “I” message: “I feel angry when you copy my homework. I think we should study together so that we each complete our own assignments.”

I Feel

There are various types of feelings that may include happiness, sadness, anger, fear, or shame. Identify what you are feeling, and state it clearly.

I feel angry...

When You

This is where you identify a behavior or an action that you would like to see changed.
...when you copy my homework...

I Think

This is where you state what you would like to see happen. Identify the behavior or change you would like to see occur.

...I think that we should study together...

I Want

Clarify what you would like to see happen. Try to express your wants in a positive way. In this example, it is clear that each person benefits from this proposal.

...so that we each complete our own assignments.

Now it is your turn! Try to create your own “I Feel” statement below...

I Feel:

When You:

I Think:

I Want:

“I” Messages Worksheet

Create an “I” Message for each of the following statements and situations:

1. “Stop bugging me. Can’t you see I’ve got things to do?”
2. Your friend just called you a name that you really hate.
3. “You always make me take out the trash.”
4. Your best friend just brought back something of yours that is now slightly broken.
5. Your best friend helped you with something you had trouble with.

Emotion Charades

Facilitator's Notes

(NOTE to Facilitator: This activity can be used effectively with either of the activities addressing consent in the "Promoting Healthy Relationships" Unit.)

Age: Middle or High School

Level: Introductory

Objective:

To discuss non-verbal communication and the limitations/challenges of communication based on non-verbal communication alone.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

Emotion Cards

Instructions:

1. Pass out emotion cards.
2. Each person must communicate the emotion on their card to the group without using verbal communication.
3. The group must try to guess the emotion being displayed by raising their hand to give their answer.
4. When the group has trouble guessing, emphasize just how difficult it can be to figure out how someone is feeling without seeing/hearing/understanding different kinds of communication (visual, verbal, body language).

Adapted from PeaceLine: A Violence Prevention Education Curriculum for Middle and High School Aged Youth, Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley, Radford, VA. <http://www.wrcnrv.org>



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Sad

Confused

Shocked

Angry

Happy

Scared

Conflict Resolution: What Would You Do?

Facilitator's Notes

(NOTE to Facilitator: This activity should be used in the later session of an on-going group.)

Age: High School

Level: Advanced

Objective:

Participants will explore and identify options for conflict resolution.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

“What Would You Do?” Scenario Cards

Instructions:

1. Divide class into groups of no larger than four people per group, and provide each group with a Scenario Card. (Some groups may have the same scenario).
2. Ask the groups of participants to discuss their scenario for ten minutes, answering the question at the end of each.
3. Check in with the groups, making sure that each group agrees on one solution that they think is best.
4. Bring class back together, asking each group to share the following:
 - Their scenario and solution they have agreed on.
 - How did they reach their decision?
 - Were there conflicting opinions?
 - If yes, what did they do to resolve them?
5. Close by pointing out that we all use conflict resolution skills all the time. Not every technique works with every personality or in every situation, but it is worthwhile to figure out what works for you in general.



What Would You Do?

1) It is three days before prom. You have been working at your part-time job for three months and are relying on your earnings to pay for gas and insurance for your car. You enjoy the job and cannot afford to quit. Your boss tells you that, because work is extremely busy, you must work prom night. Your girlfriend has bought her dress and is very excited about the prom. How can you resolve this situation?

2) You are in biology class and are sitting near several students who talk during class and are disruptive. Twice last week your teacher reprimanded you for talking even though you had not said anything. He said that you would receive detention if you were caught talking again. He just looked up from his desk and accused you of talking again. What do you do now?

3) You have been best friends with Tamyra for several years and have trusted her with your most private secrets. Yesterday you learned that Tamyra has been telling others what you have told her. You confront her and she lies, denying that she has broken your trust. How do you handle this situation?

Assertiveness Techniques

Facilitator's Notes

Role Play” activity included earlier in this unit.)

Age: Middle or High School

Level: Advanced

Objective:

To teach participants a variety of techniques of speaking assertively.

Time: 20-25 minutes

Materials:

Assertiveness Techniques Handout

“I” Messages Handout

“I” Messages Worksheet

Flipchart or Poster Board

Instructions:

1. Discuss the following definition of the word “assertive”, which is written on Newsprint/Poster Board (from the Definition of Communication Styles Handout included earlier in this unit):

Assertive behavior is standing up for your legitimate personal rights without violating the rights of others. Assertive behavior is a direct, honest, and appropriate expression of your feelings, opinions, and beliefs. It involves respectfulness, good timing and tactfulness. High quality assertion also includes empathy and consideration for the other person. This means that assertive communication involves listening to others and dialoguing with them. The non-verbal parts of assertive communication include good eye contact, matter-of-fact voice tone, open body posture and an air of confidence and self-respect.

2. Ask participants if this definition makes sense. Clarify words and ideas as needed.

3. Using the following points as a guideline, describing why being assertive is useful:

- respects self and others
- maintains boundaries
- builds healthy relationships. brings clarity to the conversation
- is non-threatening



4. Explain the assertiveness techniques, reasons to use them, and an example of each technique (see handout).
 - a. "I" Messages
 - b. Broken Record Technique
 - c. Escaping From an Encounter That Gets Out of Control
5. Give each participant a small index card.
6. Give participants 3-5 minutes to think of and write down a time they were in a situation where they found it difficult to be assertive. Tell participants that they will be sharing their responses with a partner, so only write what they are comfortable sharing. The facilitator may want to give an example to get ideas generating.
7. Break participants into pairs, and ask them to share their examples with each other. Have participants share why they found the situation difficult.
8. Have participants practice using an assertive response, using each of the Assertiveness Techniques, to the situations they have just discussed.
9. "I" messages are often the most difficult for participants to comprehend and use successfully. To help participants formulate their "I" messages, distribute the "I" Messages Handout and the "I" Messages Worksheet and have them complete both (both handouts can be found earlier in this unit under the "I" Messages activity).
10. Ask for volunteers to share their examples and responses.

Adapted from Pattern Changing for Abused Women by Marlin Shear and Beth Creamer Fallon.
<http://www.sagepub.com/booksProdDesc.nav?prodId=Book4435>



Assertiveness Techniques

There are many assertiveness techniques that you can use: Three that we think are effective are:

- Using “I” Messages,
- The Broken Record Technique,
- Escaping from a Situation that Gets Out of Control.

Using “I” Messages

Using “I” messages is very important when communicating. Try this formula:
“Feelings + Information + Thoughts + Wants”

Here is an example of an “I” message: “I feel angry when you copy my homework. I think we should study together so that we each complete our own assignments.”

Broken Record Technique

This technique makes sure that your words are heard and taken seriously. It is good to use this technique when you are setting a boundary with someone, and he or she is not hearing, not listening, or beginning to argue with you. It is done by repeating your statement over and over again.

For example:

I would like you to stop calling me every five minutes
(... but I need to talk to you often.)

I would like you to stop calling me every five minutes
(...but you don’t understand...)

I would like you to stop calling me every five minutes
(...etc....)

Escaping From an Encounter That Gets Out of Control

This technique is used when the other person begins to get nasty, ridicules you, becomes sarcastic, insults you, makes an aggressive gesture, or begins a verbal attack.

You can exit from the conversation by quickly saying, “Let’s talk another time when things are calmer,” or “I don’t allow anyone to speak to me like that,” or “We can talk when you can be more respectful.” Then turn and walk away, or hang up the phone.

How I Handle Conflict

Facilitator's Notes

(NOTE to Facilitator: This activity is meant as an introduction to the following activity entitled "Problem Solving")

Age: Middle School

Level: Introductory

Objective:

To identify individual responses to conflict and reinforce healthy choices.

Time: 35 minutes (10 minutes plus 25 minutes for "Problem Solving" activity)

Materials:

How I Handle Conflict Handout

Instructions:

1. Distribute the How I Handle Conflict Handout, and ask participants to take 5 minutes to complete only Part A, "How I Usually Respond".
2. Ask participants to return to their "How I Handle Conflict" Handout and to take another 5 minutes to complete the Part B, "An Alternative" portion.
3. Ask participants to share any "creative" alternatives.
4. Complete the Problem Solving activity (can be found in this unit following this activity).

Adapted from Colorado School Mediation Project. <http://www.csmp.org/>



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How I Handle Conflict

Part A

Answer each of the questions as honestly as you can. The purpose of this exercise is to see how you deal with conflict.

CONFLICT SCENARIO

1. When someone blames me for something I didn't do, I usually...
2. When someone steals my favorite DVD or money, I usually...
3. When someone "puts me down" or makes fun of me, I usually...
4. When someone talks behind my back and says things that are lies, I usually...
5. When someone pushes me or hits me, I usually...
6. When someone tells me to do something I don't want to do, I usually...
7. When I am mad at my best friend, I usually...
8. When I've lost something valuable or had something that's important to me broken, I usually...

Part B

If you think that you could handle the situations listed in questions 1-8 in a different way – perhaps a better way – write what that alternative would be.

AN ALTERNATIVE:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Problem-Solving

Facilitator's Notes

Age: Middle School

Level: Introductory

Objective:

To teach participants an effective problem-solving process.

Time: 25 minutes

Materials:

Help in Solving Problems Handout

How to Have a Discussion, Part One Handout

How to Have a Discussion, Part Two Handout

Chalkboard or Flipchart

Instructions:

Before class, choose an example of a problem that students will use the problem-solving model to solve. (*An example is given below. It may be suitable to use “best friend” instead of “person I’m dating” with younger students.)

1. **During class**, name the five steps of problem-solving process. Make sure that each step is clearly understood by all participants. Then, give them the sample problem that you have chosen and ask them to:

- A. Name the problem
- B. Identify their feelings
- C. Identify solutions
- D. Examine possible consequences
- E. Find resources that can help
- F. Select the best possible solution

Note: In most cases, the best possible solution is different for each person.

*Example:

A) Name the problem:

The person I’m dating gets mad when I want to go out with my other friends.

B) Identify feelings:

I feel angry, impatient, and frustrated.

C) Identify solutions:

I can go anyway, stay home, talk about it with them.



D) Examine possible consequences:

If I go, my partner may break up with me, or may get angry with me. If I stay, I may lose friends, miss out on hanging out with them, or they may get angry at me for neglecting them. If I discuss it with my partner, my partner may or may not understand, and nothing may be resolved.

E) Find resources that can help.

Talk to a trusted friend or adult about the situation.

F) Select the best possible solution.

I could discuss the situation with my partner. Hopefully, he/she will understand that my friends are important as well. If the situation does not get resolved, maybe I should ask myself if I should be with this person.

2. Give out the Help in Solving Problems Handout to participants and ask them to identify a problem for themselves and use it to fill out the rest of the Handout.

3. Briefly discuss how breaking down problems into smaller pieces may make it easier to solve them. Distribute How to Have a Discussion, Parts I and II Handouts.

Activity and handouts adapted from Skills for Violence Free Relationships: Curriculum for Young People Ages 13-18. Barrie Levy (1984) Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women, and Fairfax Victim Assistance Network, Fairfax, Virginia



Help in Solving Problems

1. Name the problem. (What is it?)

2. Identify feelings. (How do I feel?)

3. Identify solutions. (How can I solve the problem?)

4. Examine possible consequences. (What might happen if I choose this way or that way to solve the problem?)

5. Locate resources for help. (Where can I get help? Who can help me?)

6. Select the best possible solution. (Which choice helps me stay safe and lets me take care of myself?)

How to Have a Discussion (or Even an Argument) That Isn't Abusive

PART ONE

Problem Solving

Problem Solving involves six important steps:

1. Define the problem.
2. Brainstorm solutions.
3. Evaluate and narrow down the brainstorm solutions.
4. Decide on a mutually acceptable solution.
5. Implement the solution.
6. Reevaluate the solution.

- Each dating partner should define the problem in terms of his/her needs. If one or both dating partners cannot do this without anger, a “Time Out” should be considered.
- Each dating partner should offer all possible solutions, and neither partner should evaluate any of the solutions at this point.
- The dating partners should discuss how each solution might affect them in terms of solving the problem and meeting needs.
- The dating partners should decide which solution will both solve the problem and meet both their needs.
- Once the dating partners have reached agreement, they should try out their solution to the problem.
- To determine if it has worked well for both dating partners. Plan when you will reevaluate the solution.

How to Have a Discussion (or Even an Argument) That Isn't Abusive

PART TWO Time-Outs

When There's Too Much Anger To Get Past the Problem Solving Step

"Time Outs" help us address anger safely. Usually, "Time Out" means physically leaving the scene of the conflict. It also includes returning after both partners are calmer and have self control.

A "Time Out" involves six important steps:

1. Make a prior agreement with your dating partner. (For example, "When I am too angry to talk to you, will walk away, but I will come back, call you after I feel more calm.")
2. Recognize your own intense anger signals. Use cues that you have identified in your prior agreement to let the other person know you are beginning to feel too angry to continue.
3. Stop and think. Ask yourself, "What is really bothering me about this situation? Why am I reacting this way? What do I need to do for myself in this moment to calm myself down?"
4. Return to the discussion.
5. Share your feelings.
6. Plan the next step.

- A prior agreement means that you will plan together how and when you will discuss problems. Prearrange a time, and use cues that will identify the need for a "Time Out."
- When there is anger, use the word or phrase that signals you need a "Time Out." Sometimes having a prior arrangement that you will use a "funny" word or signal may help to calm the anger just as it is starting.
- Talk to yourself.
- Get active: go for a walk - do not drive while angry.
- Return. Check-in: "I'm okay now, how about you? I'm ready to talk now, are you?" If your partner is not ready, do not push. Respect each other's need for space.
- Talk about why the "Time Out" was needed?
- Give one another feedback.
- Using what you have learned, return to the subject you were discussing before the Time Out.
- Plan what you will do next time.