



MODULE 3

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

TRAINING MANUAL



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Introduction to the Training Program

Welcome to The Older Men's Network Inc Training Program. This Training Program focuses on information which has been specifically developed in order to raise awareness of the specific challenges which face men as they move through the ageing process. For the purposes of all the Training Programs, the term 'older men' is used to refer to men aged 50 and above.


The Training Program has been separated into five Modules. Modules 1, 2 and 5 address issues facing older men such as ageing, retirement, grief and loss and suicide. Modules 3 and 4 focus on developing communication skills and team building appropriate to the facilitation of older men's groups.

Each Module includes a number of topics which would take approximately one hour if presented to a group. Some optional additional information and activities are suggested in places to enable the presenter to expand the presentation where appropriate. All of the ice-breakers, activities and discussion questions are suggestions only. Presenters are encouraged to tailor presentations to the specific needs of the group where possible.

Overview of Modules

Modules 1, 2 and 5 provide relevant information about issues which are very important but often overlooked in relation to older men. Staff in community organisations may find these modules useful for their own professional development or for delivery to older men's groups. The primary aim of using these modules with older men's groups is to encourage discussion and questions and support men to share their own personal experiences by finding a place of acceptance and understanding.

The first Module focuses on issues specific to older men, including approaches to ageing, myths and realities of ageing, the six phases of retirement, how to age successfully, recognising and combating social isolation and how to provide social support to older men. Module 2 focuses on grief and loss, in particular the stages and phases of grief, managing grief and how to support grieving men. Module 5 discusses the sensitive issue of suicide in older people and how to identify and respond to those at risk of suicide.



Modules 3 and 4 focus on developing effective communication and team building skills appropriate for the facilitation of older men's groups in the community. These modules can be used in situations where a men's group desires to become a more cohesive and supportive group for their members, or where there may be older men working as a team of volunteers who meet and interact regularly. The information in these modules aims to cover some of the areas most likely to enhance the functioning of group dynamics by addressing basic skills in communication and team building.

How to use this training material

This training material is provided to assist with the presentation of information sessions or facilitation of discussion groups around issues facing older men. The scenarios and activities provided are only suggestions and may be changed as needed by the presenter to suit the group or location of the training.

Every group should be informed that they are welcome to ask questions as the material is being presented and that they should feel free to discuss, agree or disagree with the information being presented.

Each Training Package provides training notes for the presenter, a session plan for a one hour presentation, handouts for photocopying and a PowerPoint slide presentation on a CD which can be used with a laptop and data projector to make the presentation more interesting and to help participants retain the information as it is presented.

This training material is not competency based and does not align with any Nationally Accredited Training Package.

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MODULE THREE: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Module Three: Effective Communication covers three key topics:

- Methods of Communication
- Listening Skills and Managing Conflict
- Assertiveness and Empathy

Note to the Presenter

Before the presentation commences it is important to go through some simple introductory remarks to clarify any concerns that the participants might have which may reduce their ability to enjoy the session.

Start with welcoming the group to the presentation and introduce yourself to them. You may want to give a bit of personal background to help them feel that you have relevant experience in their issues and to help them get to know you.

Be sure to cover general housekeeping issues such as the location of the toilets; the expected finishing time of the training and the timing of any breaks if taken; the evacuation procedure in case of fire; the location of the exits and where participants can smoke safely.


It can also be useful to ask participants to set some ground rules prior to starting – things like showing respect to everyone even if their opinion differs from yours, no verbal or physical expressions of anger, respecting people's privacy and their decision not to share and maintaining the confidentiality of people in the group by not discussing what you have heard with anyone else. You may write these up on a whiteboard as they are suggested so that they act as a visual reminder to the group during the session.

Icebreakers

Many training programs commence with an icebreaker to help people feel more comfortable with each other, particularly if they haven't met each other before. Knowing other people's names is very important during group discussions to prevent embarrassment when referring to others and to help everyone feel part of the group and acknowledged.

The following icebreakers are optional activities which take anywhere from 2 minutes up to ten minutes to complete. The willingness of the group to participate can determine how long an activity takes but if they are enjoying themselves, it usually makes the rest of the discussion much more rewarding.

Even if some reluctance to participate is noted it is best to present an icebreaker as an enjoyable activity and proceed regardless, as hesitation on your part can make the group feel more uncertain about joining in. Usually reluctance is only due to people feeling shy



and not wanting to stand out in the crowd. The icebreakers , on page 8, were selected because they are fairly 'low-key' and non-threatening and should be presented as such.

A major benefit of using an ice-breaker to start is that some topic material is highly sensitive and may arouse feelings of grief, sadness and loss in the participants. Starting the session by 'warming' people up to each other will help the discussion flow more easily, start to build trust in the group and reduce the feeling that the participants are disclosing personal information to total strangers.

Feel free to select from the icebreakers included or to introduce your own. Many excellent icebreakers can be found in the book '*100 Training Games*' and '*103 Additional Training Games*' by Gary Kroenhert (1991, McGraw-Hill Australia, Sydney) or use the supplied references .

Suggested Icebreakers

Objects

Time required: 10 – 15 minutes

1. Ask the group members to pull something out of their wallet, purse, bag or whatever they have brought with them that demonstrates something unique about themselves. Each person in turn must show their object and explain why that object is significant to who they are.
2. An alternative exercise is for the presenter to bring along a handful of random objects and each participant selects one. In turn they must explain why they chose that object and how it relates to way that they communicate with others. (Presenters should make sure that the objects have some reference to the theme if this exercise is to be successful). Examples of possible objects include a magazine, advertising material, a business card, motivational quotes, a headset / earphones, photographs of people, places etc.

Time Capsule

Time required: 10 – 15 minutes

1. Tell your group that today they have the chance to do a backwards time-capsule. Rather than take something from today and put it away for 100 years, each person is going to take one piece of knowledge that they have today, that they wish they could have known about or used if they were alive 100 years ago.
2. Encourage them to think broadly about the types of wisdom and understanding that they have gained from many years on this planet that would have changed their lives or the lives of others 100 years ago if they had known about it.

Moments in Time

Time required: 10 – 15 minutes

1. Each group member pulls a coin of any denomination out of their pockets or wallets (or to be sure of a good spread of dates, the Presenter provides a selection of coins). Take a minute to think about what you were doing when that coin was minted. Were you in school? Were you a child? Where did you work? Were you married? Where did you live? What was going on in your life at that time? What was the music of the day?
2. Now find someone else with a coin that was minted as close to yours as you can. For 3 minutes share with each other the moments you remember from that year or that era.
3. Now discover who has the oldest coin in the room. Give that person a prize and ask him/her to tell you what they were doing in the year that coin was minted.

Ref: <http://www.businesstrainingworks.com/Icebreakers.PDF>

MODULE 3 – TOPIC 1 – METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

Intro:

Introduction: Module 3 Topic 1 – Methods of Communication

2 Minutes
PPT 1

The primary focus of Module 3 is on older men and how using effective communication methods can help support older men and build better relationships with others.

While the module can be presented as a stand-alone package it is intended to complement other modules, all of which play an integral part of the training program. The entire Module aims to provide participants with information about key communication skills for working with anyone, but in particular for relating to older men.

The issues covered in all 3 topics include:

- Methods of Communication
- Listening Skills and Managing Conflict
- Assertiveness and Empathy

2 minutes
PPT 2

The Focus of the Topic

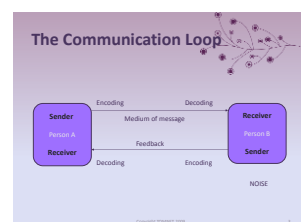
- To discuss the different methods that people use to communicate with others.
- To identify the barriers we use that can block effectively communicating with someone.

Presenter's Notes:

To start the session it is useful to have everyone focused on the primary topic by asking them to share in groups of three, people that they admire for the way that they communicate with others. These people may be friends, co-workers, television identities, radio personalities, politicians etc. The Presenter should go around the group and ask each person to contribute one name and tell the others why they admire this person/people for their communication skills and how they communicated so well. The benefit of doing this quick exercise is that it turns the group's focus onto the many different ways that we use communication in life and how others respond to it.

5 minutes
PPT 3

The Communication Loop



The communication loop is a visual way of showing the different steps that we take when we are sending and receiving messages. We tend to take a lot of communication for granted, so seeing the different steps involved in sending a simple message and receiving a simple message, reminds us that there can be many reasons why someone does not always understand messages as well as we think they should.

The communication loop begins with a person who wishes to send a message (Person A). Because we can't send messages telepathically, we need to use words or gestures to make our message known to others. To do this, the sender must encode, or translate the meaning of the message into words or gestures before they can send it to someone else.

The sender will choose their words or gestures based on factors such as their previous experiences in sending messages, their judgement about the ability of the receiver to work out what they are saying (decoding) and their past experience of sending such messages. For example, if the sender has previously found it difficult to communicate with someone who speaks a different language, he may choose to use simple words and more active gestures to get his message across with the intention of making it easier for the other person to receive the message.

The sender must also consider the most appropriate means of sending the message before he decides to send it. The message *medium* is the way in which the message is sent. For example, whether the sender uses a written memo, spoken words in a conversation, graphs on a slide or gestures in face to face situations. If the receiver is on the telephone, then using a memo won't be helpful to get the message across. Therefore the medium is very important in helping the message be understood.

Once the receiver gets the message (Person B), he then must decode it, which is the process of translating the words or gestures into the interpreted message. He will do this based on his own experiences of decoding messages. For example, a person may be used to listening to only half a message before interrupting the sender because he assumes that he knows what the message will be. This is often how messages are not well understood. When communication is effective, both sender and receiver get a common meaning. However if the receiver decodes the message in a different way than the sender intended, misunderstandings can occur.

Noise sits outside of the communication loop and is anything that interferes

with giving and receiving messages, such as being tired, static on a telephone line, being interrupted while giving a message etc. It reduces the probability of the message achieving common meaning between senders and receivers. Feedback is the receiver's response to the message and involves a reversal of communication where the receiver now must send a message back to the sender. This new message gives the original sender an idea as to whether the message was received and understood as it was intended.

When there is no feedback it is called one-way communication. Typical one-way communication occurs in the form of an announcement or a memo in an office telling people about something but not expecting a response. However when there is no opportunity for feedback, the sender may continue to send poor messages because they don't know that their message is not being well received.

5 minutes
PPT 4

Methods of Giving Messages

There are 2 primary ways that we give messages to others. Verbally and non-verbally.

When we give a message verbally, we use words to communicate.

When we give a message non-verbally, we may use:

- body language (i.e. arms crossed)
- facial expressions (i.e. smiling, frowning)
- the clothes we wear (i.e. casual, business suit)
- posture (i.e. the way we stand)
- the colours we wear or use (i.e. red = energy)

It is interesting to note that research shows that we tend to pay most attention to the non-verbal messages that others give us. When the effectiveness of each method is weighed against each other, our verbal messages account for 7% of the impact of our message; the tone of voice we use to give a message accounts for 38% of the impact and our body language accounts for 55% of the impact of the message.

This means that when you speak with someone, they are paying more attention to your body language than what you are actually saying. So if you feel uncomfortable talking about a particular topic, the other person is likely to sense this and will spend more time watching how you communicate with them rather than listen to what you are actually saying.

2 minutes
PPT 5

Methods of Receiving Messages

There are several different ways that we receive messages from others.

Sometimes we receive a message by hearing information, for example:

- listening to someone talk about it
- hearing a tape
- reading aloud or reading by saying the words in your head.

At other times we receive messages by seeing information written down, for example:

- in a book, chart, picture, movie or
- by watching a demonstration

2 minutes
PPT 6

Methods of receiving messages (cont.)

Sometimes we receive a message by performing an action related to it, for example:

- By being involved in some kind of activity:
- doing a task,
- discussing it with others,
- watching others do something and then repeating it or just giving it a try.

All of these different ways of receiving information are right for each person. There is no *best* way.

5 minutes
PPT 7

Activity: Non-Verbal Messages

It is interesting to see how other people interpret our non-verbal actions. We don't all interpret the actions in the same way although we often assume that we do. This is another way that communication can be misunderstood.

Practice these actions with a partner and tell each other what you think it means.

- Tapping your cheek
- Crossing your arms
- Rubbing your forehead
- Putting your feet on the table
- Hands clasped around the back of your head
- Pinching your nose between your eyes

10 minutes
PPT 8

Discussion

Discuss with the person next to you an example of a time when you gave a message to someone and they didn't understand your message the way you meant them to. Which part of the message didn't they understand? Where in the communication loop did the message fall down?

We all have a preference for how we receive messages. Visual people prefer to receive their messages visually – by reading information or watching a movie. Auditory people prefer to receive their messages by hearing information such as listening to a guest speaker or the radio. Kinaesthetic people prefer to receive a message by doing something or sensing something, like tasting the wine rather than read about it, or practicing on the computer rather than reading the manual.

Discuss with the person next to you which method you prefer to use. You may use more than one but usually there is one method that you like over the others.

5 minutes
PPT 9

Barriers to Communication

There are many different ways that communication can be interrupted and one of these is when people put up barriers that block communication. Blocking communication often results in the person receiving the message feeling that they do not want to continue with the conversation and it can lead to hurt feelings and avoiding communicating with the sender of the message.

Below are listed some of the common ways in which people put up barriers to good communication.

1. **Subject Changing** - Changing the topic away from the speaker's focus and avoiding the content.
2. **Day Dreaming** - Not listening, allowing thoughts to wander.
3. **Identifying / Personalising** - The listener takes over the topic by relating in detail their experience of the topic.
4. **Listening only for facts, not feelings** - Avoids feelings, thus losing the deeper meaning of the story being told.
5. **Mind-reading** - Focuses on imagined 'deeper meaning', believing that you know what will be said before the person says it.

5 minutes
PPT 10

Barriers to Communication cont.

6. **Rehearsing** - Planning a response before the other person has finished speaking.
7. **Comparing / Competing** - Focus on self in relation to what is being said, rather than on the speaker.

8. **Soapbox Response (Hit my buttons/being over sensitive)**- Launching into an automatic response to a topic - not listening to a speaker.
9. **Giving Advice/the Quick Fixer** - Offering solutions, instead of letting the speaker speak. Includes “Shoulding” or “Oughting” - “You should be doing this.”
10. **Stereotyping the Speaker** - Assuming one knows what the speaker is saying because of their age, gender, clothes, job, religion, language, (disability, etc).

5 minutes
PPT 11

Barriers to Communication cont.

11. **Filtering** - Listening only if you have to, or filtering out what is not of importance to you.
12. **Judging** - Assessing what is being said for its worth/importance, but missing the value of it to the speaker.
13. **Sparring** - Arguing, debating and nit-picking what is being said, mostly to show listeners self imagined ‘superiority’ to the speaker. Goes with put-downs, sarcasm and dismissing.
14. **Discounting** - Not accepting complements, thus killing conversations and positive feelings. Having to (always) be Right. Having to be right - smarter, know more - at ALL costs! Including fighting unfairly.
15. **Placating** - Being ‘nice’ but not genuine. Agreeing and ‘supporting’ and avoiding any real exchange of feelings or ideas and avoiding giving any genuine feedback.

5 minutes
PPT 12

Ways to kill communication

If there is time, the following additional techniques are more ways to kill communication between people.

- **Criticisms (Putdowns)** - (Obvious, but can be subtle) “It sounds like you are under prepared for this.”
- **Name Calling / Labelling** - “You’d be pretty silly to forget something this simple”.
- **Shoulding’ or ‘oughting’** - “You should be doing it this way.”
- **Interrogating** - “What happened then? What else did you do?”

5 minutes
PPT 13

- **Assuming** - "It sounds like you didn't think about"

Ways to Kill Communication cont.

- **Untimely advice** - "I think you should try . . ." (Too early or without checking)
- **Belittling the issue** - "It's really nothing."
- **Topping** - "You should have seen the first one I had, he was terrible."
- **Reassurance by negating** - "Don't worry about it." "Don't be silly."

2 minutes
PPT 14

Closing the Topic

Check with participants that all the information was provided by recapping this final slide.

- The communication loop
- Methods of giving and receiving messages
- Barriers to communication
- Ways to kill communication

If there is time ask for any last minute questions.

- Hand out an evaluation form if required.
- Thank participants for their attendance and provide them with your contact telephone number or brochure if they should need to follow up with you.

References:

Mental Health Council of Australia (1998) Effective Communication

MODULE 3 – TOPIC 2 – LISTENING SKILLS AND MANAGING CONFLICT

Intro:	Introduction: Module 3 - Topic 2 - Listening Skills and Managing Conflict
2 Minutes PPT 1	<p>The primary focus of Module 3 is on older men and how using effective communication methods can help support older men and build better relationships with others.</p> <p>While the module can be presented as a stand-alone package it is intended to complement other modules, all of which play an integral part of the training program. The entire Module aims to provide participants with information about key communication skills for working with anyone, but in particular for relating to older men.</p> <p>The issues covered in all 3 topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Methods of Communication• Listening Skills and Managing Conflict• Assertiveness and Empathy
2 minutes PPT 2	The Focus of the Topic <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To explain how listening actively can improve relationships with others.▪ To examine the three typical responses to conflict and how these responses affect our communication with others. <p>Presenter's Notes:</p> <p><i>To help the group focus on this topic, a quick activity can be undertaken. Ask the group to turn to the person next to them and tell that person about a time when they went into a store, a government agency or some other business and got a negative first impression from the person assisting them. After 2 minutes, ask for volunteers to share what they didn't find welcoming from the person. Suggestions are likely to include being ignored, lack of eye contact, not addressing them, avoiding helping them, turning their back on them etc. Look for cues around body language as well as things said. It can be a good idea to write these up on the whiteboard or butcher's paper so that you can refer to them later.</i></p> <p><i>Now ask each participant to share another example of when they received a positive impression from a business or government agency. After 2 minutes</i></p>

ask for suggestions regarding positive impressions and list these on the board next to the negative impressions. Indicate the importance to people of being acknowledged, listened to and addressed politely. These issues will be looked at in this training later on.

5 minutes
PPT 3

Listening Not Hearing

Why do we bother discussing listening? Isn't this something we do every day without even thinking about it? Actually most likely it is not. What we do every day is hear people. We hear them talk, we hear noise, we hear complaints but may not pay attention, *ie listen*, to them to find out what the story is really about.

Hearing is not the same as listening. When you hear someone you receive the information but not much else. It goes into your ears and your brain may register that you heard it but often that is all that happens. We don't actually spend a lot of time actively listening to the people around us, including our friends, partners and children. Many people are very practiced at 'tuning off' so they hear others but don't listen to them.

When you listen, you pay attention to what is being said and the feelings behind the words. You are not just hearing words being spoken, you are putting the words into a context and letting the person know that you are genuinely interested in what they have to say.

This process is called **Active Listening** and it forms a key part of all communication courses and books today.

5 minutes
PPT 4

What is Active Listening?

Active listening is a way of attending to another person during a conversation. It involves:

- Using attentive body language. Being attentive means that you are 'being with' the other person. You may do this by sitting in a position when you are comfortably facing them, leaning slightly forward so that you can take in their words and their facial expressions. It also means avoiding distracting habits such as looking at the ceiling or out the window, sighing as though bored, flicking through a newspaper or looking at your watch.
- Quietly taking in what the person says without interrupting them. Not interrupting someone can take a bit of work as many people are used to jumping in with their own story or comments. Following someone's

story without interrupting them gives the person the time they need to say what they want to. Interrupting people means that they lose the thread of their story and they will often give up and let you take over the conversation.

5 minutes
PPT 5

What is Active Listening cont.

- Not giving them your own stories or advice unless they ask. As we listen to people we often find similarities in their experiences with our own experiences. It can be difficult to listen to someone tell you that they feel stuck and don't know what to do, but unless they ask for your advice, good listening means you only reflect back their feelings to them and don't leap in with your own story or advice. Many people do not like to be told what to do and are unlikely to take any advice that they haven't thought of themselves.
- Following their story even if it is long and boring to you. Try not to get distracted or hurry people up if they wander a bit in their story. A good listener takes the time needed to hear the whole story even if it goes about in circles sometimes.
- Asking them questions if appropriate to help you understand their situation better. If you need to clarify some information or the person is seeking a bit of a prompt to keep going, asking questions relevant to the conversation shows that you have been paying attention and that you are interested in it, for example "Can you tell me a bit more about...?" "How did that situation end up for you?"
- Summarising at times to check that you have understood them correctly. When a person takes a breather from a longish story, it is a good time to clarify that you understand them the way that they intended. For example you might summarise the last few points "So what I'm understanding from you so far is that ..."

5 minutes
PPT 6

Building Rapport

By actively listening to someone, you will build rapport with them. This means:

- They will feel more relaxed around you.
- They are more likely to trust you.
- They will feel more confident that you care.
- They will be willing to share more with you over time.

10 minutes
PPT 7

The LACE Model

Listen

Give the other person your undivided attention as you try to understand what the problem is like for him. Listen with your eyes as well as your ears – use his verbal and non-verbal expression to work out just what it is like to be in his position as he perceives it.

Acknowledge

Let the other person know just what you have understood her to imply verbally and non-verbally: the whole message. Make clear that this is just your interpretation.

Check

Make sure that you understand him, by making it as easy as possible for him to amend or add to your understanding.

Enquire

Ask the questions that will help the other person to provide more information or change their previous answers.

Of these components, acknowledgment is by far the most important. If it is done well, and often, it automatically improves your use of the other components. The rest of the communication process is then much more likely to be effective.

5 minutes
PPT 8

Styles of Communication

Healthy communication avoids conflict and solves problems. This is known as a win-win situation. I win and you win and we both get what we want.

Communication that is not healthy aims to win at all costs or tends to let the other person win at your cost. This is often referred to as win/lose (ie you win and I lose) or lose/lose (I lose and you ultimately lose because I'm not being honest with you).

Our communication style impacts on how we get along with others and whether we get things that we want. There are a number of different styles that we can use when we want to resolve a problem. We will look at three of the key ones here.

5 minutes
PPT 9

The Communication Continuum

Our style of communication can often be expressed along a continuum from a more passive style through to a more aggressive style. We tend to be more comfortable with the style that we learnt to use as children and often continue to use that style even if it is no longer appropriate.

If we learnt that being aggressive got us what we wanted, then we tend to keep using that tactic in adult life. However if we learnt that we had to be fairly passive in order to survive, we tend to stick with passive behaviour in later life and avoid conflict at all costs.

Passive Communication involves putting your needs last. You don't express your thoughts or feelings, or ask for what you want. When you use passive communication it feels like others are walking all over you because you don't assert your own needs. So, you bottle things up and might feel resentful. The assumption behind passive communication is 'my needs don't matter' (you win/I lose).

Aggressive Communication is expressed in a forceful and hostile manner, and usually involves alienating others with messages such as you-statements (blaming the other person and accusing them of being wrong or at fault) and labelling them. In addition, the person's tone of voice and facial expressions are unfriendly. The assumption behind aggressive communication is 'your needs don't matter' (I win/you lose).

Assertive Communication involves clearly expressing what you think, how you feel and what you want, without demanding that you must have things your way. The basic underlying assumption is that 'we both matter – let's try to work this out'.

Assertive communication increases your likelihood of getting what you want, avoiding conflict and maintaining good relationships (I win/you win).

5 minutes
PPT 10

Managing Conflict

When we use passive or aggressive communication with other people, it often leads to conflict. Even if the conflict isn't obvious, it is there under the surface. Many people will do almost anything to avoid being involved with people who come across aggressively. The conflict during the aggression is bad enough but even avoiding someone can lead to conflict as it interferes with the way that a job gets done, or the way someone's needs get met.

When you are very passive, the conflict may come from people not being explicit about their needs. Other individuals may assume that the person is managing things very well because they never indicate that there is a problem. But many people become stressed, unhappy and lonely because they are afraid to seek help and get their needs met.

Before we can manage any conflict we find ourselves in, we need to understand how we react to it.

There are three key ways we react to conflict: flight, fight or flow.

2 minutes
PPT 11

Managing conflict (cont.)

The Fight Response:

- Forcing control.
- Believe I am right.
- Feel I am better than you.
- Think my values are the only ones

If **Fight** is your most frequent response, ask yourself:

- Why do I need to be in control?
- How would I feel if I found out I was wrong?
- Do I make myself feel good by proving that I am better than others?
- Do I feel that everyone ought to have the same values as me?
- Should I perhaps question some of my own opinions?
- What's not working for me anymore?

2 minutes
PPT 12

Managing conflict (cont.)

The Flight Response

- Withdrawal from relationship.
- Don't speak up.
- My feelings are less important.
- Do I fear their anger?

If **Flight** is the way you mostly respond, ask yourself:

- Do I really think the other person doesn't suspect I'm upset?
- What damage to the relationship is my withdrawal doing?
- Is it fear, habit or anger that prevents me from speaking?
- Are my feelings as important as the other persons?
- Am I frightened of the other person's anger, or of damaging the relationship?
- What's the worst that can happen if I speak?

2 minutes
PPT 13

Managing conflict (cont.)

Or you can choose to use **Flow** to manage your response. Flow means not being afraid of asking for what you need. If **Flow** is the way you'd like to

respond more often, ask yourself:

- Do I have needs and rights which I need to acknowledge?
- Do I need to become more aware of the needs and rights of others?
- Do I need to develop more skills in explaining clearly what I need and what I deserve?

5 minutes
PPT 14

Productive Conflict Management



Emotional energy is wasted if either the fight or flight path is taken.

Sometimes both fight and flight paths are taken in and out of one another and not confined to one or the other.

The freeze factor is not an end in itself but may be a useful part of conflict that flows towards effectively addressing goals and objectives.

2 minutes
PPT 15

Closing the Topic

Check with participants that all the information was provided by recapping this final slide.

- What is active listening?
- Building rapport
- Using the LACE model
- Styles of communication
- Managing conflict

If there is time ask for any last minute questions.

- Hand out an evaluation form if required.
- Thank participants for their attendance and provide them with your contact telephone number or brochure if they should need to follow up with you.

References

The LACE Model adapted from Dick, B 1997 Paper on Communication found at:

http://ugconnect.net/action_research/arp/communicn.html#a_com_lis

Styles of Communication adapted from Taking Charge! A Guide for Teenagers: Practical Ways to Overcome Stress, Hassles and Upsetting Emotions by Dr Sarah Edelman and Louise Remond, Foundation for Life Sciences (2005) www.flis.org.au

Managing Conflict adapted from The Conflict Resolution Network, P O Box 1016, Chatsworth NSW 2057 Website: www.crnhg.org

MODULE 3 – TOPIC 3 – ASSERTIVENESS AND EMPATHY

Intro:

Introduction: Module 3 - Topic 3 – Assertiveness and Empathy

2 Minutes
PPT 1

The primary focus of Module 3 is on older men and how using effective communication methods can help support older men and build better relationships with others.

While the module can be presented as a stand-alone package it is intended to complement other modules, all of which play an integral part of the training program. The entire Module aims to provide participants with information about key communication skills for working with anyone, but in particular for relating to older men.

The issues covered in all 3 topics include:

- Methods of Communication
- Listening Skills and Managing Conflict
- Assertiveness and Empathy

2 minutes
PPT 2

The Focus of This Topic

- To discover your right to be assertive and ways to give assertive messages.
- To consider how empathy can be used to build relationships.

Presenter's Notes:

To help the group focus on this topic, a quick activity can be undertaken. Ask the group to turn to the person next to them and tell that person about a time recently when they needed to be assertive with someone else. It may have been a friend, a family member, a person in a shop or business. Share with each other what the situation was, how you acted assertively, what you said and what you did. Then explain how your assertive response was received by the other person.

The Presenter can then ask for volunteers to share an example of being assertive and what the end result was. Of interest is how they felt when being assertive and whether they got their particular need met.

10 minutes
PPT 3

Your Right to Be Assertive

It can be difficult to be assertive if you don't believe you have a right to your particular needs. We all have particular rights as people, so what might some

of those rights be?

Question for Participants

What are some of the rights you have as an individual?

Presenter's Notes: Activity

Ask the group to come up with as many rights as they can think of and write them up on a white board or butcher's paper. If they struggle to think of any you can use the notes below to give them some ideas. Once you have a list, refer to the notes below so that you can include any others that may have been left off.

It is reasonable and proper for me

- To decide how to lead my life. This includes pursuing my own goals and dreams and establishing my own priorities.
- To have my own values, beliefs, opinions, and emotions --- and the right to respect myself for them, no matter the opinion of others
- Not to justify or explain my actions or feelings to others.
- To tell others how I wish to be treated.
- To express myself and to say "no," "I don't know," or even "I don't care." I have the right to take the time I need to formulate my ideas before expressing them.
- To ask for information or help—without having negative feelings about my needs
- To change my mind, to make mistakes, and to sometimes act illogically – with full understanding and acceptance of the consequences.
- To like myself even though I'm not perfect, and to sometimes do less than I am capable of doing.
- To have positive, satisfying relationships within which I feel comfortable and free to express myself honestly – and the right to change or end relationships if they don't meet my needs.
- To change, enhance, or develop my life in any way I determine.

**5 minutes
PPT 4**

Your right to be assertive (cont)

Many people feel that by acknowledging their needs and asking for what they want, they are being selfish. Selfishness means being concerned only about your rights with little or no regard for others.

If you are honouring your right to your needs, you are also honouring the legitimate right of others to their needs. This is not being selfish.

When you don't believe you have any rights – you may react very passively to circumstances and events in your life. When you allow the needs, opinions, and judgements of others to become more important than your own, you are likely to feel hurt, anxious, and even angry. This kind of passive or non-assertive behaviour is often indirect, emotionally dishonest and self-denying.

Any right I claim as my own, I extend to others.

5 minutes
PPT 5

How to be Assertive

- Look assertive (keep your posture strong but relaxed)
- Sound assertive (use a firm, clear voice)
- Use assertive language (“I would like...”)
- Maintain eye contact (if culturally appropriate)
- Be determined but calm. Don't lose your cool!
- Be open and honest
- Work out beforehand what outcome you would like, but be prepared to compromise

5 minutes
PPT 6

Giving an Assertive Message

The formula for giving an 'I' message is:

When... Describe the behaviour or situation that is causing the problem

I feel... Say what your feeling is

Because... Say the effect on you.

I would prefer... State what you want

Then... Say how that will have a positive effect

10 minutes
PPT 7

Giving an Assertive Message (cont.)

Example:

If you are reading and your friend puts the radio on you might say:

When I am trying to read and the radio is put on

I feel annoyed

Because I can't concentrate on what I am reading.

I would prefer that we agree on a time to have the radio on

Then we can both enjoy our activities without disturbing each other.

Warning!

Something that many people find difficult with an 'I' message is that it still ends up sounding like they are blaming the other person if they put the word 'you' in their first part of the sentence. For example, “*When you put the radio on while I am reading...*”

To soften the tone of the message, try to avoid the use of the word 'you' and

instead describe what is happening, for example “When I am trying to read and the radio is put on...”

Presenter’s Notes: Activity

You can ask the participants to practice writing out an ‘I’ message on a piece of paper in relation to a situation that they could be assertive in. When they have the message written out, turn to the person next to them and read it out to see whether they think it is assertive enough.

Practicing ‘I’ messages in this way is more effective than trying to do it off the top of their head without writing it out first. Most people find this exercise quite difficult and might need a few minutes of quiet time to think about their sentence and how to put it together. It is usually very helpful to ask for volunteers to read their message out to the group so that others can hear the different ways it can be phrased and the assertive tone of the message.

**2 minutes
PPT 8**

Create Empathy

Listen with your head and your heart.

Empathy is sensing another’s feelings and attitudes as if we had experienced them ourselves. It is our willingness to enter another’s world, and being able to communicate to that person our sensitivity to them. It is not blind sentimentality; it always retains some objectivity and distance. We do not lose our own identity, though we discover our common humanity.

- Take seriously others’ needs and concerns
- Value feelings and attitudes
- Respect others’ privacy, experience and values
- Listen actively
- Ask questions

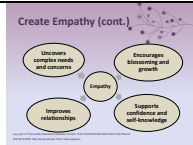
**2 minutes
PPT 9**

Create Empathy cont.

- Use open body language and warm vocal tone
- Reserve judgement and blame
- Display interest in what others communicate
- Withhold unsought advice
- Support others’ attempts to find a solution
- Make affirming statements and gestures

**2 minutes
PPT 10**

Create Empathy cont.



Empathy helps to:

- Uncover complex needs and concerns
- Improves relationships
- Encourages blossoming and growth
- Supports confidence and self-knowledge.

2 minutes
PPT 11

Closing the Topic

Check with participants that all the information was provided by recapping this final slide.

- Your right to be assertive
- Giving assertive messages
- Creating empathy

The focus has been on interpersonal communication with a view to older men supporting older men.

If there is time ask for any last minute questions.

- Hand out an evaluation form if required.
- Thank participants for their attendance and provide them with your contact telephone number or brochure if they should need to follow up with you.

References

Your Rights: Adapted from Self-Help Brochure 'Assertiveness' University of Illinois Counselling Centre, http://www.counselingcenter.uiuc.edu/?page_id=187 ; and

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