Do You Hear What I Mean? (Slide 1)

- Whether intentional or not, our actions have meanings to those around us
- For communication to be effective:
  - The sender must communicate clearly
  - The receiver must understand the message in the intended way
- Effective communication is key for successful relationships, careers, and other aspects of our lives

Objectives (Slide 2)

- Identify the components of effective communication
- Identify the difference between you- and I-statements
- Identify the difference between complaints and criticisms
- Identify how to listen effectively

Communication (Slide 3)

- Communication is a complex, situated social process in which people who have established a communicative relationship exchange messages in an effort to generate shared meanings and accomplish social goals
- Communication includes sending and receiving messages
- Two levels to consider in terms of messages
  - Content-level messages pertain to information conveyed in the message
  - Relationship-level messages convey how the message is to be taken depending on the relationship between the people sending and receiving the message

Self-Reflection Exercise (Slide 4)

- **Exercise 1**: Self-Reflection
- **Handout 1**: Self-Reflection Exercise

You- vs. I-statements (Slide 5)

- The importance of avoiding language or mannerisms that can be perceived as harsh or attacking
- By using I-statements instead of you-statements, choosing words wisely, and paying attention to nonverbal cues, we can avoid putting others on the defense
- I-statements are messages presented as declarative sentences that describe a thought, feeling, or other experience in a singular, first-person manner
  - Focus on a speaker's feelings about a specified behavior without attacking or blaming others
  - Examples
    - I feel frustrated
    - I'm disappointed when my plans don't go according to schedule
    - I feel sad when others let me down
    - I'm anxious when I can't get in touch with you

- How do you feel when someone says to you, “You are not listening to what I’m saying”?
- I-statements can be helpful when there is a need to discuss a problem
- You-statements can suggest blame and may encourage the recipient to deny wrongdoing or to blame in return
- Do not use ought or should because they usually refer to the other person and place blame or guilt
- One model for an I-statement follows: I feel _____ when _____
- Practice I-statements
  - “You’re being a pain! Stop asking me to play because I don’t have time!”
  - “You never come to my important events. How could you miss my promotion ceremony?”
- Find a way to express appreciation for the receiver
- Acknowledge the feelings of the receiver

Complaints vs. Criticisms (Slide 6)

- A complaint focuses on a specific behavior, while a criticism attacks the character of the person
  - Examples of complaint and criticism
- Changing the following criticisms into complaints
  - “You never get to work on time! You are so unreliable!”
    - “I’ve noticed that you’ve been late getting into work recently; is everything OK?” or “I was disappointed when you were late to work because I felt like it made us look unorganized in front of our customers”
  - “You always come to my house with your friend. You know that I can’t stand him!”
    - “I enjoy you coming over to my house, but I would love for you to come alone and visit with just me” or “It would really mean a lot to me if you came over alone, so we could really enjoy each other’s company”
  - “We never have money because you waste it on stupid stuff!”
    - “I was upset when you bought a T.V. without discussing it first with me” or “I felt like my opinion should have also been considered in the decision-making process since we share finances”
- **Handout 1:** Self-Reflection Exercise *Review statements 4 and 5*
- When using I-statements, be sure to focus on complaints rather than criticisms

Active Listening (Slide 7)

- Active listening leads to the perception that the person sending a message is being understood by the receiver of the message
- LAFF don't CRY as a method of active listening
  - L: Listen, empathize, and communicate respect
  - A: Ask questions and ask permission to take notes
  - F: Focus on the issues
  - F: Find a first step
- Reactions we DON'T want to use because they are not conducive to active listening
  - C: Criticize people who aren't present
  - R: React hastily and promise something you can't deliver
  - Y: Yakety-yak-yak – talking to avoid silence
- This method was developed to help teachers in communicating with parents, but it may also be used in various communication situations
- All aspects of LAFF may not always be appropriate
- You express interest in others when you ask questions or take notes
- Asking questions stops you from making hasty conclusions

LAFF Don't CRY Exercise (Slide 8)

- **Exercise 2**: LAFF Don't CRY
- **Handout 2**: LAFF Don't CRY Exercise

Objectives (Slide 9)

- Review
  - What are some components or techniques for effective communication?
  - What is the difference between a you-statement and an I-statement?
  - What is the difference between a complaint and a criticism?
  - How can someone listen more effectively?