

BEYOND BULLYING

BUILDING HEALTHY SENIORS COMMUNITIES



TOOLKIT

SEESA South East Edmonton
Seniors Association
Activity Centre

 Seniors
Housing

Beyond Bullying: Building Healthy Seniors Communities

First Edition, July 2015

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the expertise and contributions, both written and verbal, of many people over the years it has taken to get this project off the ground, particularly Margret Cameron, Brenda Cozens, Tammy Knutson, Shelley Sabo, Nancy Simmonds, Shannon Stilet, Susan Wilberg and Jenny Wilting.

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO

The South East Edmonton Seniors Association Board of Directors and Executive Director, Kim Buehler; the Greater Edmonton Foundation Seniors Housing; the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Senior's program; Barbara Ashley Phillips, Kim Boyd, Carol Kodish-Butt and the management and residents of various seniors buildings.

CREDITS

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We apologize for any errors or omissions.

**BEYOND BULLYING
BUILDING HEALTHY SENIORS COMMUNITIES
TOOLKIT**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to the Toolkit	iii
Cover Letter for Survey	v
Survey	Survey 1
Facilitating Groups	Facilitating 1
Module 1	Introduction to Bullying Behaviour
	Senior-to-Senior Bullying M1-1
	Friendly Talk Friendly Task M1-2
	Useful Communication Techniques M1-3
	The Mystery – Why do We Allow
	Bullying in Our Midst? M1-5
	The Bullying Cycle M1-7
	Mine, Yours and Ours
	Words and Responsibilities M1-8
Module 2	Loop Thinking
	Loop Thinking - What is it? M2-1
	Negative Loop Thinking M2-3
	Escape Loop Thinking M2-4
Module 3	Useful Behaviours and Trust
	Useful Behaviours for Calm Discussion M3-1
	Thoughts on Trust M3-2

Module 4	Assumptions	
	Breaking Through Assumptions, Using the Parent – Child – Adult Model	M4-1
Module 5	Healthy Self-Management	
	Healthy Self-Management	M5-1
Module 6	Living in a Seniors Residence	
	Tips for Adjusting to a Seniors’ Residence	M6-1
	Getting to Know You, Slowly	M6-3
	Gossip – the Good, the Bad and the Ugly	M6-4

Additional Information

Tips for Managers and Boards	Tips Page 1
References and Resources	References Page 1

APPENDICES

Activities

- A. Virtues Ball
- B. Code of Conduct
- C. Communicating Assertively
- D. Parent-Adult-Child Communication
- E. Building Community

EVALUATION FORM



INTRODUCTION TO THE TOOLKIT

Seniors bullying happens. We choose from a variety of ways how to respond to bullying behaviour, wherever seniors congregate. To broaden seniors' choices, the Beyond Bullying committee developed a toolkit to help seniors identify and cope with bullying behaviours in their homes. This promotes safe caring homes and supportive communities.

Bullying behaviour uses power to control others. The threat of exclusion, the strength of malicious gossip, the force of unwanted touch, insults and criticism can greatly influence a senior's health and attitude. This creates a stressful environment. Some seniors respond to bullying behaviours by becoming depressed, isolating themselves and not participating in activities they enjoyed before. This affects their mental and physical health.

The Beyond Bullying toolkit can help us find out new things about ourselves, learn new ways to cope and discover that we *all* have our own wisdom and strengths.

There are several modules in this toolkit. The toolkit may be used as a whole or each module may be used separately, to assist with a specific need.

Please use the toolkit as you see fit. We welcome your feedback regarding the items that were useful and suggestions for improving the modules that were not as useful, and have provided an evaluation form at the end of this toolkit.

You are welcome to copy and use any of the information contained in this Toolkit, without changes to the content. None of the ideas presented are original. They have been around for many years. We put them together in a way that is useful in learning new ways to deal with bullying behaviours.

Please contact Karen or Leslie at the South East Edmonton Seniors Association for further information or to enquire about training sessions. Phone: 780 468-1985.



Date: _____

Dear Resident of _____.

The Beyond Bullying: Building Healthy Seniors Communities team has been asked to provide information or resources for your building.

The attached survey will help us learn about what life is like in your building. This includes things that work and things that you would like to see improved.

Please answer the questions on the survey and return it to SEESA by _____, using the envelope that has been provided, or we will pick up the surveys on _____.

Do not use any names. This survey is meant to be completely confidential.

Note that there is a Resource list on the back of this page. Please keep it.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact Karen or Leslie at the South East Edmonton Seniors Association. Phone: 780 468-1985.

Thank you,

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES

ORGANIZATION	HOURS	SERVICE	PHONE #
211	24/7	Link to community resources	Dial 211
Distress Line	24/7	Crisis intervention and referrals	780 482-4357 (780 482-HELP)
Community Urgent Services and Stabilization Team	24/7	Mental health crisis – assess and stabilize	780 342-7777
Seniors Abuse Helpline	24/7	Support, referrals and crisis intervention	780 454-8888
Elder Abuse Intake Line (EARS) Non-emergency	Monday to Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm	Provides support to older adults at risk of experiencing abuse or neglect	780 477-2929
City of Edmonton Services		Information about services provided by the City of Edmonton	Dial 311
Emergency	24/7	Crisis/emergency Police, ambulance, fire	Dial 911

Beyond Bullying: Building Healthy Seniors Communities Survey

Please do not use any names in this survey.

Please indicate your age group: 55-64 65-74 75-84 85-94 95 or above

How long have you lived in your current residence? _____ years _____ months

How much social contact do you generally like?

daily a few times a week rarely never

Please put a checkmark ✓ to answer Yes or No to the following statements:

When I first moved into my current residence...

- yes no I wondered, "Will I fit in?"
- yes no I felt optimistic about making new friends and enjoying activities.
- yes no I assumed I would be accepted as an equal here.
- yes no Generally, people were friendly and welcoming.
- yes no I joined in social functions.

Comments:

Now that I have lived in my current residence for a while...

- yes no Other residents are welcoming and friendly.
- yes no Staff are pleasant and do their jobs well.
- yes no I have friends in this building.
- yes no I attend group activities that I choose.
- yes no I can 'be myself' with the existing groups.
- yes no I feel safe expressing my opinions.
- yes no I volunteer in the building.
- yes no My friends and family are welcome to visit.
- yes no Building rules balance the needs of the residents and the needs of the organization.

Comments:

I have witnessed or experienced...

- yes no verbal abuse and name-calling
- yes no malicious gossip, hearsay and telling lies
- yes no rumours spread based on inaccurate assumptions
- yes no racist comments to and about other seniors
- yes no insulting, critical comments about clothing or physical appearance
- yes no unkind remarks about a senior's individuality or disability
- yes no disrespectful or condescending speech and treatment of other seniors

Comments:

- yes no forming cliques, promoting a climate of "us" versus "them"
- yes no "in group" demanding compliance to opinions in order to be included
- yes no treating people unfairly and unequally
- yes no excluding others from participating in activities or social functions
- yes no scheduling "clique's" activities so no time remains for others' activities
- yes no shunning or ostracizing others
- yes no telling seniors they cannot use a common area
- yes no dismissive behaviour; eye rolling

Comments:

- yes no prying into other seniors' private lives
- yes no harassing visitors of another senior
- yes no entering another seniors' home without being invited to do so
- yes no meddling with the private property of other seniors
- yes no interfering with or damaging other seniors' projects or belongings

Comments:

Please list any actions or behaviours by others in the building that have helped you feel **welcome and included**:

Please list any actions or behaviours by others in the building when you have felt **unwelcome or excluded**:

Have you found helpful or effective ways to deal with "bullying behaviour"?

What suggestions do you have to further build the sense of community in this building?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.



FACILITATING GROUPS

Role of the Facilitator:

- Create an environment that promotes participation, i.e.
 - Put the chairs in a circle
 - Have a well lit room
 - Welcome the participants
 - Start and end the group sessions on time
 - Speak clearly
 - Have beverages ready, such as tea, water, coffee or invite group members to bring their own
 - Encourage everyone to speak, not just the most vocal group members.
 - Keep the group on task.
 - Encourage group members to practice parts of the facilitator role so that the group can operate on its own when it is working well.
 - Provide the location of washrooms and inform the group that washrooms are to be used when needed.

- Set and discuss ground rules to the point where group members agree on them.
 - Confidentiality
 - I say nothing outside of the group concerning another participant.
 - I am welcome to share and discuss new learning outside of the group.
 - Respect
 - I give others and myself enough time to gather thoughts before speaking.
 - I allow others to speak without interruption.
 - I know everyone has the right to be in this group.
 - I participate fully, even when I lack confidence in my ideas.
 - I talk about my personal experiences rather than using generalizations.
 - I speak to a person rather than about a person.
 - I help myself to refreshments when it will not disrupt someone who is speaking
 - I practice each concept daily and record my struggles and successes honestly.

Suggestions for starting each group session:

- Introduce yourself, the name and purpose of the session or module from the toolkit.
- Briefly outline the activities for the session, i.e. introductions, information, break into small groups to practice skills, etc.
- Ask the participants to give their names and what they expect to learn.
- Go over the ground rules.
- Use an ice breaker, such as the Virtues Ball Activity; telling something funny about yourself and asking the participants to do the same; telling something about yourself that very few people know and asking the participants to do the same, etc.

Recommendations:

- Welcome everyone, preferably by name, at the beginning of the session.
- Start each session with an introduction of the topic and outline of activities.
- Ask each participant about expectations for the session.
- Repeat the ground rules, particularly confidentiality and respect. The group definitions of these are useful to have on display at each group session.
- Explain how people learn – visual, auditory and tactile.
- Have supplies on hand, such as name tags, pens, paper, etc.

*There are many resources for facilitating group discussions.
See the Resource List for examples.*



Beyond Bullying Building Healthy Seniors' Communities

MODULE 1



SENIOR-TO-SENIOR BULLYING

The Beyond Bullying Definition of Bullying: Bullying can be an aggressive or control response to normal conflict or stress.

Bullying behaviour uses power to control others. The threat of being left out, the strength of malicious gossip, the force of unwanted touch, insults and criticism are types of bullying behaviour.

What is Bullying Behaviour in a seniors' environment?

- a. Verbal Hostility (gossip, insults)
- b. Exclusion (intentionally leaving a person out)
- c. Boundary Trespass (such as unwanted touch, insults, invasion of privacy)

CONFLICT

Conflict is normal! Some conflicts occur when you expect the other person to know what you mean. The other person may have difficulty if they have trouble hearing you, interpret what you say differently from what you mean or are from a different culture.

Common responses to normal conflict (fight or flight):

- a. Aggressive or demanding behaviour
- b. Passive or disappearing behaviour
- c. Assertive behaviour - engaging in conversation

Friendly Talk and Friendly Task



Difference of Opinion



Conflict Choices



Demand

- Challenge status quo
- Bully

Discuss

- Problem solve
- Find understanding
- Agree to disagree

Disappear

- Pause to think
- Give up

USEFUL COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES

1. Breathe from the belly to keep calm. Place your hand on your belly and feel it move up and down as you breathe in and out.
2. Use assertive language for clear communication. This involves stating:
 - a. What happened, using facts without blame. For example, state: “the chair was blocking the doorway. I had to move it to get into the room.”
 - b. Your feelings
 - i. Expressing feelings begins with “I”, keeping the focus on me. For example, “I felt unsafe when I moved the chair. I thought I was going to fall.”
 - ii. Remember that feelings are neither right nor wrong. They just ARE.
 - iii. Feelings and thoughts are not the same. When you say “I _____ that_____” you are expressing a thought. For example, “I feel that you did not want me to go in the room” is not a feeling. The clearer sentence is “I thought you were blocking my way.”
 - c. State what you need, for example to feel safe.
 - d. State your request, for example, “I am asking that the doorway be kept clear.”

See the Communicating Assertively Activity.



THE MYSTERY:

WHY DO WE ALLOW BULLYING IN OUR MIDST?

WHY DON'T WE STAND UP TO THE BULLY?

- We may wonder “Am I being petty?” “Maybe I’m exaggerating a minor rudeness.” “Maybe I shouldn’t feel this way.”
- We may feel responsible “Why did I let this happen?”
- We may think that others will not believe us.
- We may think that we will not be taken seriously.
- We do not realize the bully is bullying others. We may think we are the only one.
- We may be tired or ill and have no energy to resist.
- We may have come from an authoritarian background where we had to obey an unreasonable parent, older sibling or spouse. We are in the habit of obeying without question. Authoritarian parents, siblings and spouses do not respond to the needs of children. Rules are paramount.
- We may believe that isolating ourselves is the answer.
- We may tell ourselves we don’t care and focus on outside activities.
- We may forget that we belong here.
- We may fear retaliation.

WHY DO WE SUPPORT THE BULLY?

- We may not want to be outside of the “in” crowd.
- We may feel more powerful when we are part of the “in” crowd.
- We may feel sorry for the bully because the bully is adept at playing ‘poor me’ and believes that he or she is the victim.
- We may feel trapped and believe we have to cooperate with the bully.
- We may choose to believe a bully’s malicious gossip without questioning his or her opinions.
- We may hold the same racial or social prejudices expressed by the bully.
- We may not recognize the bully’s ‘Jekyll and Hyde’ personality.
- We may want to feel protected by the bully.
- We may want to protect the bully so that we are not the target.
- We might not recognise our own bullying tendencies.

Phase # 1: Tension Building
Breakdown of communication,
tension builds.
Target becomes fearful and feels
the need to placate the bully.

BULLYING CYCLE
Cycle may escalate
if not remedied

Phase #4: Calm
Incident is "forgotten"
or "forgiven".
No bullying is taking place.
"Best behaviour" is the norm.

Phase #2: Incident
Verbal, emotional,
physical abuse.
Anger, blaming, arguing,
threats, intimidation.

Phase #3: Target Responds
Bully denies the abuse has occurred or says that it
wasn't as bad as the target claims.
"I was just kidding, can't you take a joke?"
Gathers supporters for reassurance. Further threatens
the target or gives excuses or apologizes.



MINE, YOURS AND OURS

WORDS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

MINE	YOURS	OURS
Only I can choose to change my behaviour	I cannot change your behaviour	Together, we can choose how to change our relationship

USEFUL THOUGHTS AND WORDS	MY WORDS THAT WARN ME THAT I TRESPASS ON ANOTHER	USEFUL THOUGHTS AND WORDS
I can . . . I will . . . I will not . . . I need . . . I don't ... Is this my business?	You need . . . You can . . . You should . . . They should . . . It's not your business.	What is your goal? How can we . . . ? Does this work for you? How does that work?



Beyond Bullying
Building Healthy Seniors' Communities

MODULE 2



LOOP THINKING

Loop thinking uses our brains in much the same way as hamsters use exercise wheels. We expend energy and never get anywhere. We go around in circles in our brains, thinking the same thoughts repeatedly.

We begin to build a train of thought in an attempt to make sense of something that happened. If we tend to self-blame, the thoughts that we keep repeating support that attitude. If we do not want to take responsibility for our actions, we concentrate on thoughts that put the burden on another person. ***(See the Negative Loop Thinking diagram).***

Problems intensify when we do not explore other ways of thinking about the situation. Loop thinking can be comforting because our repeated thoughts are familiar. Each time we follow the looped thoughts, we make a deeper and deeper impression in our memories.

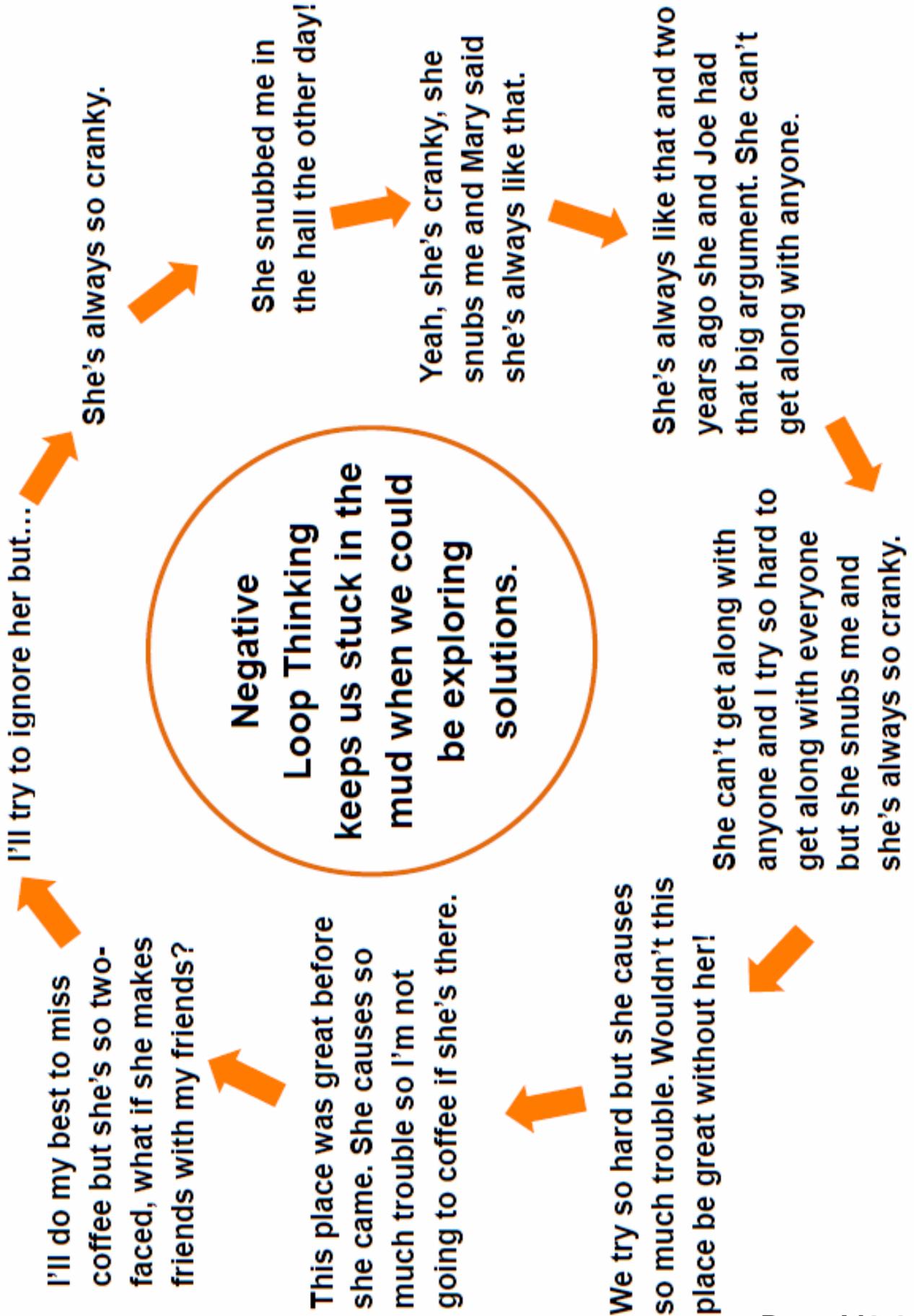
Feelings follow thoughts so rapidly that we may think that the feeling came first. We justify our negative thoughts because we believe that someone “made” us feel a certain way.

One way to escape from the loop is to become aware of our thoughts when we notice that we are feeling sad, angry or frustrated. Ask: “Are these thoughts accurate?” “Are these thoughts helping me?” We can choose which thoughts to keep and which thoughts to discard. One way we may do this is by correcting ourselves when the thought comes to mind and realize “that is an old thought, I no longer believe it.”

An example of learning is: if we tell someone personal information that is repeated, we might want to remember not to tell that person secrets again and allow ourselves to think “this person is great fun but has trouble keeping secrets”. We may then choose to enjoy an activity with that person and not reveal any personal information. ***(See the Escaping Loop Thinking diagram).***

We look after ourselves and save our energy for worthwhile endeavours when we choose which parts of the loop to keep and which to discard.

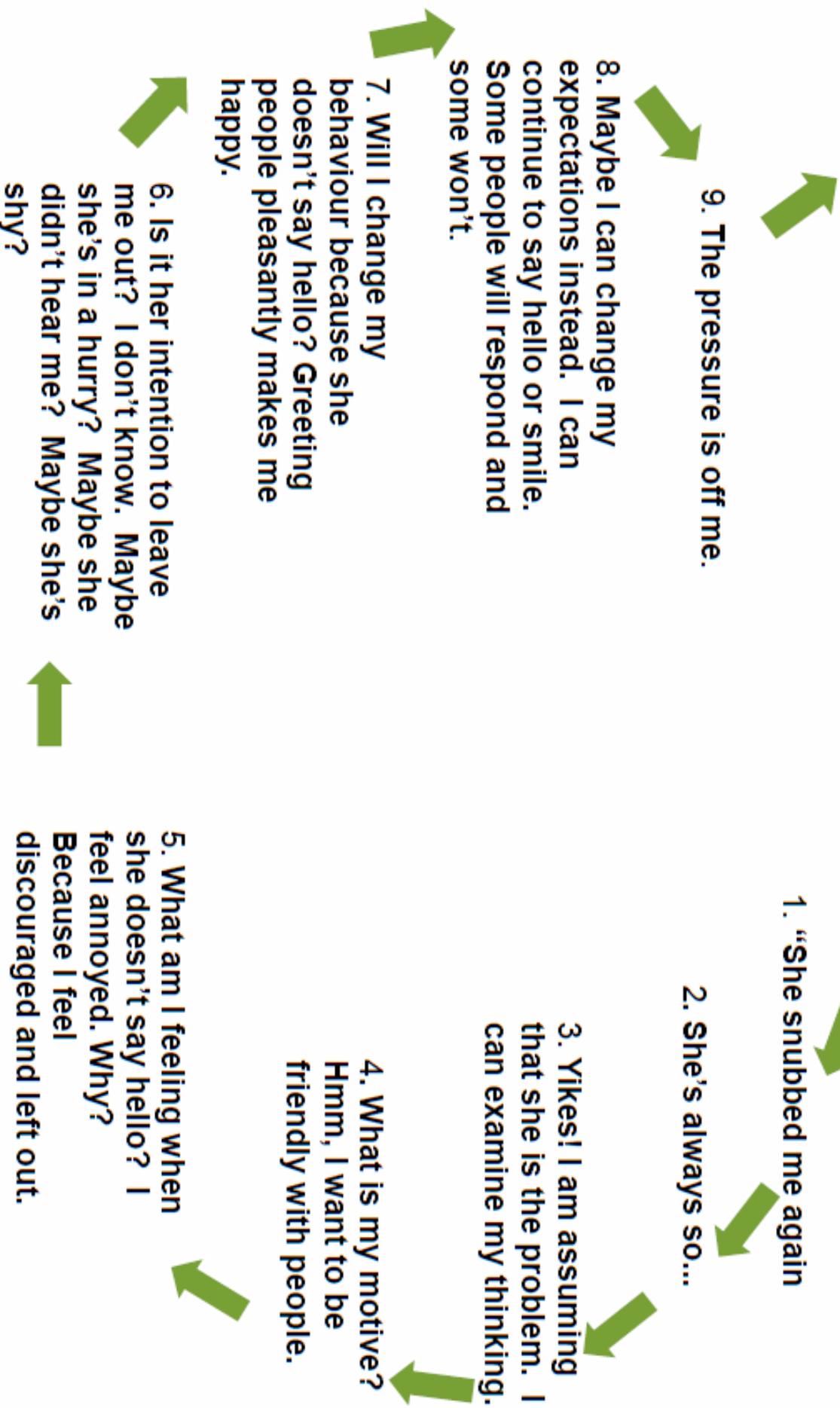
NEGATIVE LOOP THINKING - EXAMPLE (read clockwise)



ESCAPE LOOP THINKING - EXAMPLE (read clockwise)

FREE OF LOOP

START OF LOOP





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MODULE 3



USEFUL BEHAVIOURS FOR CALM DISCUSSION

- Community living involves give and take.
- Treat everyone as an equal.
- Respect others' privacy.
- Think of what you need and what you want. Recognize the difference.
- Listen as though you are hearing what the other person is saying for the first time.
- Know we can only change our own behaviours and attitudes.
- Be aware of your tone of voice. Notice how people react to your “normal” tone of voice.
- Be aware of your body language.
- Avoid using “should” and “must” when referring to yourself or speaking to another person.
- Double-check to know the other's meaning, “Do you mean . . . ?”
“What I hear you saying is...”
- Know that we can continue to problem-solve through misunderstanding if we just keep at it.
- We have choices about our own behaviour.
- We are all in this together.



THOUGHTS ON TRUST

- We need to be clear about the expectations of all involved before we make agreements.
- Save deeply private information for those you have learned to trust.
- Share your feelings and ideas in useful ways with others.
- We can choose to enjoy pleasant times with people we do not consider friends.
- The meaning of friendship varies in a community and from person to person. That's okay.

“Beyond our ideas of right-doing and wrong-doing, there is a field. I will meet you there.” Rumi



**Beyond Bullying
Building Healthy Seniors' Communities**

MODULE 4



BREAKING THROUGH ASSUMPTIONS

USING THE PARENT, ADULT, CHILD MODEL

We think, feel and act with remarkable speed. Have you ever wondered about your first impression of someone? Why your first thought about a woman in dirty, poor fitting clothes might be “she’s lazy” or “she must be depressed”? These are assumptions.

This is also called “jumping to conclusions”. We assume something about another person without knowing the person. The conclusions we make affect how we treat that person and are often not correct.

What does this have to do with bullying behaviours and getting along with others?

When we examine how we think, we might notice that our assumptions about ourselves and others change with each mode of thinking.

Conflict is normal! We have different ways of responding to conflict, depending on which mode of thinking we are using.

Eric Berne, M.D., developed a method of defining the three most common ways of responding and called it Transactional Analysis. This is a brief description of this method with some examples of each way of responding.

1. Parent Response

The Parent response is an automatic response to an event. These words may have been meant to keep us safe, threaten us, demand compliance or to manipulate us.

During the first five years of life we absorb messages from our parents and caregivers that are deeply recorded in the brain and usually not recalled until we use them ourselves. Have you ever said something to your child or grandchild and asked yourself “Where did that come from?” Or say to yourself “I sound like my mother!” Examples are: “Don’t talk to strangers.” “Eat everything on your plate.” “Don’t talk with your mouth full.” “That must have really hurt.” “Nice girls sit still.”

Many of these messages are the same things our parents heard, felt and saw when they were growing up. Now, when we find ourselves in situations similar to those from our childhood, we repeat these messages to our children and grandchildren, without thinking. Some of the messages are still very important. Others are no longer needed.

The capital P Parent thought process is different from our human parent. Human parents do not always respond from the capital P Parent mode. They also respond from the Adult, Child or mixed Adult-Child or Adult-Parent mode. All of us have a Parent mode, whether or not we are parents.

When we hear a Parent comment, we may respond from our own Parent mode, by putting the other person “in their place” or demanding a change in behaviour.

Assumptions while in the Parent mode may be critical or judgemental. We assume the others need our correction, our direction or our support. For example: “You poor thing”, “You know how clumsy you are!”

2. Child Response

The Child is our source of joy, sense of freedom, creativity and unconditional love. As seniors, we often lose touch with this part of the Child when faced with bullying behaviours.

The Child response is also from a place of wanting something NOW, regardless of consequences. The Child does not take responsibility for his actions. The Child may respond with fear, such as running away or crying when faced with conflict.

The Child response is based on the emotions or feelings we experienced prior to 5 years of age. Examples are: "When I heard my parent yell, I was scared." "When my parent hugged me I felt safe and warm." The feelings that accompanied the event are attached to the event.

The capital C Child response does not mean that the person is immature or a child. All of us have a Child mode.

Think of something that happened when you were very young. What do you feel? Happy? Sad? Surprised?

Assumptions we make when we are in the Child mode are usually emotion-based, such as fear, joy or excitement. Do you remember being really excited as a child when you went to the circus or the fair? Do you feel excited thinking about going now? Did you feel safe and warm when your parent hugged you? Do you feel safe and warm when someone hugs you now?

3. Adult Response

The Adult response involves taking time to look at the whole picture. This skill may be learned and improved upon with use.

The Adult response begins to develop when a child learns a skill, such as holding an object and moving it. *“Adult data grows out of the child’s ability to see what is different than what he or she observed (Parent) or felt (Child). In other words, the Adult allows the young person to evaluate and validate Child and Parental data.”(Berne, E. at <http://www.ericberne.com/transactional-analysis/>)*

Adult thoughts are based on analyzing the information from the past along with new experiences. These are not “recorded” responses. You may choose to have the Adult include part of the Child response or part of the Parent response. For example, you may draw on the Child’s sense of fun or play or the Parent’s sense of responsibility when responding to an event.

The Adult makes choices. When we work with others to find solutions, we are depending on our Adult. We know that we may not get all that we want but we will make our own needs evident and will work to find a solution that is fair to all concerned.

When in the Adult mode, we seldom make assumptions. We look at the assumptions from the Parent or Child and decide how to respond. Using the example at the beginning, the woman with dirty clothes that don’t fit:

The Parent thinks the woman is lazy.

The Child feels curious or afraid.

The Adult thinks about the assumption, and treats the woman as an equal.

Everyone has Parent, Child and Adult modes. Learning about them and learning to recognize them helps us choose which one, or which combination, we want to use at a particular time.

Responding from the Parent or Child mode is usually automatic, without thought. The Adult mode may help in many situations. One way to have the Adult help is counting to 10 and deciding how to respond. Is the response going to help? Is it going to make the situation worse? Create more conflict? Make your needs and feelings clearer?

Assumptions, example

When we hear someone make loud, insistent demands,

Our Parent: might assume that the speaker needs to learn manners and then “puts the person in her place”.

Our Child: might assume that there is a threat and decide it is best to obey or run away.

Our Adult: might assume that the person may be under some stress and then ask the person to speak quietly so that we can better understand the person’s needs.

There is a big difference in what we assume, depending on our mode of thought. Our Adult mode is constantly developing. The more we pay attention to how we react to stress and notice our attitudes towards new people and ideas, the more opportunity we have to break free from knee-jerk reactions to the behaviours of others.

What is the truth? We see different things because we are who we are. Even if we describe it as truthfully as we can, what you see and what I see, even sitting in [this] room, is also coloured by who you are and who I am.

Liv Ullman, Actress, Director, Screenwriter



Beyond Bullying
Building Healthy Seniors' Communities

MODULE 5



HEALTHY SELF-MANAGEMENT

Learning to speak up for ourselves to get our needs met is an important skill that can be learned at any age. The only behaviour we can change is our own and substitute negative thought patterns with healthier ones.

Four Choices to Deal with Stressful Situations

1. Toleration with resentment
2. Protest
3. Separate
4. Tolerate with no resentment

Assertive, Aggressive and Passive Behaviour

Assertive behaviour is to stand up for oneself without undue anxiety and to exercise one's own rights without denying the rights of others. It is to communicate honestly and directly.

Aggressive behaviour is to communicate in a way that infringes on the rights of others. An aggressive person may tend to think that other people are incompetent and stupid and that he is always right.

Passive behaviour is avoiding conflict and wanting peace at any cost. She will often feel hurt and collects resentments and grudges and gets tired of being walked on. Then she resorts to passive aggressive behaviour.

Passive aggressive behaviour on the surface appears friendly and non-threatening but underneath is a thinly veiled hostility or threat.

For effective interpersonal communication use the words “want” and “wishes” vs. “should” and “musts”. “Should” and “must” is an attempt to control others.

There are specific skills one can learn to be assertive:

- Broken record – repeat needs or viewpoint over and over in a calm manner. No explanation required. “No, I do not want to go shopping with you.”
- Fogging – eliminate non-productive arguing; “Yes, I might enjoy shopping, but I am not going”.
- Negative assertion – you made a mistake and admit it. End of story. Again, no explanation required.
- Negative inquiry – ask for more negative information. “Why would I be sorry if I buy these shoes?” Get specifics so the person knows they have been heard. Then you can address their concern head on. “Yes, the colour may not be practical, but I am buying them.”
- Give yourself a time out: “I can’t respond to you right now. This is new information to me. Let me think about it and I will let you know.” You don’t have to answer it on the spot. You do not need to answer all questions. At times, you may simply want to respond, “I am surprised that you asked me that.”

Examples of Assertiveness

Self-Disclosure

Your neighbour asks you if you want to go out to dinner. You do, but you do not like fish. An assertive person will use self-disclosure so her preference is known: “Yes I would like to go to dinner but I do not eat fish”.

Workable Compromise

A tablemate in the dining room blows his nose in the cloth napkins. You find this behaviour unsanitary and disgusting.

“George, I enjoy your company at dinner. I would like to continue to eat together. I want you to use these hankies I bought for you.”

A workable compromise does not need to be fair - it just needs to work.

It takes practice to develop assertiveness skills and you will likely need to deal with some anxiety. Practicing or “role-playing” with a trusted friend can be very helpful. In addition, try journaling and breathing exercises. It is important to have a positive or neutral feeling towards the person.

Dealing with Criticism

Ask yourself: Is it true or false?

If the answer is that it is false, forget it. The other person has the right to be wrong.

If it is true, ask yourself: Is it a fault? If you decided that it is true but, from your point of view, it is not a fault, forget it.

The person has a right to a different opinion.

If it is a fault, thank the person for bringing it to your attention and resolve to try to correct it.

Problem Solving

A healthy person responds to the unhealthy behaviour of people in her environment by solving problems rather than by whining, complaining or feeling sorry for herself. She only attempts to solve her own problems and allows others to solve theirs. The person who is upset about the situation is the one who has the problem, not the person whose behaviour is unacceptable or unhealthy. There is value in recognizing that the person whose behaviour you find difficult is doing you a favour. She is giving you an opportunity to grow and learn.

There are several steps in problem solving:

1. Identify the problem. Is it truly your problem to solve?
2. Set a realistic goal that is within your control.
3. Develop a plan to reach the goal.
4. Put the plan into action. Be willing to accept possible consequences.
5. Note your progress. Movement in the right direction is progress! If you are reacting in a less stress-producing way to the problem, that is progress! Perfection may be hard to achieve.

Thinking About Our Thinking

How we think either contributes to our sense of well-being or erodes it. For example:

Three Irrational Ideas

1. I must do well or perfectly well in important tasks I choose to perform and must win the approval or love of the people around me or I am a worthless individual.
2. You must treat me considerately and kindly, in precisely the way I want you to treat me and if you don't, you are a bad and worthless person.
3. The conditions under which I live must be arranged so that I get everything I want easily and quickly. Conditions must not exist so that my life is filled with hassles because then life isn't worth living.

For an idea to be rational, it must meet at least three of the following criteria:

1. It is factual.
2. It helps you protect your life and health.
3. It helps you achieve your short and long term goals.
4. It keeps you out of significant trouble with others.
5. It helps you feel the emotions you want to feel.

Assumption makes an ass of you and me – ass u me

When we do not know the details of a situation, we may make assumptions. This makes mutual understanding difficult.

THE ONLY BEHAVIOUR YOU CAN CHANGE IS YOUR OWN!

Do not respond to second hand complaints unless it is frequently repeated by different people. In this case, go to the alleged source and say, “I heard...is it true that you said this?”

Now go have a cup of tea and relax. This is hard work!
Keep calm and carry on!

*Written by Jennie Wilting with Shelley Sabo for the Beyond Bullying:
Building Healthy Seniors Community Project Edmonton, Alberta,
Canada, 2015*

Jennie Wilting is a retired registered and psychiatric nurse, university professor, published researcher and author. She wrote the book Nurses, Colleagues and Patients: Achieving Congenial Interpersonal Relationships.

Shelley Sabo is a community engager and mobilizer who knows that “we are all in this together”. This item is the result of a dynamic intergenerational partnership.



Beyond Bullying
Building Healthy Seniors' Communities

MODULE 6



TIPS FOR ADJUSTING TO A SENIORS' RESIDENCE

*"The best way to get it together is together!"
Shachter-Shalomi, Z. From Age-ing to Sage-ing*

- There are many benefits to moving into a seniors building. You no longer have to shovel snow, maintain a furnace or fix a leaking roof!
- Downsizing and moving into a seniors building can also be a difficult transition. Recognizing that we are all in this together can help us be kinder to one another.
- Greet people. Some may not hear you or see you because they are hard of hearing or visually impaired. Say hello anyway. You may want to ask the person or the person's family how best to communicate with the person.
- Be cautious when talking about personal information about yourself or another person. You may be sensitive about your personal information and not want everyone to know it.
- What about inviting a man or woman to tea or an activity in a common area, instead of your apartment?

- Try putting yourself in another's shoes. Look at things from a different point of view. This may help you be more compassionate and slower to react. Remember that each of us can have a bad day. It may be your turn tomorrow!
- Try taking another person's comments as information, even when they seem to be directed at you. The comments show how the other person sees the world. Eleanor Roosevelt famously said, "Your opinion of me is none of my business".
- Are you making an assumption about another person's actions? We are often upset, not by another's actions, but by our interpretation of those actions. Catch yourself when you start to blame or judge.
- Learn to communicate clearly. One method is using Non-violent communications, pioneered by Marshall Rosenberg. This way of communicating is free of blame and judgment. It helps us to express our feelings and needs and to listen for feelings and needs in others. We can learn this at any age.
- Take time to really listen to the other person. One way to get to know someone is to ask the other person to show you something they care deeply about and tell you why it means so much. This helps the other person become more real – more of a person – when we listen deeply.



GETTING TO KNOW YOU, SLOWLY

We make personal choices about our friendship levels. When we go slowly, we have time to notice others' habits and understand their values before we commit ourselves to friendship.

Does she keep commitments? Does he respect your point of view? Are we listened to as much as the other person expects us to listen? Does she appear to give others the benefit of the doubt? Does he share other's information freely? Are we pried with questions? After a few chats or activities, are you looking forward to seeing the other person again? Do you know why you look forward to seeing or want to avoid the other person?

Some friendships might be short-term because of age or illness. We can choose friendship and enjoy the moments and the rich memories we build together.

AQUAINTANCE LEVEL

Experience tells you that you can enjoy a group activity together. You both will show up on time and play fair. You keep personal talk confined to your role in the activity. Your attention is on the challenge and enjoyment of the activity.

CASUAL-FRIEND LEVEL

As well as enjoying common activities you might have interests, history, family, friends, places and political values in common. You feel at ease with the friend but keep deeply personal things to yourself. You do not encourage confidences from the other person.

STRONG-FRIEND LEVEL

You've grown to trust that you can safely share personal information. You both respect each other's opinions and behaviours. You are honest. You give each other grace to be different. You care deeply for each other without interfering with each other.



GOSSIP: THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

Definitions of Gossip:

1. Casual and idle chat; to have a gossip with a friend
2. A conversation involving malicious chatter or rumours about other people; a gossip about the neighbours
3. A person who habitually talks about others, especially maliciously; also called **gossipmonger**
(Source: *the British Dictionary online*)

The person being talked about is not present.

- When I gossip, I say things about another person that may or may not be true. I can check to see if it is true.

The truth becomes:

- “Good” gossip when I have permission to talk about the other person’s personal information. For example, “She is in the hospital and asking for visitors.”
- “Bad” gossip when I say things about her character or behaviour or do not have her permission to talk about her personal information.
- “Ugly” gossip when I say things to make me feel good and make the other person look bad. This is also called malicious gossip.

Gossip can harm others.

I harm my own reputation when I gossip.



Beyond Bullying
Building Healthy Seniors' Communities

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



TIPS FOR MANAGERS AND BOARDS

Please note that many of these items are in use at most seniors buildings. This is a summary of items that are important to seniors. There may be a few things you could use.

1. Clear, visible Mission Statement.
2. Clear, visible Vision Statement(s).
3. A procedure for coping with changing needs of residents, such how to adapt the building to resident with changes in vision or changes in mobility.
4. Management contact number, office hours and emergency contact numbers are visible.
5. A welcome package that includes the above information and:
 - a. Clear job descriptions of managers and any building staff.
 - b. Description of Social Club role and responsibilities.
Recommend that leadership of the social club rotate and that a position of Volunteer Coordinator is included.
 - c. Encourage residents to volunteer for various activities in the building, such as gardening/tending flowers.
 - d. Expectations of residents, such as use of common areas, management approval required for items placed on doors, etc.
 - e. Description of Resident Council role and responsibilities (not just for complaints!). This could include plans for the future and the expectation that all residents would participate.



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**Beyond Bullying
Building Healthy Seniors' Communities**

APPENDIX



VIRTUES BALL ACTIVITY

Purpose

To explore virtues and how we define them. May be used as an ice breaker.

Materials Required

- Inflated beach ball
- Fine-tipped, permanent marker

Activity

- Using the list on the back of this page, write out each virtue randomly on the ball. Participants may take turns writing the words.
- The Facilitator tosses the ball in the air and catches it. The word nearest to her right thumb is the word to be discussed.
- The Facilitator reads the word out loud and states what that word means to her. Group members are encouraged to share their own meaning of the word. The intention is to explore different virtues and work towards a common group understanding.
- The Facilitator then tosses the ball to a group member and the process is repeated until everyone has had a chance to introduce a new virtue. Group members may pass or select a virtue they are comfortable talking about.

For definitions, please visit:

www.virtuesproject.com/virtuesdef.html

List of Virtues*

The language of virtues helps us to replace shaming and blaming with personal responsibility and respect. It is a frame of reference for bringing out the best in each other. It helps us to become the kind of people we want to be. **

List of Virtues*

Assertiveness	Generosity	Respect
Kindness	Gentleness	Responsibility
Caring	Helpfulness	Self-Discipline
Love	Honesty	Service
Compassion	Honour	Tact
Confidence	Humility	Gratitude
Consideration	Joyfulness	Tolerance
Courage	Justice	Trust
Courtesy	Loyalty	Trustworthiness
Creativity	Moderation	Truthfulness
Determination	Modesty	
Discretion	Patience	
Flexibility	Peacefulness	
Forgiveness	Purposefulness	
Friendliness	Reliability	

**This list was adapted from the Virtues Project. For more information, go to: www.virtuesproject.com ** **Excerpt from: www.virtuesproject.com/strategies*



CODE OF CONDUCT ACTIVITY

Purpose

To create a Community Code of Conduct

Materials

- Paper
- Pens

Activity

- Using the St. James example (on the back of the page), create a code of conduct for your building with fellow residents.
- Discuss how you want to treat each other in your building community.
- One person writes down the words.
- Discuss the words and come to an agreement about what words to use as your Code of Conduct.
- You could make it into a poster for display and include a smaller version in the building's welcome package.
- Recommend discussing the Code of Conduct once a year, with all residents. Changes or additions may be made.

In This School

- We are kind
- We do second chances
- We forgive
- We respect each other
- We keep our promises
- We never give up
- We encourage one another
- We laugh often
- We belong
- We are St. James



This Code of Conduct was written by St. James elementary school students in 2014. St James is in Edmonton, Alberta Canada



COMMUNICATE ASSERTIVELY ACTIVITY

Purpose

To learn to communicate in an assertive manner.

Materials Required

- Develop various scenarios that are familiar in your facility, or ask for examples of conflicts that have occurred.

Activity

1. Divide the large group into groups of 3 or 4.
2. Ask each group to use a scenario you have provided, or use a scenario from one of the group members.
3. One person in the group is the person with the problem. Another person responds, using assertive language. The other two people provide feedback about what worked well and what could be improved.
4. Change roles so that each person has the opportunity to respond.
5. Return to the large group. Discuss the activity and congratulate everyone for any new learning they experienced.

Script to Communicate Assertively

1. When this happened – event, using non-judgmental and non-blaming language. Example: Do not use: “You left the chair in front of the common room door!” Instead, state “The chair was in front of the door and I could not get into the room.”
2. State how you felt during the event. Be careful not to phrase a thought as a feeling. Remember that if you can put “that” in front of the word used to describe a feeling, it is a thought!
Example: Do not say, “I feel that no one wants me to go into the common room!” Instead, state “I feel frustrated that I could not enter the room.”
3. Tell the other person what you need. Not what you want.
Example: Say: “I need to move freely within the building.”
4. Ask for what you want.
Example: “Please help to keep the doorways clear.”

FEELING WORDS

GLAD	SAD	ANGRY	AFRAID	OTHER
content	blah	bugged	uncomfortable	shy
pleased	blue	annoyed	startled	curious
playful	gloomy	irritated	uneasy	sassy
cheerful	rotten	resentful	tense	weird
giddy	sad	mean	anxious	confused
calm	unhappy	crabby	worried	moody
comfortable	empty	cranky	concerned	small
cozy	disappointed	grumpy	timid	quiet
safe	hurt	grouchy	alarmed	jealous
relaxed	lost	disgusted	scared	embarrassed*
confident*	sorry	ticked off	afraid	guilty*
strong	ashamed	mad	frightened	responsible**
peaceful	lonely	angry	fearful	concerned**
delighted	down	smoldering	threatened	ashamed*
jolly	hopeless	hot	shaken	caring**
bubbly	discouraged	frustrated	disturbed	bored
tickled	awful	impatient	dread	
silly	miserable	fed-up	panicky	
happy	crushed	fuming	terrified	
proud*	helpless	infuriated	horrified	
	depressed	destructive	petrified	
	withdrawn	explosive		
	heartbroken	violent		
		enraged		
		furious		

FURTHER THOUGHT

*self-conscious emotions

**empathic emotions

<http://childrenscenter.sa.ucsb.edu/CMSMedia/Documents/ParentSupport/FeelingWords.pdf>



PARENT/ADULT/CHILD ACTIVITY

Purpose

To explore interactions between the Parent, Adult and Child modes of communicating.

Materials Required

- Diagrams on paper may be used, see sample
- Pen and paper
- Conversations

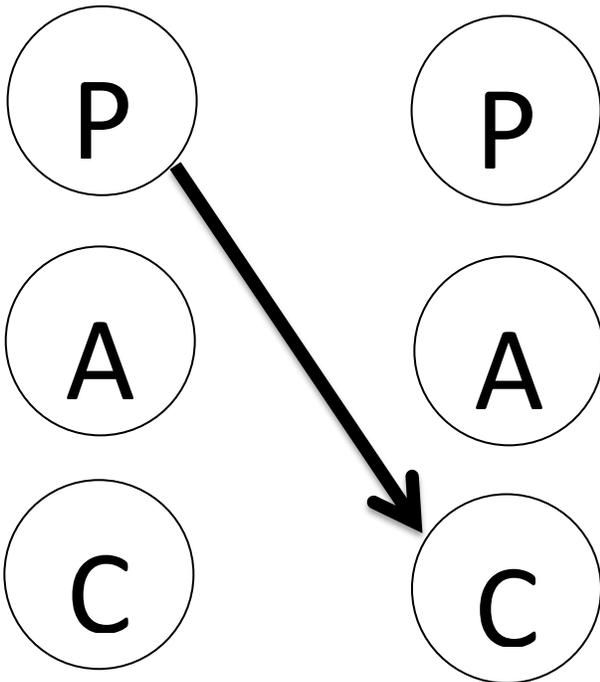
Activity

- In groups of 2 to 4 participants, provide a list of conversations and assumptions.
- Ask the participants to decide whether the speaker is talking from the Parent (P), Adult (A), Child (C) or a combination of two (PA) or (AC).
- Ask the people in the small groups to discuss their reasons for assigning the P, A, C, PA or CA and work towards a common group understanding.
- Return to the large group to discuss new learning and challenges with assigning modes of response.

Example of a conversation:

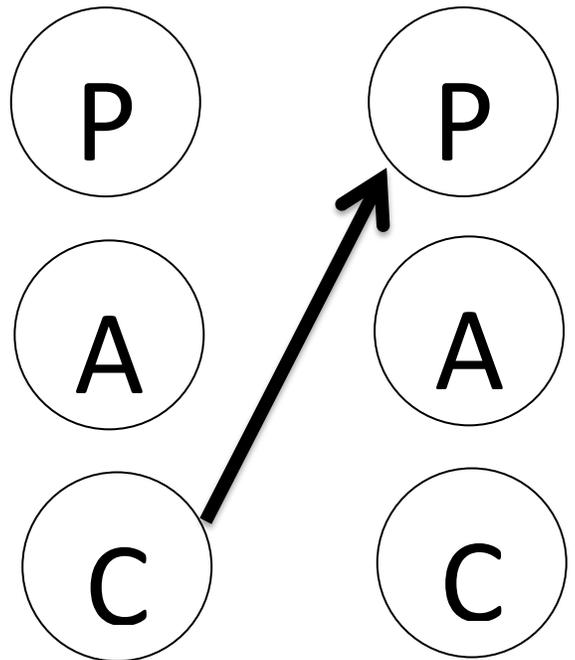
Bill and Gloria are married

Parent to Child statement



Gloria's Parent to Bill's Child:
"Pick up your shirt and socks!
Why do I always have to tell you!
You should know better!"

Child to Parent reaction



Bill's Child to Gloria's Parent
"Why are you always
nagging? No one I know
has to put up with such
nagging!"

Which mode are you in for each of the following assumptions (P, A or C or combination of PA or CA)?

1. Wow! Look at that car. He must be rich!
2. She has dark skin. She must be a foreigner.
3. Boy, is he dumb! He dropped the ball again.
4. A man is lying in a gutter. Only bums lie in gutters.
5. A man is lying in the gutter. Anyone lying in the gutter is in need of help.

Conversations:

Sally: Joe, I want to go out for dinner tonight.

Joe: Sally, you know we can't afford it.

P	P	P	P
A	A	A	A
C	C	C	C

Sally: Oh. I forgot. Do you think we could save enough to go next week?

Joe: If you would quit going shopping for clothes!

P	P	P	P
A	A	A	A
C	C	C	C



BUILDING COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

Purpose

To explore ways to build community and become more involved in your community.

Materials Required

- Imagination
- Pen and paper or flipchart to write down ideas

Activity

- Invite your fellow residents to co-create a poster about your community.
- Discuss what you want to include. (See sample ideas on the back of the page).
- Make the poster, including the ideas that have been agreed upon, and hang it in a prominent place. Pictures or drawings may be included for interest or emphasis.
- Include the poster in your welcome package.
- Meet once a year to discuss the community poster, inviting all new residents to participate.

Here are some ideas to prime the pump:

- Be kind
- Turn off your TV
- Leave your apartment or room
- Know your neighbours
- Look up when you are walking
- Greet people
- Sit in common areas
- Tend flowers
- Use your library
- Play together and include others so that no one is left out
- Explore your neighbourhood
- Share what you have
- Share your abilities
- Share the chairs
- Take someone to a park
- Garden together
- Support your neighbourhood school
- Have potlucks
- Listen to someone – really listen
- Listen to the birds
- Read to someone
- Ask if someone would like help
- Ask for help
- Accept help
- Ask a question
- Start a tradition
- Include others
- Have tea together to address differences
- Share what gives you pleasure
- Listen before you react in anger
- Learn from new and uncomfortable angles
- Seek to understand

*Adapted from the Syracuse Cultural Workers
www.syracuseculturalworkers.com*



Beyond Bullying: Building Healthy Seniors Communities

Evaluation Form

1. Is the Toolkit what you expected? Yes No
2. Is the Toolkit meeting your needs? Yes No
Please explain your answer:

3. Do you want more information on any topics? Yes No
If so, what topics do you want more information on?

4. What other topics are you interested in?

5. What did you think was the most useful about the Toolkit?

6. What would you like to see changed? Please explain.

7. What would you like to see added to the Toolkit?

Thank you!

We rely on your answers to help us improve the Toolkit.

Please return completed form(s) to:

SEESA, Attention: Leslie or Karen

9350-82 St.

Edmonton, AB T6C 2X8

Please provide your name and phone number if you would like us to contact you.

About the Authors

Karen Sheridan has worked as a crisis counsellor in a Y Women's Shelter, as a School and Family Advancement Worker and as a Child and Youth Care Worker. As an active volunteer at the South East Edmonton Seniors Centre for the past 14 years, She believes that personal growth is a life-long project. Karen lives in a seniors' apartment building and enjoys writing and painting.

Leslie Amundson is an occupational therapist who enjoys working with people of all ages. She is currently working at the South East Edmonton Seniors Association as an Outreach Worker and began participating in the Beyond Bullying project in 2015. Leslie enjoys reading, writing, playing and listening to music and lifelong learning.