

Self-Reflection Exercise

Handout available for download on the [YRRP website](http://www.yellowribbon.mil/cms/event-handout) at:
<http://www.yellowribbon.mil/cms/event-handout>

These statements were taken from a larger questionnaire and are designed to help you think about how comfortable you are communicating in different situations. Please read each statement, and think about how skilled you are and how comfortable you feel in handling each of the given situations.

1. Introducing yourself to someone you might like to get to know (or date).
2. Saying “no” when someone asks you to do something you don’t want to do.
3. Letting someone get to know the "real you."
4. Being able to patiently and sensitively listen to someone (e.g., friend, romantic partner) let off steam about outside problems he or she is having.
5. When angry with someone (e.g., friend, romantic partner), being able to accept that he or she has a valid point of view even if you don’t agree with that view.

This handout was adapted from the following source: Buhrmester, D., Furman W., Wittenberg, M. T., & Reis, H. T. (1988). Five domains of interpersonal competence in peer relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 55(6), 991-1008. <https://doi:10.1037/0022-3514.55.6.991>

Speaker-Listener Technique Exercise

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This handout contains an example of the Speaker-Listener Technique. Remember, this is not a way to communicate most of the time, but it is a communication approach you could use when dealing with a difficult topic.

Rules

The following rules are meant to help participants practice this technique safely and respectfully.

1. The speaker is the one with the floor. As a speaker, remember to use an I-statement to start the conversation. If you do not have the floor, you are the listener. The speaker keeps the floor until he or she has finished speaking.
2. Share the floor throughout a conversation. One individual has the floor to start, and he or she speaks. Then, the opportunity to speak passes to the listener, who, at this point, becomes the speaker. Switch roles and continue.
3. Do not try to problem-solve. Focus on having a positive discussion. This rule is crucial to keeping the discussion on track.
4. Stay on one subject at a time, and try not to talk about several topics at once.
5. You can stop the discussion flow for a moment to clarify an idea or specific wording or if you and your partner experience a problem. Do not stop the conversation and talk about what each participant is doing wrong.
6. Stop or use a “time out” if needed. Choose a signal to stop the exercise if you feel the discussion is getting out of hand or you have a question about the techniques or if you and your partner need to get back on track with using these rules.

Example

Initial Interaction

Speaker: When you didn't come to my promotion ceremony, I felt disrespected and angry. [speaking with an I-statement]

Listener: You really wanted me to come yesterday, and, when I didn't, you were upset.

Speaker: I wasn't just upset. All of the others had their partners there to pin them. I was the only one whose spouse didn't show up. And, my commander was there, so I looked bad.

Listener: So, you were upset and disappointed that I didn't come. And, because this happened in front of your commander and the others getting promoted, you felt disrespected and undermined.

Speaker: Exactly. I wanted you there regardless but feeling like an idiot in front of the others made it 100 times worse.

Listener: It was important to you for multiple reasons. [speaker nods]. Is there anything I missed? [speaker shakes head].

Speaker and Listener Switch

New Speaker: I'm really sorry that I didn't come. When you mentioned it offhand, I genuinely didn't realize that it was such a big thing. So when I had the chance to get overtime and put more money in to our vacation fund, I figured you would have wanted me to say yes.

New Listener: You didn't know that the promotion ceremonies can be a big to-do. You thought you were doing the right thing by getting extra money for our vacation.

New Speaker: Yes. If I realized that it was so important to you and your career, I would not have worked the overtime. I just don't know anything about this military stuff.

New Listener: You would have made a different decision if you had realized this event was such a big deal.