

Communication & Conflict Resolution

HOW TO GET YOUR POINT ACROSS WITHOUT PUNCTURING SOMEONE IN THE PROCESS

I. OUTCOME: A sense of being understood, cared for, accepted

II. Goals:

TALKER (teacher)

- Cannot use “you”
- Be specific and brief

LISTENER (Learner)

- * Repress your own feelings and observations
- * Summarize with same emotional intensity
- * Summarize accurately even if you *disagree*

III. Process: For Each Question (A-D)

- Listener asks question
- Talker responds
- Listener summarizes
- Talker approves or corrects
- Listener summarizes
- Listener asks next question

IV. Questions (Always asked by Listener)

- “How do you see (view, ect.) this issue (problem, topic, ect.)?”
- “When this happens, how does it make you feel?”
- “Can you tell me why you feel this way?”
- “What do you need from me when you feel like that?”

Listener: Look for hurt, anger, or fear

Listener: Listen for specific behaviors

Talker: Slow down; think through what you need from listener when this issue arises. Make it a specific behavior.

V. Change Roles: Go through the four basic questions (A-D) again.

Talker: “How do you feel about what I just said?”

(This is the equivalent to question B)

VI. TROUBLESHOOTING

- If you as a talker are feeling “agitated,” the listener has assumed your role and is no longer listening.
- If you as a talker are feeling “grilled” or “interrogated,” summaries are not being given often enough or at all.
- If you as a listener are feeling “confused,” not enough “feeling” words are being used.
- Watch out for the talker who says, “I feel...” but is using cognitions. If you can substitute “I think,” then it is probably not a feeling.
- If you as a listener are feeling “overwhelmed,” slow conversations down, go “down” deeper into the topic instead of “across: it; limit feelings to those occurring in one issue at a time.