



Values and Self Esteem

By Daniel Rateng

Before beginning the exercises the facilitator should review the rules for this exercise.

- A value is something very personal, and it is not considered right or wrong.
- Every person has the right to her/his own opinion regarding the importance of each statement.
- No one can put down or question the values of another person.

The facilitator should make sure that the rules are clear. Read one statement as an example to practice. At that point, the facilitator should read each statement, allowing the participants to move where they choose about the space. When everyone has chosen where to stand, the facilitator should ask participants why they chose the different positions they did, reminding the group to respect each other's values.

The statements are as follows:

- Be honest
- Participate in government
- Work hard
- Be kind to others
- Honor one's parents
- Be happy
- Earn money
- Become educated
- Be religious
- Help others
- Accept others
- Look out for yourself
- Obey the law
- Know one's culture
- Be efficient with time
- Stand up for what you think is right

Module 1. Values and Clarification

Objectives:

- Define values
- Understand where one's values come from
- Identify three strongly held values
- Identify three strongly rejected values
- Relate values to specific decisions made
- Identify their personal styles of cooperation
- Identify some of their own barriers to cooperating with others
- Practice trusting others
- Identify their own feelings about how safe it is to trust other people

Methods:

- Interactive lecture
- Experiential exercise
- Large group discussion
- Large group activity

Materials:

- Newsprint
- Markers
- Masking Tape
- Handout: Values and Decisions Worksheet
- Sets of instructions for Observers
- Sets of Group instructions
- Envelopes with broken squares (one full set per group of 6 people) – see instructions
- Blindfolds made out of soft cloth

1. Introduction

The facilitator will welcome the group by asking about their week and if they have any questions to start. The facilitator should inform the group that they will go through an exercise to loosen up and to come together as a group. The facilitator should then introduce the “Letter Carrier” exercise to the group.

Letter Carrier Exercise:

The facilitator will arrange the group so that the participants are sitting in a circle with just enough chairs for the number of people (minus the facilitator). The facilitator should stand in the middle and explain that he/she will be the “Letter Carrier.”

He/She will be bringing letters for certain groups of people, and when that group of people is called, anyone who fits the description must get up and change seats, grabbing any of the seats which become empty.

The facilitator should give an example: “I’ve got a letter for anyone who is wearing glasses.” Those participants with glasses should all get up and try to grab another seat.

After the example, the facilitator will explain that, while he/she calls out which group is getting a letter, he/she will also try to grab one of the empty seats. Whoever is left standing will become the new “Letter Carrier,” and will have to call out the next group to get a “letter.” That person should then try to grab an empty seat. This can continue for about 10 minutes.

After the exercise, the facilitator should thank the group members for their participation. At which point, he/she should explain that during this session we will look at values and how they impact our lives.

II. What are Values?

The facilitator should begin by asking the group what they think values are, forming a group definition based on the responses of the participants. The facilitator should note each response on newsprint, as well as the final definition.

At that point, the facilitator asks the group where they think a person gets their values, noting responses on the chalk board. Responses should include:

- Family
- School
- Peers
- Mass media
- Religion

III. Values Clarification: An Exercise

The facilitator should explain to the group that they will be doing an exercise to think about how their values affect their decisions, as well as taking a look at what it is we value.

To begin, the facilitator should ask each participant to think about something they do which is very important to them. They should give each participant a slip of paper on which they are to write their names and three things they do which are very important to them. The facilitator should collect these slips of paper.

After collecting all the slips of paper, the facilitator should ask the group to clear a space in the room, moving chairs and tables out of the way. At this point, the facilitator should explain that they will be reading off a number of statements about different values.

After each statement is read, the participants should respond by moving to different parts of the room to indicate how much that statement is related to why they chose the particular things they wrote on the slip of paper as being important. The facilitator should explain that one end of the room is for all those people who believe this statement is key to why they chose the things they wrote on the paper. At the other end of the room is for all those people who don't think that statement has anything at all to do with why they chose the things they wrote on the paper. All the spaces in between are for different degrees of beliefs, with the center being neutral.

IV. Values and Decisions

Exercise:

The facilitator will distribute to each of the participants the "Values and Decisions" worksheet (below). They should ask each person to look over the sheet and to put a check mark beside each value they personally accept, and an "X" next to the values they personally rejects.

The facilitator should leave some time for this activity. When all the participants have finished, the facilitator should ask each person to rank the three values he/she holds most strongly, writing the number "1" next to the most strongly held value, then "2," then "3." After the group has finished, the facilitator should ask each participant to rank the three values he/she most strongly rejects, writing "A" next to the most strongly rejected, "B," then "C."

At this point, the facilitator should return the slips of paper to the participant. They should facilitate a discussion of how those activities relate to the values held, and the values rejected. The facilitator should ask some of the following questions:

- 1) What happens when a person makes decisions that have no relation to their values?
- 2) What happens when a person makes decisions which go against their values?
- 3) What would that mean with regard to re-examining one's values?
- 4) What would that mean with regard to making future decisions?
- 5) What can a person do to make sure their decisions follow with their values?

Values and Decisions Worksheet

- Be honest _____
- Be kind to others _____
- Earn money _____
- Help others _____
- Obey the law _____
- Stand up for what you think is right. _____
- Participate in government _____
- Honor one's parents _____
- Become educated _____
- Accept others _____
- Know one's culture _____
- Work hard _____
- Be happy _____
- Be religious _____
- Look out for oneself _____
- Be efficient with time _____

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V. Broken Squares

Broken Square Exercise– Making the Squares

A complete set of squares consists of five envelopes containing pieces of cardboard which have been cut into different patterns and which, when properly assembled, form five squares of equal size. One set is provided for each group. To make each set, cut out five cardboard squares of equal size (about six by six inches).

Mark the squares as below. Write the letters in very light pencil. They will be erased later.

The lines should be drawn so that all pieces with the same letter will be exactly the same size.

After drawing the lines, cut each square into the smaller pieces that will make up the puzzle. Mark five envelopes with the letters A, B, C, D and E. Distribute the puzzle pieces in the envelopes as follows:

- Envelope A has pieces: i, h, e
- Envelope B has pieces: a, a, a, c
- Envelope C has pieces: c, j, a
- Envelope D has pieces: d, f
- Envelope E has pieces g, b, f

Erase the penciled letter from each piece and write, instead, the appropriate envelope letter. This will make it simpler to return the pieces to the proper envelope when the exercise is completed.

Broken Squares - Instructions to the group

In this packet, there are five envelopes, each of which contains pieces of cardboard for forming squares. When you get the signal to begin, the task of your group is to form five squares of

equal size. The task will not be completed until each individual has a perfect square of the same size as all the others in front of him or her. Specific limitations imposed on your group during the exercise are:

- 1) No member of the group may speak.
- 2) No member of the group may ask another for a piece from his or her envelope or in any way signal that a person is to give him or her a piece or to grab a piece from another person's envelope.
- 3) Members may, however, give pieces to other members. No member, however, can simply leave a piece in the middle of the group. He or she must give the piece directly to the person to whom he or she chooses.

Broken Squares - Instructions to the observer

Your job is part observer and part judge. Make sure each participant observes the rules:

- 1) No talking, pointing or any other kind of communicating in the group
- 2) Participants may give pieces to others, but may not take pieces from each other
- 3) Participants may not simply throw pieces into the center for others to take; they must give the pieces to another individual directly
- 4) A participant may give away all the pieces to his or her puzzle, even if he or she has already formed a square.

Do your best to strictly enforce these rules. As an observer, watch for the following:

- 1) Who is willing to give away pieces of the puzzle?
- 2) Did anyone finish his or her puzzle and then somewhat divorce himself or herself from the struggles of the rest of the group?
- 3) Is there anyone who continuously struggles with his or her pieces yet is unwilling to give any or all of them away?
- 4) How many people are actively engaged in mentally putting the pieces together?
- 5) Periodically check the level of frustration and tension... who's pulling his or her hair out over this?
- 6) Was there any critical turning point when the group began to cooperate?
- 7) Did anyone try to violate the rules by talking or pointing to other participants?

Beginning the Exercise:

The facilitator will explain that the group will now look at cooperation through a process of solving a puzzle, which will be done in small groups. The facilitator should explain that this exercise may be difficult, and that participants should expect some frustration. The facilitator will divide the group into smaller groups of six people each. Any extra people should be incorporated into the groups and can serve as second observers.

Groups should have space on a table or on the floor to work out the problem. The actual time limit for solving the puzzles should not exceed twenty minutes. Each group should choose a person to be the observer (or if there are seven people, choose two observers). The observers should be given their instructions. The others in the groups are each given one of the set of five closed envelopes with their pieces of the puzzle.

They should be instructed not to open their envelopes until the signal is given to begin.

The facilitator should then distribute the group instructions, one to each group. At the same time, they should read the instructions aloud, and ask if there are any questions.

When the signal is given to begin, the facilitator should circulate around the room to observe, and to assist the group observers. When the time limit has been reached, the facilitator should call time.

VI. Group Discussion

The facilitator will begin to process the exercise by asking the group observers to report back what they have seen. Open the discussion to comments from all participants. The facilitator should solicit responses and observations about feelings, rather than observations on the technical aspects of the game. They might want to explore if it was helpful for the group to be told ahead of time to expect some level of frustration. The facilitator should make connections between the comments of the group members, and experiences with similar life events.

Some points which might come out in the discussion include:

- 1) Each person must understand the problem in order to be able to participate in its solution.
- 2) Each person should understand how he or she can contribute toward solving the problem.
- 3) Each person should be aware of the potential contributions that others can make.
- 4) People need to recognize the problems of others to help them make their maximum contribution.

VII. Trust

The facilitator should next explain to the participants that they will begin to look at the question of trust, and will do so by doing a very unusual activity called a "trust walk."

This activity will be a very effective way to understand what trust is and why being able to trust others (and be trustworthy) is an important thing to do. The activity will seem strange, but it is completely safe. The facilitator should tell the participants that they will discuss the activity after it is over.

Trust Walk Exercise

The facilitator should begin the exercise by asking the participants to count off in two's (1,2,1,2 etc).

After the counting off, the facilitator should explain that all of the "ones" (1) will have the experience of being blind for the next five minutes. They will be wearing blindfolds over their eyes. They will be led around the room by the "two's" (2) who will be taking complete care of them, making sure nothing happens to them. They won't run into any walls or trip over anything.. (The facilitator should let the participants know that later the roles will switch).

The ones should sit while the facilitator hands out a blindfold to each two. The facilitator should tell the twos to stand behind the ones. Now each two should tie a blindfold completely but not tightly over the eyes of the one seated in front of him. (If there are an odd number of participants, one two can have two ones to blindfold and lead in the exercise.)

As the twos are blindfolding the ones, the facilitator should remind the twos that they are responsible for the person in their care. They are to lead the ones carefully around the room, making sure they don't bump into anything. From time to time the twos should stop the ones and have them explore an object (a door, a book, etc.). The twos and their ones can talk quietly while they walk if this helps them to move safely around the room.

The facilitator should tell the twos to now begin the exercise by leading the ones away from their chairs and walk them around the room for the next five minutes. When the five minutes have passed, the twos should lead the ones back to their chairs and remove the blindfolds. The twos and ones should trade places, the twos sitting in the chairs and the ones putting the blindfolds on the twos. The facilitator should repeat the directions, directing the ones to lead the twos around the room on the "trust walk," stopping to explore objects. When another five minutes have passed, the facilitator should instruct the twos to bring the ones back to their chairs and

remove the blindfolds. All participants should be seated to begin a discussion about the trust walk.

Discussion

The facilitator should begin the discussion by thanking everyone for participating in the activity given that it's difficult to be led around not knowing where you are going and not being able to see anything.

Questions:

- What the experience was like?
- What was the hardest part of being led around?
- Did they truly trust their leader to take care of them?
- Was it hard to trust the leader?
- Have you ever had to trust someone to do something for you in real life?
- How do you feel about depending on other people?
- How did it feel during the trust walk to be a leader and have someone completely in your care?
- Was it easy?
- Have you ever had to take care of someone in real life, a child, an older person?
- What does it take to win someone's trust?
- Can the participants think of situations where it's best not to trust and situations where it might be O.K. to trust someone?

The facilitator should not lecture to the participants about the need for trust. They should let them draw their own conclusions and express what they truly feel. "Trusting can be hard thing to do, especially when the world seems dangerous a lot of the time. Trust is often broken, but it is also often kept." The facilitator should encourage the participants to describe at least a few positive experiences they have when they trusted someone.

VIII. Conclusion

The facilitator should thank the group for their interest and participation, remind them of the time and place for the next session and tell them how much they are looking forward to seeing them again.

Module 2. Self Esteem

Objectives:

- Practice giving and receiving positive feedback
- Identify feelings provoked by giving and receiving positive feedback
- Define self-esteem
- Identify factors which impact self-esteem
- Describe different sources of messages given to young people about looks, thoughts and behavior.
- Explain how these messages impact self-image and self esteem
- Identify one aspect of who they are or what they've done which makes them proud
- Identify feelings associated with positive achievements
- Create one way to celebrate achievements

Methods:

- Interactive lecture
- Large group discussion

- Small group discussion
- Crafts

Materials:

- Newsprint
- Markers
- Masking Tape
- "Post-its"
- Small slips of paper
- Pens
- Newspaper
- Folding boxes
- Crayons
- Glue
- Scissors
- Magazines
- Lace, buttons, small patches of fabric, etc.

I. Introduction

The facilitator will welcome the group back, asking about their week and if any questions have come up for them. The facilitator should remind the group that they will go through an exercise to loosen up and come together as a group.

Then introduce the exercise to the group: self-esteem. Begin by describing the importance of positive feedback to our growth and development as people. "We get lots of negative feedback all the time. We get put down at home, at school - even by people who claim to be our friends. The sitcoms on TV are mostly about people teasing each other.

Positive feedback means telling people what you like about them or what they do well.

Post-it Appreciation Exercise:

Explain that this session will be an exercise in giving and receiving positive feedback. Participants will get the chance to appreciate each other and to receive appreciation. This can feel strange, because we are not used to it, but how is someone supposed to know that you like about them if you never tell them?

Hearing positive feedback from someone else makes you feel better about yourself, and can help you to keep going when you feel down.

Have the participants break into small groups of four.

Each participant should be given six (6) Post-it note papers. The facilitator should tell the participants that they are to use two (2) post-its for each of the other three people in their group. On each the Post-its, the participants will write one piece of positive feedback for the other people in their group, two for each of the other people. They can write something they like about that person, something good they saw that person do in any of the previous sessions of this course, or some strength they see in that person.

The facilitator should remind the participants to do their writing in silence. There will be a particular way later of sharing these observations. When the participants have finished their writing, the facilitator should ask them to hold onto all the Post-its they have written and form a circle in the middle of the room.

Guide the participants in sharing their observations in the following way. Focusing on one person, ask anyone who has a Post-it for that person to move to him or her and read the Post-it out loud and stick it on the person. The facilitator should remind participants that they should receive the positive feedback without making jokes about it or rejecting it. The facilitator should tell everyone who has an appreciation for that person to come forward before going on to the next person in the circle.

When the activity has gone around the entire circle, the facilitator can close the process by asking the participants:

- How did it feel to be appreciated?
- Was it harder to give or receive the positive feedback?
- Was it an uncomfortable exercise?
- Did they learn anything new about how they are seen by others?

II. What is Self-Esteem?

Ask the participants if they've heard the term "self-esteem," and what they think it means. Write their responses on the newsprint, and then provide them with the dictionary definition of self-esteem.

Self-esteem: A good opinion of oneself

III. Where do we get our Images?

The facilitator will explain to the group that our self-image is the result of images we are fed from the time we are small. They should ask the group where they think we get these messages about how we're supposed to act, to look, to think, etc., noting responses on newsprint.

Responses should include:

- Parents
- Brothers/Sisters
- Friends
- Television
- Fashion
- Music
- Magazines
- Church

The facilitator should then proceed with each of these sources, asking the group to describe what the messages are from each source with respect to:

- What does this source say about how a girl should look? And about how a boy should look?
- What does this source say about how a girl should act in school? And about how a boy should act in school?
- What does this source say about how a girl should act at home? And about how a boy should act at home?
- What does this source say about how a girl should act with males her own age? And about how a boy should act with females his own age?
- Ask the group to discuss the impact of these messages with regard to our actions. They should process this discussion with some of the following questions.
- What is the impact when the messages we get conflict?
- How do we choose which messages we want to pay attention to?
- How do our choices affect our interactions at home? With friends? In school?

IV. Celebrations of Pride

The facilitator should ask the group to brainstorm on how they feel when someone recognizes something positive in them. They should note on newsprint the responses, noting words such as:

- Happy
- Pleased
- Good
- Optimistic
- Secure
- Confident
- Excited

The facilitator will ask the group how often they recognize their own achievements and the things which make them proud, as well as how often they feel that their parents, teachers, friends, community recognize these achievements. They will explain how important it is that we recognize and celebrate these achievements - our own and those of the people around us. The facilitator will explain that the group will be constructing "celebration boxes" today, to keep reminders of the positive things we see in ourselves or that we've done.

The facilitator will distribute the folding boxes and explain to the group how to construct them. They should then distribute materials, such as markers, crayons, glue, scissors, magazines, lace, and other objects and allow the participants to create boxes which represent for them a celebration of pride and happiness. The group can work for about 30 to 40 minutes on their boxes, leaving time to show the finished boxes to the group.

V. Conclusion

Ask each group member to put the slip of paper on which they wrote the one thing that makes them proud into his/her box to start off his/her collection. They should thank the group for their efforts.