

**INTRODUCTION TO RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: A TRAINER'S  
GUIDE**

**Washington Ethical Society. Fall, 1988.**

This trainer's guide is for teachers of the Introduction to Relationship course taught in the Washington Ethical Society's School for Ethics. This is a script format and we recommend that teachers use it as a script until becoming comfortable with the material.

Each session has the following sections: 1. Purpose of session 2. Supplies needed; content of session and activities. 3. Welcome and plan for evening. 4. Name Game(sessions one through four. 5. Letting go meditation(sessions two-seven)6. Directions for one-on-ones. 7. Content presentations. 8. Ground Rules(session one and two and as needed). 9. Final go rounds. 10. Home assignments. 11. General comments to teachers.

"T" marks in the script indicate a new activity or content piece. Teachers may designate who does what at these marks.

Prior to beginning the first class, teachers should make sure that 1. the WES office has ordered Straight Talk books for class members to purchase 2. the WES office has enough printed handouts for class members and 3. each class member has been confirmed by phone preferably a week prior to class beginning.

The night of the first class, teachers

1. Prepare a class list sheet with space for name, address and phone numbers of participants
2. copy a class list from the SFE registration notebook to record payments
3. sell books and distribute handouts; put money and checks in an envelope and place in secretary's box
4. place signs on both the library and the Main Hall welcoming participants and stating the location of the class.
5. Set up the room, arranging chairs in a circle. Make sure teachers have marked chairs for themselves in the front of the room with access to the board and flipchart.
- 6 Locate markers, chart paper, paper for participants.

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## CREATING A CULTURE

Why is it so important to create a safe and energetic learning environment rather than just teach a class? Because we approach the content (the what) through the process (the how) and the process through the content. The content consists of the models, the maps, the definitions, the formulas, etc. The process is taught by modeling the skills we teach in our relationships with each other and with the participants. Participants need to feel that they're coming to something that has a history, a purpose, a culture, a leader, something that has an energy and a life of it's own. Then little by little, class by class, they are drawn into the culture and take responsibility for creating, supporting and extending it.

1. Convey the attitude that the participant is always right. It's true because each of us is the expert on our own experience and we're all doing the best we can. No one is ever free to do something he or she can't think of. So the class is about teaching and modeling skills that have been helpful in our lives. It's not about convincing anyone or improving them. Albert Schweitzer once said "Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It's the only thing."
2. Give attention to details - of the physical space, the chairs, the lighting, the materials, the beautiful signs you hang up to direct people to the room.
3. Convey energy and purpose through your voice and body- as you greet people, in giving directions, in giving presentations. Be interested and fascinated by what you're there to do!
4. Convey a definiteness to the plan and the purpose by being on time, using self-responsible language, giving clear directions.
5. "All I have to do is tell my story" is the way one teacher trainee described her job. Talk about your life and the impact Relationship Building has had on you.

## CREATING A TEACHING TEAM

1. Confirm who will be on the team at least 2-3 months before the course begins.
2. Meet together 1-2 months before the course begins to consider questions such as the following:
  - What are my expectations, excitements, fears about teaching this course?
  - What is my personal goal for myself as a teacher of this material? What kind of support do I need?
  - What are our roles and job descriptions?
  - What agreements will we have about working together?
  - What is our enrollment target? What is our plan for reaching it?
  - What other details (meeting times, handout preparation, etc.) do we need to handle?
3. The quality of relationships we develop with each other as a team will have a significant impact on the group culture that develops in the class. Issues surrounding the worth and value concept are bound to crop up, as well as issues concerning leadership and authority. Look for them and use team meetings to stay clear with each other. When you have incidents with each other, use the material you are teaching as your guide for handling them.
4. To start each evening out, try meeting an hour or so before class. Use the time to get in touch with each other, let go of the day, review plans for the evening, renew agreements.
5. Debrief after each class.
6. When the course is over, evaluate your experience together and pass your ideas on to the next teaching team.

## PLANNING A PRESENTATION

1. Read the book, study your script, and look at notes from previous classes.
2. Highlight important points in your script. Read it outloud several times. Find someone who will listen to you. Ask them "Is this clear? Is this believable? Am I believable?"
3. Recall your experiences and jot down examples, brief stories, etc. in the margins of your script that will make your script come alive. (Or borrow discretely from the lives of your friends and relatives, changing the names to protect the innocent.)
5. Practice giving your talk as you drive along in the car, into a tape recorder, or to a real live person. Look for powerful phrases and an interesting ways to engage your listeners:

- \* With a real life experience or example
- \* With an "orienting" sentence such as "There are three ideas I'd like you to leave here with tonite." Or "I'd like you to listen for any Search Talk you hear in what I'm about to read."

## GIVING YOUR TALK

1. EAT YOUR PAPER! "Digest" your points so well that you can usually talk without notes. If you do refer to your paper involve the listeners by saying "Let me check and see if I included everything I wanted to." Or use a "public" outline and put your points on the board or on a chart for all to see as you talk. (If you use chart paper and markers you can then pencil in reminders for yourself that the listeners won't be able to see.)
2. SHOW UP! Be with the people, not your paper! Stay in the room. Be fully present.
2. Make eye contact with all the participants. Speak to individuals by holding eye contact for several seconds especially when you come to a "punch line".
3. If there's a rhino in the room, talk to it. If something is going on, it's usually best to stop and address the issue rather than ignoring it (i.e., a long siren, confusion over directions, upset of some sort, a cat walks in the room, etc.)

## SOME TECHNIQUES FOR MANAGING A LIVELY DISCUSSION

1. Assume that everything participants say is "right" and build on it. Reward participation.
2. Find gentle but firm ways to keep the discussion focused. Repeat the central theme or question. Ask the participant who rambles to help you understand how his or her comment fits into the theme or question at hand.
3. Be quiet sometimes and trust participants to answer each other's questions or explain concepts to each other.
4. Consider asking for comments from someone who hasn't spoken yet. Studies show that the quiet people in groups often know more than the talkers.
5. If someone asks a questions that you sense might be a "set up" or might have a "right answer", try saying "Would you turn that question into a statement of what you believe?" Done in a supportive, interested tone of voice, this may help the participant take responsibility for the thought or feeling behind the question. Remember they took this course to learn your ideas. You need not prove them wrong - you only need to convey your message clearly and creatively. In your behavior lies the answer about whether RB "works".
6. If you encounter negativity or disbelief assume that each person in the room as some percentage of just the same thing (even you!) and be glad for the opportunity to look at the doubts. Resistance = Questions + Anxiety.

Say "Thank you for bringing that up."

Or "Sometimes I feel that way, too."

Or ask for more information so you can help the participant see the point at which he or she chose that belief. Say "Can you think of an experience you've had that led you to decide that?"

Sometimes moving physically closer to the person helps to dissolve resistance. (Especially when what the person really wanted was your attention!)

Or when it's clear that the person does not agree with the concept you might say, "I can see you disagree with the idea that \_\_\_\_\_. I'd like you to try on this new belief for the next 3 weeks. Just consider it. And then at the end of the course let's check in about where you are with it."



Finally, if you encounter resistance, check in with yourself to see if you have the intention to share your experience of this material in your life or whether your self-esteem depends on the participants "getting" it.

Some participants may try to "test" you to see whether this is a course you teach or to see if you have actually made the beliefs and skills your own. When in doubt about what to do, use the skills. Model what you are teaching. That's what they came to see - a real person using the skills!

**IRB SESSION ONE: Introduction to the Four Styles**

**Purpose:** Participants will become familiar with the four styles of communication.

**Supplies:** Books, folders, paper, handouts, markers.

---Content: A. Origin of course.

B. Lecture on Small Talk.

C. Lecture on Control Talk.

D. Lecture on Search Talk.

E. Lecture on Straight Talk.

Activities: A. One-on-ones(o/o) small talk.

B. O/o control talk.

C. O/o search talk.

D. O/o control talk.

E. Discussion.

F. Journal writing: choose goal.

G. O/o goal.

H. Group share-goals.

I. *Ground rules*  
*Home Work*  
*Closing Go Around*

T. I'd like to welcome you to the Washington Ethical Society

and Introduction to Relationship Building, which goes for seven

weeks. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and my co-trainer is \_\_\_\_\_. (Say a few words about yourself; your affiliation with WES and the School for Ethics.)

Our plan for tonight is to talk about the origin of this course, the four styles of communication and get to know each other. We'll do this by breaking into pairs for one-on-one's, sharing with another person at various times during the evening.

In order to begin to get to know each other, we're going to start with one of WES' finest traditions: the Name Game.

The Name Game begins with one person saying his/her name.

The next person says the name of the first person and then his or her name. So the further we get around the circle, the more names will be said by each person. Who would like to start?

(At the end of the Name Game, acknowledge participants for playing.)

T. I'm now going to say a few words about the origin of this course at the Washington Ethical Society. In 1972, at the University of Minnesota, researchers studied 100 couples who had been married for five years or longer to gather information about the way couples communicate. One of the goals of this research was to determine how long the average couple spent communicating during the week. Does anyone have any idea as to what amount of time they discovered? (Get responses from group.)

The answer is 27 1/2 minutes per week. The average amount of time was 27 1/2 minutes per week that couples spent communicating with each other. From this comes one of the central themes of our course: it's not how long we talk to each other or even what we talk about, but how we talk to each other and the style that we use.

Researchers also noticed that the talk itself could be categorized into four main types or styles of communication. In addition, they discovered that those couples who resolved conflicts most effectively were those who had skill in using all four styles. Those who had the most difficulty tended to use two styles at the most.

Out of this Minnesota study was born the book Straight Talk, a book about the four styles and conflict resolution.

Twelve years ago when the Ethical Society's committees and programs were being born, leaders and members of the Society determined that members needed to know how to communicate effectively and resolve problems productively in order for programs to flourish and grow. We needed a common framework as a community for creating relationships, making ground rules and establishing agreements that supported the ethical principles we were choosing to live by. The driving belief

of the course is that no one is born knowing how to build good relationships and those skills necessary to resolve the inevitable conflicts between people can be taught. Therefore, people like Don Montagna and Lynne Waymon created this class based on Straight Talk and other similar works. Since 1976, we've taught approximately 200 people a year; this class is now the prerequisite class for many other courses and workshops taught here in the School for Ethics.

Does anyone have any questions or comments?(Look at each participant when asking this question.)

T. So let's begin with the four styles. Most of us have some skill in one or two of these styles. We can increase our effectiveness a great deal if we are aware of all four and are able to select each style when it's appropriate. We'll talk about each style and then we'll experience using each tonight.

The first is **SMALL TALK**. Small talk is sociable, chit-chat, usually friendly. It's talk about "it"--it's an exchange of information. It's the "meet and greet" talk in your office. Small talk does not mean inconsequential. The subject itself may be very weighty--the political scene, or an office problem, for example, or not so heavy, a movie you liked perhaps. But small talk is low risk, it's not about you and me. It's about something other than us and the intention is to exchange information, to make contact and to keep things on an even keel.

Some examples of small talks are:

" How are you today? I'm fine.

This report says we need to cut back operating costs.

The music is a bit sad.

Red is my favorite color.

This weather is great!



I know a great new Italian restaurant."

Small talk includes reporting, questions and answers , as in "where are the car keys?", joking and opinions. Small talk is always exchanged under clear expectations. It's low risk and our intention when we use small talk is to keep things moving along smoothly. You and I are talking about something other than our relationship. So do you recognize this way of being together? Does anyone have any questions?

T. Tonight, you'll have a chance to be with most everyone in the room tonight for 2-3 minutes each. In a minute I'm going to ask you to choose a partner and then listen to what the o/o is about. There are no "right" answers, so just have fun and enjoy being with the people you'll meet. Remember, you're in charge of your own participation. Share what is comfortable for you and feel free to sit out on any activity. In each o/o, I'll ask you to take turns. After you both have had a turn, I'll ask you to choose a

new partner for another o/o on another subject. Now please choose a partner and listen for directions.(Help people get paired up. Say"Raise your hand if you're looking for a partner")

A> Introduce yourself. Tell your partner something about where you live, where you work, anything else you'd like to share about yourself. One of you will go first--how about the person with the brighter clothing on--I'll call time in a couple of minutes and then the other person will take a turn.

Thank your partner. Say goodbye and choose a new partner.(Teachers note that each person has a partner and help those who do not, by asking "Who needs a partner?")

B. Tell your partner what you did last night. Again, one of you will go first, I'll call time and then the other will take a turn.

Thank your partner. Say goodbye and choose a new partner.

C. Tell your partner about a good book, movie, or restaurant you've enjoyed recently. Each take a turn. You'll

have about two minutes each.

Say goodbye and come back to the large group.

T. Again, small talk is always low risk and low emotion, even if the subject itself is "weighty."

Style Two is Control Talk. The intention of control talk is to take charge, to get someone else to do something you want them to do. It does not maintain the status quo like small talk; its aim is to alter the course of things.

There are two kinds of control talk:

Light Control is necessary in the world to get things done. It takes the form of--

--persuading-We really need you to come to the meeting.

--seeking agreement-How about the last person in the office turning off the computer?

--praising-You did an absolutely perfect job on that report.

--teaching-See if you can hear the difference between small talk and control talk.

--making rules-Don't cross the street alone.

As long as there is no compulsion attached, control talk is efficient and functional.

Heavy Control is the other kind of control talk and it's win/lose. The message is--do it my way or else. It takes the form of:

--blaming-You're the one who makes us late all the time.

--threatening-If you don't learn where the pots and pans go, I'm not going to cook anymore.

--sarcasm-I guess it will be another month before  
we're blessed with one of your meals.

--criticism-You talk too much at parties. It bores me.

Heavy control is labelling, name calling, accusing,  
demanding,ridiculing and put down's, the kind of statements  
that begin, "The trouble with you is. . . .". Heavy control also has  
two forms--Active and Passive,which we call the Iron Fist and  
the Velvet glove.

Iron Fist Heavy Control talk is when you know  
you've been hit. The intention is loud and clear.--If you have one  
more drink, I'm taking the car and leaving.

Velvet Glove Heavy Control is when you know  
you've been hit but you're not sure how the blow came. --My  
mother never called me. When I called her she'd say, "My God!  
Where have you been? I thought something had happened to  
you!"

The intention of Velvet Glove Heavy Control is to control by inducing guilt, sympathy, anxiety.

So let's do some more one-on-one's. Find a partner, someone you have not been with earlier.

D > Give your new partner your best advice about how to get the most out of this class. Tell your partner what he or she should do to make the class the best possible experience . I'll call time so that both of you get a couple of minutes to give your best advice.

(Say goodbye and choose a new partner.)

E. Complain to your partner about something going on in your life. Your partner's job is to just listen. Then change and give your partner a turn. (NOTE: a very effective variation of this is to have them use numbers to express their complaints. They express the same emotion, but don't get momentarily

stuck in their problem. Directions are: Now when you complain, don't use words. Use numbers from one to one hundred in any way you want.

Like one two three four FIVE SIX SEVEN eight nine TEN.)

(You may want to have a brief large group discussion here to check in with people about small and control talk. Are they familiar? Are you more comfortable with one than another?)

T. Style Three is Search Talk . Search talk is tentative, exploring, detached; it tests the waters. The intention of search talk is to stop the action in a tense situation and look at things in an objective way. Its tone is reflective, contemplative. The goal of search talk is to explore a problem area in a relationship in an unemotional way to create more understanding without necessarily finding a solution. This "wonder why" talk is low risk, even though the topic may be high risk.

It often starts with "I noticed..." as if you're a spider on the wall, observing, watching, but not taking a position. Some examples of search talk are:

" We seem to be fighting an awful lot. I wonder if it's because we're getting married in a month.

I'm curious about why we squabble after we go to one of our in-law's for dinner.

What are some ways we could change this unpleasant

state we seem to be in right now."

Search talk is a good place to go if you've gotten into control talk and you don't know how to stop.

Does anyone have any questions? Search talk is one that may seem the most unfamiliar to you, or you may recognize it as a style that you've been using all along. Search talk can be an enormously effective tool to use, especially in tense



situations. It changes the nature of the dynamic right away if one steps back and begins to look at , in a purely exploring way, what is going on and what might be behind it. Often we think we're using search talk when we say such things as-" I wonder why you always start fights after we go to my mother's". But what style is that?

How do you know? The surest way to figuring what style you're in is to ask yourself " what is my intention?". Intention is always the clue. And the intention of search talk is to step back and consider the cause and effect in a non blaming way.

Choose a new partner for some more one-on-one's.

G. In this o/o, speculate with your partner on what you might get out of this course. Be tentative, exploring, pondering. I'll call time to give both of you a turn.

(Thank your partner and choose a new one!)

H. In this o/o, share with your partner a situation recently that was very tense, one in which you chose to use control talk

and complained, or ridiculed, or demanded or withheld. Tell your partner about it. Then think of what you might have said in search talk that might have stopped the action.

I. (Optional o/o: We're going to have an experience now of being with each other without using words. Our society doesn't encourage us to be together in silence. We often fill up silence with meaningless words. Choose another partner. Sit knee to knee with your hands on your own knees. Now close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. In a minute I'm going to ask you to open your eyes and be with each other without talking. Okay now open your eyes. Notice any physical sensations you might have. Notice any tension in your stomach or shoulders. Try to let go of the tension. Notice if you need to laugh. Let it up and let it go. Notice your need to talk, then don't. Just be with each other without using words. Notice any thoughts or feelings you're having. Notice the other person across from you. Whatever you think or feel, is okay. Just notice it.

Now stay with this same partner and share what this was like for you. Be exploring, speculative and open-ended. Be curious about why you might have thought or felt the way you did. Speculate with your partner what your relationship might be like now that you've shared this experience.)

T. The fourth style is Straight Talk. Straight talk is a way of communicating responsibly and openly about what you think and feel in the present. The intention of straight talk is to build a relationship; seek a course of action, seek resolution to an issue. Straight talk is self-responsible, self-disclosing, caring, committed. It's "I" talk--I think, I feel, I want. You state how you think and feel and then listen to the other's sharing of the same. Straight talk is high risk. One becomes vulnerable when sharing their thoughts and feelings.

Some examples of straight talk:

" I feel out of control when I can't find things. I'd like top

propose some agreements about where things go.

"I'm disappointed we're not getting together on Sunday. I'd like to make plans to see you later in the week.

I feel really good about our relationship. I care a lot about you."

Sometimes we think we're airing our thoughts and feelings in a "straight" way such as what I've described; but we may be using disguised control talk. If you said something like--"I feel that you're not listening to me when I talk about work", what style is that? How do you know? What might you say to make that a straight message? What is the best means of knowing what style we're in?( Make the point that intention is always the best gauge for knowing what style we're in. Do I want to hurt and punish or do I want to resolve a problem and bring myself and the other closer together?)

Why do you think that straight talk is high risk? What makes you vulnerable when you share your feelings? Let's try some straight talk. Choose another partner. Find someone you have not been with tonight.

J. Share with your partner why you decided to take this course. What's going on in your life that motivated you to choose spending some time with building relationships? Use "I" statements to describe your thoughts and feelings and wants about relationships. When you're the listening partner, just listen and repeat back what you hear your partner saying. I'll call time so each of you will have a turn. You'll have about two minutes each.

(Thank your partner and come back to the large group.)

T> Does anyone have any questions about the four styles? Any comments? Do you recognize that you have been using them? Which ones are you the most familiar and comfortable with?

Which ones were most difficult and why? What do you think of the one-on-one activity?(Pause and look at each person when you ask questions; call on people by name who look like they may have something to share.)

T. Take about five minutes now and think about the one-on-one we completed a few minutes ago. Why did you decide to take this course and what is your goal? What would you like to create for yourself here? How would you like yourself and/or your relationships to change as a result of this class?

(If time, lead a o/o where partners share and get clear on each other's goals. There are several options from here.1. Ask participants to write a letter to themselves with their goals; date the letter and keep it handy so they can refer to them during the class. 2. Have a go round where each person shares his/her goal and teachers write on flip chart. Stress a one sentence goal for this exercise.)

T > Before we end tonight, we'd like to discuss ground rules for this course. Since we're going to be together for the next \_\_\_ weeks, we think it's important to establish some agreements with each other.

The number of classes is \_\_\_.

Classes begin at 7:30 and end at 9:30. Class time is full of activities, so please plan on being on time. We'll rarely go over, but if we do we will check in with everyone to agree to it before going ahead.

If you have an emergency and can't come to class, please call one of the teachers or another classmate. We'll be distributing class lists next week with all our numbers on it.

Our numbers are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Also, if you have to miss class, please check in with another classmate or teacher about the class and assignment.

The ground rule with the greatest importance--confidentiality. This means that personal

information shared in here needs to stay in here. We hope you'll share the content, techniques, skills, activities with the world. But this is a small community and since we want to make it safe for all of us to share personal information about ourselves and significant others , we need to know that this information is considered confidential and will not be repeated outside class. Also we like to stress that everyone is in charge of their own experience in here. You have the right to pass during a go round, or on any other activity.

Does anyone have any questions about any of that, or any other agreements proposed?

T. Good! Well this evening has flown by and we'd like to end by having a final go around. What was the evening like for you tonight? Keep it brief. Whoever wants to start can start.

T. Homework for the week.



Read chapters one, two and three in Straight Talk. Notice yourself and others using the four styles this week. Choose someone in your life--friend, coworker or mate and tell them everything you know about the four styles. Notice their reactions. Notice your questions. We'll see you next week at 7:30!

**SESSION II: Introduction to Inner Critic and Inner Witness.**

**Purpose:** Participants will become familiar with the Inner Witness and Inner Critic.

**Supplies:** Blank sheets of paper

Lots of markers and crayons

List of names and addresses of class

**Content:** Review of 4 styles

Inner Critic

Inner Witness

**Activities:** A > O-o you and the 4 styles

B > O-o -the 4 styles at work; paired and group

C > Discussion of 4 styles

D > Draw and share Inner Critic

E > Draw and share Inner Witness

T. Welcome to Session II of Introduction to Relationship Building. Tonight we're going to review and discuss the four styles of communication. We're also going to talk about two roles we call the Inner Critic and Inner Witness. The first thing we'll do to get started is the Name Game. Does anyone remember how the name game starts?

T. Good! In order for us to be grounded here tonight, we're going to relax with a short meditation. So put everything off your laps; place your feet firmly on the ground; uncross your legs and arms; place your hands on your knees and begin to relax. Close your eyes; stretch if you need to, particularly your neck and shoulders. Now take a few deep breaths; and another. (NOTE: trainers can use the following meditation or any variation.)

Remember your day. (Allow 15 seconds.) Now let it go.(15)

Remember what it was like getting here tonight.(15) Now let it go.(15)

Tune in to your sensations. Notice any areas of tension.(10).

Now let the tension go.(10)

Tune in to your feelings. Notice any emotions you have.(10)

Now let your feelings go(10)

Tune in to your thoughts. What are you thinking right now?(10).

Now let your thoughts go.(10)

Tune in to your wants. What do you want from this evening?(15)

Imagine that your mind is a lake. See the choppy waves on the lake. Gradually smooth the waves until the lake is like glass.

(30).

When you are ready, open your eyes and come back to the room.

T. Choose a partner for a one-on-one. In this paired share, take out your chart of the four styles and share with your partner what you noticed about yourself and the four styles this week. You'll have about two minutes each. I'll call time for you to switch midpoint.

T > What are the four styles? (Trainer questions group and writes on board. Keep your energy up as you ask for participation. ). Style 1: what is its intention? When do you use it? What are some examples of Style I?

Style II: What is its intention? When do you use it? What are the two types of Style II? What are the two types of Heavy Control? What are some examples?

Style III: What is its intention? When do you use it? What are some examples?

Style IV: What is its intention? When do you use it? What are some examples of Style 4? Why is this a risky style?

Does anyone have any questions about the four styles of communication? We're going to work a bit more with them tonight.

T > We have a lot of choice in how and when we use the different styles; depending on our intentions, each style has its usefulness. Here is an example of a situation and how I used the four styles.(NOTE: space for a trainer's individual examples follows this one.)

I really wanted a dog and my partner didn't.

SmT: I really like dogs!

CT: You're really selfish to deny me a dog.

SchT: I wonder if we can find a compromise. I wonder what it would be like to have a dog.

StT: I feel lonely at times. I would really like to have a dog to take care of. Let's explore your questions

about dogs and look at the pro's and con's.

I'm willing to be responsive to what concerns you may have about a dog.

T > Are there any questions about this? Now we'd like you to go through a similar exercise. Choose a partner because you'll be working on this in teams. On page \_\_\_ in your workbooks, is an exercise where we'd like you to imagine that you are interacting with a new co-worker and taking him/her out to

lunch. We'd like each team of partners to decide and write what you might say to this new person in each of the four styles. Talk it over together. One of you write. Use your chart of the four styles. You'll have about 7 minutes to complete this and then we'll share it.

(NOTE: Have a go around for each team to share a few of each of the phrases in each style. Discuss.)

T > Does anyone have a question or comment about the four styles? What is confusing? Which of the styles is the easiest for you? The most difficult? What do you think is useful about the four styles? Remember--the point of the four styles is to observe and choose which style will suit your intention.)

T > At this point in the course, we've found that people begin to feel some self-criticism--"Boy I really use control talk a lot!" So we're going to talk about the Inner Critic and the role it plays in



our lives.

The Inner Critic is that critical little voice that wakes up the minute you do each morning. Are you all aware of your inner critic voice? (Pause about ten seconds) That's the one--the voice that's saying "I don't get it. What's this little voice stuff?" The Critic is our internal judge, censor. It passes judgment on all our thoughts, feelings, actions. Its style is Heavy Duty Control. The Inner Critic screens our experiences, and censors our expressions of thoughts, feelings, actions. The Inner Critic tells us that we're not good enough and never will be. This voice which began in childhood is a creation of parents, siblings, teachers and others who thought we needed to be criticized to be kept in line. What the Inner Critic accomplishes most of the time is that it makes us feel bad. It worries about tomorrow and criticizes what you did yesterday.

Let's see how the Inner Critic Works.(Each trainer stands in the front of the room. One holds a sign saying"self"; the other

holds a sign saying "Inner Critic".)

Self: Boy that dessert looks great!

IC: You are the most disgusting pig. You know sugar isn't good for you. You'll never fit into your fall clothes. You have no self-control. You're like a

child.

Self: Oops! It's 7:45. Time to get going.

IC: Can't you even do the simplest things? Like get up on time? You are lazy, good for nothing. You'll lose your job one of these days and be a bag lady.

You're irresponsible and no good.

Self: Where's that receipt? I thought I put it in here.

IC: You are hopeless! You lose stuff all the time. What's the matter with you? What a joke you teaching organizational skills. You're filing system is a national disaster.

T > What does your Inner Critic look like? Mine looks like a demented bee. We're going to give you paper and pens so you can draw this monster that's never satisfied. What does this judge look like and what does he/she say all the time. Mine says " You'll never get it right . You're not good enough. "

(Hand out paper and several crayons and pens. While they're drawing, you might want to ask--"Does anyone notice their inner critic judging their drawing ability?")

Now let's all take a minute and hold up our drawings so we can see each other's inner critics. Let's go around the room; keep your drawing up and each person share what their critic is saying.

T > I sometimes believe that if my inner critic wasn't functioning, I'd degenerate into an irresponsible child. But this is not so. What happens is that the relentless criticism of my

inner critic creates another role that rebels against the critic and starts the cycle all over again.

Although the Inner Critic was in many ways developed for us out of our control, we have the choice to develop many other voices or roles that can serve us better than the Inner Critic.

One is what we call the Inner Witness. The Inner Witness is a voice, or role, or way of thinking, that we can treat as a personality, just like the Inner Critic. The Inner Witness is a personality that is aware of and accepting of all our different roles and personalities--whether we're operating as mother, daughter, wife, trainer. The attitude of the Inner Witness, in contrast to the Critic, is one of total non-judgement. The Inner Witness is a curious observer; only-"how interesting!, it says." It is only an observer; just noticing what happens. Its intention is Style III-just step back and notice what is happening.

The Inner Witness does not argue with the Critic, affirm our worth, list our good points and accomplishments. The Inner

Witness is a part of us that is above all the action, just watching, curiously. My inner witness is a butterfly which hovers over my right shoulder and says things like--isn't that interesting. Here's how it works:

(NOTE: If there are only two of you, enlist a third person to be self. One trainer is Critic; one is Witness; and one trainer or participant is self. Give the Self something to say.)

Self: Boy I'd really like a beer right now.

IC: You drink too much. You're never going to finish painting this room.

IW: Hmmm. Isn't that interesting. I'm criticizing myself for wanting to relax this evening.

Self: I just used control talk with my son.

IC: You use control talk too much. You're not a good parent. You're not a very nice person!

IW: Hmmm. That's interesting. I'm really beating myself.

T > Are there any questions about the Inner Witness? It's often confused with affirmations and other positive self-talk which we use to counter the Inner Critic. But the purpose of the Inner Witness is to simply notice what is happening, in order to bring it to consciousness so that there is choice about it. The Inner Witness by just noticing weakens the Critic. It gives us more information on our patterns, the consequences of our actions. By creating some space, the Witness gives us opportunities to create more options for ourselves. " Hmm. Isn't that interesting how I criticized my husband in front of his family. I wonder what is going on that I would do that?" The Witness doesn't find answers for us; it simply tells us what is going on, helping us create a space for answers to come.

T > So draw your Inner Witness. What do you imagine it to look like? What do you want it to look like? It's your own creation. After you draw it, think of a one line phrase that it will use to

notice your experience. Remember, it isn't countering your critic. It only notices, not judges. After we're done drawing, I'll ask you to share your picture and what it says.

(NOTE: Participants frequently want their witness to fight their critics despite what you've said about its role. Therefore, one suggested method to counter this is to write the words "tentative, curious, observing" on the board with sample phrases such as "Wow" "Far out!" "Isn't that interesting!", etc. and ask them to choose one of these phrases for their witness to say.)

(Have a go-round for everyone to hold up the drawing of the Inner Witness and share its saying. NOTE: This place is often very difficult for people. They often want to use the Inner Witness to battle the Critic. You may need to reemphasize the purpose of the Witness. Sometimes the courtroom metaphor is useful. The defense attorney defends you. The prosecuting attorney makes a case against you to the judge. The witness tells what

happened.)

T > Let's have a final go round. How was tonight for you? What did you create for yourself tonight? Say whatever you want to say to say goodnight. Whoever wants to begin may begin.

T > Homework: Be aware this week of your inner critic and practice creating your inner witness. Notice those situations that bring up your inner critic.

(NOTE: during the final go round, one of the trainers may want to restate some of the concepts and emphasize that in a course about relationships, communication and conflict, the inner critic goes wild, once our consciousness is raised. Use the inner witness and notice what our critic is saying about ourselves in relationships.



**SESSION III: The nature of conflict and incidents defined.**

**Purpose:** Participants will become familiar with specific precepts about conflict and the role of incidents in conflict.

**Supplies:** paper for participants' notebooks.

**Content:** Inner Critic and Witness review

Conflict--what it is; strategies for coping with it

Incidents-the first step in conflict resolution

**Activities:** A. O-o Inner Critic

B. O-o Inner Witness

C. o-o control talk

D. Brainstorm conflict indicators

E. Discuss conflict strategies

F. Make list of incidents

G. GO-round. Share an incident on your list.

T > Welcome to Session III of Introduction to Relationship Building. Tonight we're going to review Inner Critic and Witness and begin to look at what conflict is and how to resolve it. We're going to start with the Name Game! Who wants to begin?

T > Good. Now let's get settled and have a meditation to get ready for this evening.

(Meditation)

T > We'd like to review the ground rules briefly at this point, especially since we'll be getting into sharing conflict situations with each other. We'd like to emphasize confidentiality, as well

as the importance of getting here on time and letting us know if you cannot be here. We don't want to worry about you, so please give one of us on the list a call if you can't make it.

T > Who noticed their Inner Critic this week? How about the Inner Witness? How would you describe the Inner Critic? What does it do? Say? What is the purpose of the Inner Witness? What kinds of things does it say in its role of observer?(NOTE: Use the board or flipchart during this review to get them regrounded in the material.)

T > Good. Choose a partner for a one-on-one. Share with your partner what you noticed this week about your inner critic. You'll each have about two minutes.

Choose another partner. In this one-on-one, share with your partner what you noticed about your inner witness. Again, you'll have about two minutes each.

Does anyone have any questions or comments about the Inner Critic or Inner Witness.

T > Choose another partner. In this one-on-one, you'll have a chance to look at control talk. Tell your partner about a time you wanted to control someone or a situation. Tell your partner what you did and said. Then tell your partner what you might have said using search or straight talk. After that, speculate on how the situation might have turned out differently if you had used search or straight talk. (NOTE: Write these three pieces on the board.)

--What happened during this time when you wanted to control

--What you might have said in search or straight talk

--The effects of using control versus straight or search

You'll each have about four minutes each to answer these questions and I'll let you know when half the time is up.

T > There are three important points about conflict. As you probably just noticed, straight and search talk are most effective when trouble occurs. In order to use these styles most effectively, we need to know a few points about conflict.

1. It's inevitable. Conflict is unavoidable in the process of living and relating to others. There is no right or wrong--only differences. Even in a relatively harmonious relationship, two people will disagree about which movie to see. We believe that there would be no conflict if we found the right job, the right mate, the right group. But this is not so. Conflict exists with all

jobs, mates, groups.

2. To avoid conflict is to avoid significant relationships.

There are two ways to avoid conflict: withholding and placating.

When we withhold feelings, communication or withdraw from closeness because of conflict, we avoid intimacy. If we go along in our relationships not expressing what we think or how we feel because we want to avoid conflict, then we'll soon have a big space of resentment between ourselves and others. The quality of a relationship is determined by the ability to resolve conflict.

3. Conflict resolution skills can be learned. No one is born knowing how to resolve problems with others. We are born only with our differences. We believe that there are skills to learn to resolve problems; and like any skill it takes practice and effort to put it into use.

T> How do you know when you are having a conflict with someone?

What are some of the physical sensations you experience?

What are some behaviors you do?

What kinds of feelings do you have?

What kinds of thoughts(Trainer write these on board.)

T > We all learn different strategies for conflict in our families. We use these strategies out of habit; it's what we learned when we were young and we don't know any better. How did your family treat conflict? What did you learn to cope with problems in your family? Be with yourself a minute to think about this and remember.(Write these strategies on board or flipchart. "Be nice"; "pretend it doesn't exist."; "yell and scream", "whine and complain", withdraw, etc.)

What we now know about a lot of these strategies is that they don't work very well. None of them resolve the problems and bring us closer to others. We're going to talk about a different

approach to resolving conflict.

T > Recognizing conflict is one of the first steps in resolving it.

Conflict begins with what we call incidents. What is an incident?

An incident is something that happens to one or both of us that affects how we are together, our space, our relationship

.(Repeat)

An incident is:

1 .What did Jack Webb say in Dragnet? JUST THE FACTS! He said \_\_\_\_\_. She did \_\_\_\_\_.

2. You may know you've had an incident by the physical sensations that accompany it(sweaty palms, butterflies, clenched jaw), as well as the feelings you have that"something just happened."

3. You may know you've had an incident because you keep on replaying the event over and over in your head.

4. If we ignore our incidents, they come between us and create a field of land mines with less and less access to each



other.

Although some incidents can draw us closer together (you sent me a birthday card), in this class we'll focus on the ones that create distance. When an incident is resolved, it can make us feel closer.

Normally the most dramatic incidents, those with the greatest intensity--occur with our closest significant others.; partners, friends, siblings, parents, bosses.

We may have minor incidents with parking enforcement workers, service people who don't come when they say they're coming, the post office, government officials. But these incidents don't have much staying power, even though we may be extremely upset at the moment. Use the time in this class to focus on incidents with people who are fairly significant in your life--mates, partners, bosses, friends, family.

Here's a list of the incidents I've had in the last few

weeks:(Note: Dig out old ones if you have to because this needs to be a substantial list to illustrate incidents.)

T > I'd like each person to make a list of incidents that you've had today, this week, this year , whenever. No one will see this. It's just for you to use to jot down the facts(just the facts) in your own shorthand. We'll ask you to share one in a minute. If you're having trouble getting started, think of all the significant people in your life and what it has been like with them lately;notice any "blips on the screen" when you've been with them lately?

T > Let's have a go-around now. Choose and say one incident from your list. (NOTE: Trainers may need to work with participants who may have difficulty separating the incident from embellishments. A Participant may say "Joe said in the rudest tone possible..."

Trainer can then say " Good ! what was it that Joe said? The

incident is that Joe said he couldn't go with me. The incident is just the facts. Description of the event or guesses about it come later in the resolution process.)

T > It's time for a final go-around. Say whatever you want to say about how tonight was for you. What did you create for yourself, notice about yourself. Or say whatever you want to say to say goodnight.

T > Homework for tonight is to notice incidents and list them (for extra credit!) Read Don Montagna's lecture on conflict resolution, pages \_\_\_ in your manual and read chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 in Straight Talk.

Have a good week!

## **SESSION IV: THE AWARENESS WHEEL**

**Purpose:** Participants will become familiar with all parts of the awareness wheel as a tool for understanding conflict.

**Supplies:** paper and awareness wheels

Content: Review of conflict

The awareness wheel

Uses of the awareness wheel

- Activities:
1. O-o share an incident, positive or negative
  2. Brainstorm why we avoid noticing incidents
  3. Discussion of why it's important to notice incidents.
  4. List incidents.
  5. Complete an awareness wheel.
  6. O-o share awareness wheel.
  7. Discussion of awareness wheel.

T > Good evening! Tonight we're going to be working on a number of areas. We'll begin by looking at incidents and conflict and reviewing last week's material. Then we'll talk about a tool we call the awareness wheel which is the first step for getting in touch with yourself and your experience so that conflicts can be resolved.

T > Let's begin by letting go and being here with a meditation.

T > Well I sure feel much more relaxed! How about a quick Name Game to get our energy going?!

T > Okay. Choose a partner for a one-on-one. In this one on one, share with your partner two or three incidents you had this week; choose ones that either drew you closer or created some

distance. Remember--just the facts. Also share what you've noticed in general about incidents this week. If you didn't have any incidents, make some guesses about why that was! You'll each have about two minutes each and I'll call time for you.

T > Sometimes I notice that it's hard for me to think of incidents or notice them. Anybody have that experience?(Pause) What are some of the reasons that we avoid noticing incidents? Let's brainstorm and write them up here on the chart. What do you suppose would be the payoffs in not noticing incidents and in not dealing with them directly?

T > All of these reasons--it's painful; once you notice, you have to do something about it; conflict is unsettling--let's smooth it over and pretend it didn't happen--are why we often don't notice or don't bring them up. But building relationships takes being willing to notice incidents, getting in touch with your

experience of the incident and sharing your experience in a way that draws you closer to the other person. We're going to use a tool called the awareness wheel tonight that helps us get in touch with the experience we have as individuals when we have an incident.

T> Before we talk about the Awareness Wheel, take about five minutes to list your incidents from the previous week. Again, a good way to get started is to make a column headed by each area of your life or each significant relationship. (Illustrate this on the board.) Think--how has it been lately to be with this person?  
First thought!

T> When an incident occurs, we are often overwhelmed by waves of feelings, thoughts, sensations. I know that I'm usually unable to formulate a response at that moment that I'm comfortable with. Before resolving conflict with another, you

must first connect with yourself. The technique we use , called the awareness wheel, divides our response into five parts(interpretations, feelings, actions, sensations and wants).

The Awareness Wheel is the tool we use to get in touch with our experience of our incidents, after which we can use this information and decide what type of resolution we want.

(NOTE: Draw a large AW on the board. Share an incident and fill in each part of the wheel as you explain about each part. The incident you use should be very complete and clear for you)

Incident: The incident is something that happens that changes the way we relate to each other. My incident is that I

\_\_\_\_\_.

Body Sensations: Notice to see if you have any strong physical sensations when you're having an incident with someone.They are usually clues to feelings . Hurt, for example, often is that queasy feeling in the stomach. Anger is often first felt as a



tightness in the chest or neck or by a rapidly beating heart. My sensations were

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Feelings. Feelings are the spontaneous emotional reactions. Feelings are usually one word expressions such as anger, sadness, joy, hurt, etc. Sometimes thoughts are expressed as feelings such as in "I feel that....." Usually if "that" can be inserted into the statement we have jumped into interpretations. Feelings are often a clue to interpretations and vice versa.

My feelings during this incidents were \_\_\_\_\_.

Notice how some of them conflict? It's not unusual. We're complicated creatures. Feelings will often conflict especially since they are linked with interpretations.

Interpretations: Interpretations are our thoughts, expectations, judgments, opinions, beliefs, impressions, conclusions, attitudes, motivations, about ourselves and the other person. Our interpretations are our best guesses as to why someone did something and why it affected us. We think our interpretations are reality, but they are just our way of analyzing the world and our experience. Interpretations vary from person to person, since everyone is different. In this incident I had several interpretations about

myself: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. And I also had interpretations about the other

person: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

Sometimes the first interpretations are control talk thoughts about ourselves and others (He's irresponsible. That's why he forgot our anniversary.) A good question to ask when the

interpretations are all style 2 is " why?" Sometimes " why" will give us some other thoughts in straight talk or search talk.(He has had a lot of tension at work lately.)

Actions: Actions are what you did when this occurred. You may have done absolutely nothing, withdrawn, stopped speaking, stormed out. All of those are actions. What I did when this happened was \_\_\_\_\_.

Wants: Wants I always leave for last after I've figured out my experience and the best way to proceed. What do I want from myself and what do I want from the other person. For myself, these are things that only I can give myself. Maybe I'd like to ask for something; change my behavior; design an affirmation; get more in touch with my inner witness. In this incident, I had several wants for

myself: \_\_\_\_\_.

As far as the other person, these are things I want from him/her and I'd like to ask for them. I want acknowledgement, reassurance, sympathy, you to be on time, etc. It's important to state them positively. I want you to tell me I look good when we go out, not I don't want you to tell me you don't like my dress as we're leaving the house to go out. In this incident I was very clear about what I wanted, since I had done a wheel \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

How do I know if my want is straight or control talk? Intentions are always a clue. If you want the other person to feel bad about what they did, then you're in style 2. If you truly want to resolve the incident and get closer it will be expressed in your straight talk message. If I get an angry, defensive response from the

other person, I need to look at my intention and how I'm expressing it.

Usually it's easier for us to begin with a certain area of the wheel with which we feel the most comfort. I had no trouble with \_\_\_\_\_, but it took me a while to notice my \_\_\_\_\_.

They are always clues to each other and they create each other.

If I think that my relationships with \_\_\_ are always messing up, then probably I will feel sad and despondent.

Having an incident is like being tuned into five channels at once on a tv with all the pictures and noise of five shows. Using the wheel helps us tune into one channel at a time so we can get a very clear picture and clear sound of what is happening.

T> Who has questions on the awareness wheel? What do you think about the wheel? What are your reactions to it as a tool for looking at your experience? We're going to do one in a minute.

The wheel has a couple of very important uses: One, it helps you get in touch with your personal experience. Another is that it helps you understand why you are in conflict. Sometimes it may seem like such a minor, unimportant exchange, but it was an incident for you and it helps you understand you. It also helps us communicate our feelings and interpretations which can lead to closer, more intimate relationships. And it helps us get to our wants, which need to be expressed in order to build relationships.

T > I'd like you to choose an incident from your list, one that you'd like to know more about and also one that you'd be willing to share with at least one other person. Begin by putting the incident into the center. Save wants for last.

(NOTE: Circulate to each person within five minutes to make sure that the incident is just the facts; then make sure that the feelings and interpretations are in the right areas and that

feelings are feelings not ideas. Another area people frequently have difficulty with is identifying body sensations. Ask them to make their best guess about what those might have been, or just let it go if they're feeling blocked. Awareness Wheel

T > Okay, choose a partner for a one-on-one., In this paired share, go over your wheel with your partner. Partner, it's your job to listen and help them figure out if all the information is in its place. It is not a time for you to be helpful with advice on how to solve this incident or relationship. You'll each have about ten minutes and I'll call time.

T > So how was it to do an awareness wheel? What area of the wheel feels like foreign territory to you? Why do you think that is? Can you see yourself using this?

T > It's time for a final go around. What was tonight like for you?

What were the high points for you? What are your concerns or doubts? Say anything you need to say to say goodnight.

T > Homework for the week is to read chapters 7-12 in Straight Talk on Awareness Wheels, and do one at home this week.

## **SESSION FIVE: USE OF THE SHORT FORM**

**Purpose:** Participants will review the awareness wheel and become familiar with the short form and how to use it.

**MATERIALS:** paper

awareness wheels

short forms

**CONTENT:** Review awareness wheel



## Introduce Short form

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### ACTIVITIES: 1. LIST INCIDENTS

2. ONE ON ONE SHARE

3. COMPLETE AWARENESS WHEEL

4. WHEEL PARTICIPANT'S WHEEL ON BOARD

5. COMPLETE SHORT FORM

6. SHARE SHORT FORM ON BOARD OR ONE ON

ONE.

T > Good evening and welcome to session five. Tonight we're going to work with the awareness wheel and then discuss a method of sharing your experience in order to resolve a conflict. We call it the short form. (We call it the short form because it has four parts and is an easy way to shorten what you discovered in your awareness wheel in preparation for talking to the other

person--the incidentee--about the incident.

T > Let's begin this evening by letting go and being here with a meditation.

T > Find yourself a partner for a one-on-one. In this one-on-one, think about something that moved you, touched you recently. Share with your partner--just listen to each other. I'll tell you when it's time to switch.

T > The awareness wheel! What is it? What are the five parts of our experience that we plot on an awareness wheel? (NOTE: Draw an awareness wheel on the board and define each part outside its title so that the class can refer to it throughout the evening.) What are the uses of the awareness wheel?

(NOTE: For review and fun, trainers may use a device called the living awareness wheel.)

T > It all begins with an incident. Take about five minutes and

list as many incidents as you can--at least five--from this last week, or from any time in the past..

T > Does anyone have any questions? Choose an incident to do an awareness wheel. This should be an incident that you're interested in exploring and also one that you'd be willing to share with at least one other person.

(NOTE: Circulate to make sure that the incident is just the facts; that feelings and interpretations are in the correct place. Usually participants need some one-on-one attention during this part of the class because they are still unsure of the device.)

T > Choose a partner for a one-on-one. In this paired share, each of you take a turn and share your incident and awareness wheel. As a listening partner, just listen to your partner. You may offer help about what is a feeling or an interpretation, but this isn't a time to give advice about the incident and how to

resolve it. You'll each have about five minutes and I'll call time so you'll know when to give your partner a turn.(NOTE: While this is going on, circulate to find a wheel that is appropriate to share with the class. The wheel will be plotted on the board and then the short form will evolve out of it. You're looking for one that is clear and that will have universal appeal. If it's too hot an issue, however, people will get stuck in their own interpretations! It's an art! Get permission from the participant.)

T > Does anyone have any questions right now? We've got a volunteer to put a wheel on the board. Why don't you tell me what your incident is?(Ask the participant all the questions you need to get the wheel completed on the board. This will engage the class.)

T > Thank you very much for sharing that with us. Is everyone clear about \_\_\_\_\_'s incident and wheel? One of the reasons for

doing an awareness wheel is for you to know yourself and your experience in enough depth that you can then identify what it is that you want for yourself and from the others. <sup>Starts</sup> One of the ways to go after you do an awareness wheel is to share your incident with the incidentee. This is your chance to resolve an issue and become closer to the other person, if that's what you want. The tool we use for this is called the short form and with it you share your incident, feelings and interpretations and then what you want. (Draw a short form on the board next to the awareness wheel.)

**ASK PERMISSION!!**

First the incident: When \_\_\_\_\_ (What happened)

Then your feelings: I felt \_\_\_\_\_ (name a feeling)

Then the interpretation: Because I thought \_\_\_\_\_  
(name an interpretation)

Last, say what you want: I  
want\_\_\_\_\_.

(turn you complaint into a want.)

So let's try it with yours, \_\_\_\_\_. First what was your incident?  
Good, now give me a feeling or two. Okay that's right you did  
feel those emotions. Sometimes--and this depends on the kind  
of relationship you have--it's easier to take if feelings are  
expressed generally such as "upset" rather than hurt or anger  
which can often trigger others no matter how straight talk are  
your intentions! But you can make that decision as you do this.  
Good. Now what's one of your interpretations.? Again, although  
you have had a lot of interpretations, and a lot of them are style  
two about the character defects of this person, it makes the  
most sense in a short form if you choose interpretations that  
aren't alienating--such as I thought you wanted me to go home,  
rather than I thought you were a withholding critical male. As

you can see the interpretations can evolve from the feeling you've named.

Now state your want. What would you like this person to do or say now and or in the future so that this kind of incident doesn't happen again? Remember: this is one of those places where your intentions are going to come across loud and clear regardless of how you say it, so if your intention is to be right and get back at this individual then the want will express that. The short form is a device that can be used cleanly when you want to clear up an incident, when you want resolution, when you want to go forward, not dwell on the past hurts, etc. Okay so you want him to \_\_\_\_\_ > Good! Does everyone see how this works? Here's the short form on a sheet for you. Take your incident now and put it into a short form to share with the other.

T> Short form rules: Hot Fudge Sundae; Bill Cosby; and Fur Coat

(NOTE: If there is time, sometimes it is very effective for short forms to be written up on the board, one after another. If not, sharing one- on -one is an option.)

T > Well it's time for the final go around. Let's share whatever we want to say good night or what tonight was like for you.

T > Homework for tonight is to read chapters 13-16 in Straight Talk and complete an awareness wheel and a short form. See you next week.

## **SESSION SIX: Early Childhood Memory and Patterns**

**Purpose:** Participants will use an early childhood memory to get in touch with the roots of beliefs and patterns.

**SUPPLIES:** PAPER

**AWARENESS WHEELS**



Belief form

**CONTENT:** 1. Patterns

2. Early Childhood Memory

3. Patterns, payoffs and costs

T. Good evening and welcome to session six! Tonight we will be looking more in depth at incidents as they become patterns. We'll also look at our early childhood memories and how they influence our incidents and patterns now.

T. Let's have a one-on-one and share an incident that brought you closer to someone. Choose a partner and share something that has happened recently that's positive. You'll each have about a minute and I'll tell you when to switch to give both of you a turn.

T. Good! Now take piece of paper and list all your juicy incidents this week. Try and list at least ten. You'll have five minutes. Think about those significant others in your life. What kinds of incidents have been occurring?

T. Now choose one incident--one that you'd like to know more about and that you'd be willing to share with at least one other person. Take this incident and complete an awareness wheel on it. We'll be coming around while you're doing this and talking to you about your incidents

T. You may have noticed since you've been aware of incidents the last few weeks that some of them seem to be very similar. This is because we develop patterns of behavior and incidents. A pattern is a recurring incident, behavior, thought, emotion. The same type of incident keeps happening--they're all familiar

with those bosses, boyfriends, friends, children. You know you've got patterns when you change jobs, relationships, even apartments yet the same kind of interaction occurs that you've had in the past.

Where do they come from? Patterns are based on beliefs we have that we may no longer be aware of--beliefs we formed as children. As children, we made interpretations about the world, about others, about ourselves that we used to cope with whatever events were happening to us. A dramatic example of this is a child who has been hurt and abused by a parent--that child decides that the world is a pretty dangerous place to live, that men and women are hurtful and that for survival it is best to keep quiet and stay out of the way most of the time. These decisions we made as children about the world were crystallized into beliefs that still drive the way we act and react to events.

These beliefs are still in our early childhood memories--often

unconscious memories.

So why is it important for us to begin noticing patterns and gathering information about our early childhood memories? By noticing what drives us, we can begin to develop some choice about how to behave and our wants from ourselves and others.

The very best place for us to stand when we begin to notice patterns is with our Inner Witnesses. The Inner Witness helps us observe--oh there I go again--without judging with the Inner Critic's voice. The Inner Critic helps keep us stuck, since it just beats us up for "doing that old number again."

Alfred Adler believed that we create our realities and we have the ability as human beings to change and grow. So observing and noticing the recurrent themes in our lives give us the option to change patterns we don't like. Some common patterns are:(Trainers: develop a list of twenty common patterns that will be universal with the group. Two trainers can merge their patterns for examples to the group. Ones I've used with

effectiveness include: You feel like a martyr a lot; or a victim.;your boss is always wrong; you tend not to communicate your needs, getting angry when they're not met; you don't say no when you want to and then feel put upon; you'll do anything not to have a fight.)

T. Okay. Let's choose a partner now for a one-on-one. In this one-on-one, share your incident and awareness wheel you did tonight with your partner. Tell your partner whether this incident seems familiar to you in any way and in what way it does. You'll each have about two minutes to talk about this. Does anyone have any questions?

T. We're going to have a meditation now. In this meditation we're going to go back to our childhood and tap into the memories we have. We're going to relax and get in touch with events that happened when we were children. So put

everything off your laps and take a few deep breathes. Roll your neck around and stretch to become as comfortable as possible. Uncross your arms and legs and let your hands rest easily on your knees.

Close your eyes and take a couple of deep breaths to the count of five. Breathe in to five and breathe out to five. Let your mind wander back in time to when you were a little child. Imagine yourself at six years or younger. <sup>5</sup>Picture where you were living, where you were going to school. Picture your brothers and sisters and your mother and father. 10

By now you may have focused on a scene of an event that 10 occurred when you were young. If you don't see a scene when you were very young, scan your young life until you find one.

What happened in this scene. Recreate it for yourself and picture each part of it. <sup>Pause</sup> Who was there? What were they doing? What was said? What did you do? Imagine what you might have been feeling, imagine what you might have been thinking. What

were your body sensations? <sup>10</sup>

When you have a memory and it is clear to you, raise your hand. Continue to focus on this scene and picture all details. <sup>15</sup>

Breathe in again deeply to the count of five and out to the count of five. Continue to breathe and when you are ready, open your eyes and come back to the room.

T. Now go back to your last partner and share your early childhood memories with each other. While you're doing this we're going to give you a handout with an exercise for you to work together to complete.

T. Let me have your attention up here while we talk about this handout. We're making a connection between our incidents, patterns and early childhood memories here. Write your incident first at the top, the one you've been working with all evening. ;then write your early childhood incident in the next

section.

Work with your partner to decide what kinds of beliefs you formed about the world and others from this incident

(NOTE: Different versions of this form are out; I have found it more effective to begin with beliefs about how others treat me, myself and how I should act followed by how the world is since the global belief about life is more logical when the specifics are laid out at the beginning.) After describing the beliefs you formed from this early childhood incident, describe the pattern. What is the typical incident and what do you typically do?(NOTE: it is helpful if the trainer who did the first awareness wheel does this part to tie it all together for them.)

T. Before we go any further, let me have your attention as a group so we can talk about another aspect of patterns. Once we've identified a pattern in our lives, we may wonder why we keep it going.(NOTE: refer back to one of your incidents and



describe the pattern.) This was a painful pattern for me, yet I kept it going. Why did I maintain this pattern? The answer lies in what we call payoffs and costs.

Payoffs are the unconscious benefits we get from maintaining the pattern. Some of my payoffs were:(List your payoffs)

Costs are the unconscious price we pay for maintaining patterns.(List your costs side-by-side the payoffs.

Acknowledging the costs and payoffs of our patterns is the key to change. Staying with your inner witness helps you to notice and create a space where you can choose to maintain the pattern with the payoffs you get or make some changes to stop paying the price.

T. I'd like a volunteer now who would be willing to share their incident, early childhood memory and pattern. As a group, we'll be brainstorming payoffs and costs. Who would like this

opportunity?

(Refer class to the page in the workbooks that lists some common payoffs and costs. Also, keep noting for the class and the sharing member that these are our guesses and may not be payoffs and costs for him or her.)

T. Thanks a lot for sharing your pattern and your willingness to discuss it with us. It's time for the final go around now, so please say whatever you need to say to say goodnight.

T. Before you go, we want to announce that after class next week, there will be a party. So please bring some eats to celebrate. We need at least two people to volunteer to bring drinks and the rest can bring munchies. Thanks and we'll see you next week.

## **IRB SESSION VII: REVIEW AND WRAPUP**

**Purpose:** Participants will review the content of the class--four styles, inner witness and critic, incidents and awareness wheels. Using one participant's incident and awareness wheel, all the steps after the wheel, including early childhood memory, belief form, patterns and payoffs and costs will be demonstrated. Finally, the short form will be reviewed in conjunction with the demonstration wheel.

**SUPPLIES:** PAPER, AWARENESS WHEELS, BELIEF FORM, SHORT FORMS

**CONTENT:** Review briefly four styles

Review awareness wheel

Inner witness and critic review

patterns, payoffs and costs, early childhood memory short form

**ACTIVITIES:** 1. Brainstorm content of course and write on

board.

2. List incidents; choose one; complete an awareness wheel.

3. Tap into early childhood memory with a meditation.

4. Guide them into completing belief form. Illustrate using someone's incident and pattern; brainstorm payoffs and costs.

Show them that this could be complete for personal information or one can switch to the short form with a want to share with incidentee.

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