

## Interpersonal Communication Activity

### Chapter 9-Dynamics of Interpersonal Relationships Dialectical Tension

The purpose of this activity is to identify and describe behaviors that contribute to dialectical tension in relationships. For each situation below, do the following: Identify the dialectical tension and explain the elements of the conflict. Identify one or more of the eight strategies for managing this tension (denial, disorientation, selection, alternation, segmentation, moderation, reframing, or reaffirmation) that you feel would be most beneficial to the relationship and explain how the relationship would deal with the tension under these circumstances.

Situation	Dialectical Tension	Strategy for Managing
<p>Example:  <i>Sam, 19, and Sam's parent, Tracy, have become good friends over the last few years. Sam now has a serious romantic partner and spends less time talking to Tracy.</i></p>	<p><i>The open-privacy dialect is probably at work here. Sam and Tracy continue to share the intimacy of their parent-child relationship, but privacy needs about the romantic partner probably keep them at more distance.</i></p>	<p><i>Sam and Tracy are likely to use the segmentation strategy, in which they maintain openness about many areas but keep certain areas of the romantic relationship "off limits".</i></p>
<p>1) Daryl is new to the software firm where Pat has been for five years. Daryl has asked Pat to play golf this weekend. Pat is uncomfortable about mixing business and pleasure, but still wants to have a good working relationship with Daryl.</p>		
<p>2) Nestor and Gina have been dating for six months. They continue to enjoy one another's company, but each has begun to notice annoying little habits that the other one has.</p>		
<p>3) Jenner and A.J. are siblings who have always relied on one another completely. Jenner appreciates A.J.'s dependability, but wishes their relationship wasn't so boring.</p>		

Situation	Dialectical Tension	Strategy for Managing
<p>4) Eugenia and Shane have worked at the same company for twenty years. They have collaborated on a number of projects. They've tried to get together socially, but Eugenia's husband and Shane's wife don't seem to get along.</p>		
<p>5) Chris and Nic are roommates. Chris wants them to share everything, but Nic is not proud of a few instances in the past and doesn't want to face Chris's judgment.</p>		
<p>6) Gene and Erin have been best friends for over ten years. Gene met someone over a year ago and got married last month. Both Gene and Erin are trying to work out their "new" relationship.</p>		



## Interpersonal Communication Activity

### Chapter 10-Climate Nondefensive Responses to Criticism

The purpose of this activity is to practice nondefensive responses to typical criticisms you may face. For each of the following statements, write a nondefensive response that follows the suggestions in the text. Working in dyads, take turns role playing the situation/criticism and effective responses. Be prepared to share with the class.

Situation/Criticism	Effective Response to Criticism
1) "You've been late to work everyday this week. Just who do you think you are that you can come wandering in after the rest of us are already working?"	
2) "This place is a mess. Don't you care about how we live?"	
3) "You should have consulted someone before acting on that."	
4) "Your sister got terrific grades this term."	

5) "How could you have been so thoughtless at the party last night?"	
6) "Why can't you understand?"	
7) "You think I'm your personal servant!"	
8) "Haven't you finished that yet?"	
9) "You haven't been very affectionate."	
10) "I wonder what those parents do to make their children so well-behaved when yours run all over the place."	



## Interpersonal Communication Activity

### Chapter 11-Conflict Identifying Conflict Styles

The purpose of this activity is to identify various styles that may be used to handle interpersonal conflict. For each of the conflicts described below, write responses illustrating nonassertive, directly aggressive, passive aggressive, indirect, and assertive communication styles. Compare the responses of the group members and prepare a response to share with the class.

Example:

Three weeks ago a friend borrowed an article of clothing, promising to bring it back soon. You haven't seen it since, and the friend hasn't mentioned it.

Nonassertive: Say nothing to the friend, hoping they'll remember to return the item.

Probable consequences: There's a good chance I'll never get the item back. I would probably resent the friend and avoid them in the future so I won't have to lend anything in the future.

Directly aggressive: Confront the person and accuse them of being inconsiderate and irresponsible. Say they probably ruined the item and just don't want to say so.

Probable consequences: My friend would get defensive and hurt. Even if they did intentionally keep the item, they'd never admit it when approached this way. We would probably avoid each other in the future.

Passive aggressive: Complain to another friend, knowing it will get back to them.

Probable consequences: My friend might be embarrassed by my gossip and be even more resistant to returning it.

Indirect Communication: Drop hints how I loved to wear the borrowed item. Casually mention how much I hate people who borrow things and don't return them.

Probable consequences: My friend might ignore my hints. They'll most certainly resent my roundabout approach, even if they return the article.

Assertive: Confront the friend in a non-critical way and remind them that they still have the item. Ask when they'll return it, being sure to get a specific time.

Probable consequences: The friend might be embarrassed when I bring the subject up, but since there's no attack, it'll be OK. Since we'll have cleared up the problem, the relationship can continue.

- 1) Someone you've just met at a party criticizes a mutual friend in a way you think is unfair.

Nonassertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Directly aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Passive aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Indirect Communication: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Assertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

- 2) A fan behind you at a ballgame toots a loud air horn every time the home team makes any progress. The noise is spoiling your enjoyment of the game.

Nonassertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Directly aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Passive aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Indirect Communication: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Assertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

- 3) Earlier in the day you asked your roommate to stop by the store and get snacks for a party you are having this evening. Your roommate arrives home without the food, and it's too late to go out to the store.

Nonassertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Directly aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Passive aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Indirect Communication: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Assertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

- 4) You find out that a friend at work told other people some very personal information about you.

Nonassertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Directly aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Passive aggressive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Indirect Communication: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_

Assertive: \_\_\_\_\_

Probable consequences: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Interpersonal Communication Activity**

### Chapter 12-Common Employment Interview Questions

#### Communication at work

The purpose of this activity is to generate responses to common employment interview questions. For each of the following questions, use active listening techniques to ask a clarifying question or paraphrase the questions and then write your first response as you would give it during an interview. When you are done, compare the responses of the group members and formulate a list of most and least effective responses to the questions. Be prepared to share your responses with the class.

- 1) What makes you think you're qualified to work for this company?

Clarifying question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Paraphrased question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- 2) Why do you want to work for us?

Clarifying question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Paraphrased question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3) What college subjects did you like best and least?

Clarifying question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Paraphrased question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4) Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Clarifying question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Paraphrased question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5) What major problems have you faced, and how have you dealt with them?

Clarifying question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Paraphrased question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6) What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction?

Clarifying question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Paraphrased question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7) What are your greatest strengths?

Clarifying question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Paraphrased question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8) What are your greatest weaknesses?

Clarifying question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Paraphrased question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Interpersonal Communication Discussion**

### Chapter 12-Communication in Families Communication in Families

The purpose of this activity is to analyze family communication in mediated contexts. As a group, discuss the following questions and prepare a response to share with the class.

Describe how family communication might occur differently in mediated contexts (letters, e-mail, telephone, instant messages, chat, online courses) than in face-to-face communication within the listed relational types and discuss how satisfying relationships can be maintained without face-to-face communication?

1) Between spouses/partners:

2) Between Parents/children:

3) Between siblings:

4) Between extended family members: