Styles of Communication in Conflict

- **Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument**

- Answer each question as if “push comes to shove”

- Answer each question the closest to your response – what you most likely do – “A” or “B” response

- 30 Questions total – add your responses

Manual pgs 6-7 – 6-14
Five Styles of Communication

- Five Styles:
  1) Competing
  2) Avoiding
  3) Compromising
  4) Accommodating
  5) Collaborating

Competing Style

Manual pg 6-10
Competing Style

• The attitude is “I’m going to win; you’re going to lose.”
• There are only two possible outcomes from conflict: winning and losing.
• Winning is associated with status and competence.
• Losing is associated with loss of status, incompetence and weakness.
• Prime importance on personal goals to the virtual exclusion of any concern for the relationship.
• Protection of personal goals is taken as an index of successful combat.
• It’s a dog-eat-dog world.
• Nice guys finish last.
• Method of control: RESENTMENT

Avoiding Style

Manual pg 6-10
Avoiding Style

- We are both going to lose, so I'll leave.
- There is a feeling of hopelessness.
- Avoiding protects the person from the useless and punishing experience of endless struggles that cannot be won.
- Rather than suffer, I will leave physically or psychologically.
- An Avoider might adopt the role of a detached observer.
- Roll with the punches and live to fight again another day.
- Getting angry means losing control.
- It is unfair to lose control, so leave.
- Method of control: WITHDRAWAL

Compromising Style

- Manual pg 6-11
Compromising Style

- You get half the cookie, and I get half the cookie. We both lose a little and compromise. It’s better to get something than nothing.
- A secret variation of losing/winning.
- Soften the effects of losing by limiting gains of the other person.
- Arrive at compromise by somebody playing the “judge.”
- Ringing oratory invoking everything from “the democratic process” to “the rules.”
- Nobody wins, and nobody loses.
- Evokes the attitude that “war is hell.”
- Method of control: RULES

Accommodating Style

Manual pg 6-11
Accommodating Style

- The primary concern for the effect of conflict is on the well-being and durability of relationships.
- The assumption is that human relationships are fragile, that they cannot endure the trauma of working through differences.
- There is a fear of losing the relationship.
- Appease others by ignoring or denying their behavior and avoid conflict by ignoring or denying how you feel about their behavior.
- Personal objectives are set aside, and the relationship lends itself to one-sided domination.
- There is an attitude of forced, cheerful compliance.
- Eventually, the “Mt. St. Helens” effect will play out (“Tic, Tic, Boom!”) or it is like a time bomb (“TIC TOC, TIC TOC … BOOM!”).
- Method of control: GUILT

Collaborating Style

Manual pg 6-12
Collaborating Style

- This has an altogether different attitude that results in a different behavior.

- We can both win.

- Importance is attached to the well-being of the members of the relationship and to the relationship simultaneously. The two sets of goals are not seen as mutually exclusive as with other styles.

- Conflict is inevitable because we are different from one another. This leads to differences in opinion. The most common reasons for differences are incomplete understanding and commitment to inequality.

- A collaborator has a tolerance and acceptance of differences.

- You have the right to feel, and so does the other person in the conflict.

Collaborating Style

- Let’s differentiate (and get out of our feelings) and then integrate (and create more closeness ... let’s be solution focused).

- The real paradox of control is to not control! The real power comes into play when you both allow each other to get out your feelings and then think of the other’s perspective to the point of creating more closeness through the understanding and then, through that, you come to a place to problem solve that takes the feelings, points of view, background and perspectives of both parties into play. This is true integration of both parties.

- The paradox of control: REAL POWER
Styles Revealed

- Avoiders have minimal concern for personal goals as well as minimal concern for the relationship (1,1).
- Competers have maximum concern for personal goals and minimal concern for the relationship (9, 1).
- Accommodators have minimal concern for personal goals and maximum concern for the relationship (1,9).
- Compromisers fall into the middle of the quadrants. They want to preserve personal goals and the relationship and are willing to give up some of each to do so.
- Collaborators have maximum concern for personal goals as well as maximum concern for the relationships. They want everyone to win (9,9).

Manual pg 6-13

Activity

Family Circle of Styles

- Create a circle and place in it the people in your immediate family you grew up with – label each person.
- Consider what style was each person's primary style, and when that did not work, their secondary style.
- When did you know the conflict was over?
- Consider how your culture played into the conflict styles – what were those considerations?
Conflict Resolution and the Intersection With Indigenous Peoples, Part 3

Conflict Glossary

- **Conflict** is natural and occurs in everyday life.

- It is often due to misunderstanding or misinterpretation of someone else's verbal or non-verbal behavior.

- It is rarely needed for life-saving techniques, yet our natural instinct is to "fight" or "flee"—our limbic system has kicked into gear.

- Our deliberate responses, those guided by the cortex of brain, teach us to slow down, back up or stand still and reassess the situation before we run or “put up our dukes.”

- Feelings of stress might lead to conflict.

Manual pgs 3-20

Conflict Glossary Handout

Please turn to this page in your workbook: Pg 46

**Healthy Conflict:**

- Engenders natural feelings
- Identifies needs and feelings
- Energizes us to meet the needs of ourselves and others
- Increases our skills for dealing with our environment
- Decreases the number of conflicts
- Creates naturally inhibited behaviors
- Solution Focused

Manual pg 3-21
Conflict Glossary Handout

Unhealthy conflict:

- Creates learned responses
- Masks real needs and feelings
- Squanders energy on false solutions, blame and shame
- Increases the problems we have with our environment
- Increases the number of conflicts
- Is addictive
- Creates a false sense of power and authority
- Results in impatience, urgency and reticence
- Problem Focused

Manual pg 3-21

What It Takes to Have a Healthy Relationship

- Being with someone – no matter what.
- We are inter – dependent on each other – interconnected. We need each other.
- Must be entered in – heart and soul. Don’t worry about the outcome.
- All you want is their highest good.

Manual pg 3-22 – 3-24
What It Takes to Have a Healthy Relationship

This type of relationship means:

- You are willing to do what is right to rescue the relationship.
- It is what you do with what has happened – NOT what happened.
- Doing all this means taking risks. The biggest risk is not basing the relationship on ME.
- It requires the ability to forgive.

What It Takes to Have a Healthy Relationship

This Type of Relationship CANNOT be Based on:

- School
- Hobbies
- Family Gatherings
- Lust
- Your child’s Activities
A HEALTHY Relationship DOES NOT Intend to:

- Manipulate
- Keep Score
- Control
- “You owe Me” Attitude

Manual pg 3-24

A HEALTHY Relationship DOES NOT Intend to:

Costs of a HEALTHY Relationship

- Risk
- Time
- Money
- Energy
- Reputation

- Heart
- Dreams
- YOUR Agenda
- YOUR Customs
- YOUR Taste/Style
It Can be Broken by the Following Behaviors

- Lying
- Stealing
- Sexual Deviance
- Abuse of ANY Type
- Outside Sexual Relationships

Repairing Relationships

- Life offers many situations and circumstances that damage relationships.
- A person does not get through any relationship without some damage.
- It is not always the damaging effects of “what happened” that make the damage so destructive.
- It is the manner in which individuals involved deal with the damage that causes the ongoing hurt and deep feelings of unresolved resentment, lack of forgiveness and loss.

Manual pg 5-5
Repairing Damaged Relationships

- The first step in repairing a damaged relationship - identify the relationship that has been damaged and the root cause of the damage. Was the surface issue that you and the other involved individual identified as the source of the problem the actual root cause or was there something deeper and more difficult to identify that lead to the hurt?

- Next step is to validate your feelings around the hurt, unresolved resentment, lack of forgiveness or loss. Being able to identify your feelings helps reduce any chaos or “feelings of craziness” around the situation.

Manual pg 5-5

Repairing Damaged Relationships

- Now, here comes the tough step.

- Check in with the other party or parties to see what they recall and how they feel about the situation or circumstance. This is more than just asking their perception of what happened. It also attempting to understand the context in which it happened.

Manual pg 5-6
Life Happens

• We all know that “life happens.”

• Yet when it is happening to another person and that person then affects us in a negative manner, we tend to take it personally.

• Understanding the other person’s life situation might also help you to see that what was going on for them was not “all about you.”

• Maybe it was about them.

• Their life situation caused an inability to really see or feel what was happening to you at the time.

Manual pg 5-6

Repairing Damaged Relationships - Steps

Follow these guidelines to help the individual explain their story, of how “life happened” to them:

– Check out their perception of the situation.

– Listen without judgment (that is, suspend judgment).

– Do not jump in as he or she tells the story. The person is telling you what was actually happening in his or her life at the time.

– Stand still in the moment (use your mantra if need be) to just sit and listen.

Manual pg 5-6
Other Methods for Repairing Damaged Relationships

- Writing a letter or a series of letters to the person(s) involved, explaining without judgment what is causing you to write and describing the hope to clear up some unresolved feelings. Include in the letter your perceptions of the events and situations leading up to the unresolved hurt, resentment or lack of forgiveness.

- Using audio or video tapes in addition to letter writing. The addition of body language, gestures, facial expressions, voice and personal sounds and expressions that are familiar to both parties can be very powerful.

More Repairing Methods

- Visiting a gravesite to have the conversation

- A time of meditation with a ritual of letting the hurt, resentment and/or lack of forgiveness go in some manner – lifting it out.

- Meet, if possible if the person with whom you have the damaged relationship is alive.

- If no longer alive, the ritual might involve a simple prayer, followed by the hurt being expressed in writing and then burned at the gravesite.

- A blessing can be said as the burned papers fly off in the wind or scatter on the ground.
Courageous People

- Courageous people make big efforts to be transparent
- Put their dukes down
- Create meaningful conversations
- Risk their ego for the possibility of creating a new life change – intimacy
- Intimacy is broken down to four interconnecting words: In – To – Me - See

Cyn’s Book

Rein In Your Brain
FROM IMPULSIVITY TO THOUGHTFUL LIVING IN RECOVERY
Cynthia Moreno Tuohy, BSW, NCAC II, with Victoria Castello

Presented by: Cynthia Moreno Tuohy, BSW, NCAC II, CDC III, SAP
Conflict Resolution and the Intersection With Indigenous Peoples, Part 3

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Counselor’s Tool – NIDA SBIR

A Component of NAADAC’s Life-Long Learning Series

84

Thanks and Blessings

Many blessings as you move through your life. It is yours to change and influence!

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85