

The Third Side

Objective:

1. To allow participants to understand, explore, and practise the Third Side.
2. To allow the participants to experience getting into the balcony and helping others get there as well.

The key skills are LISTENING and QUESTIONING.

Effective Communication: active listening, probing, feedback giving

Active Listening

The capability of one person to demonstrate and prove his/her understanding of the substantive and emotional messages of the speaker.

Purposes

- Helps build and maintain rapport.
- Helps gather data.
- Helps check perceptions and filters.
- Helps the speaker to clarify and develop his/her ideas.
- Builds respect and consideration.

Procedures

- Use conducive listening posture.
- Use appropriate eye contact.
- Paraphrase the message of the speaker.
- Reflect the core feelings.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Give statements of understanding.
- Ask or welcome clarifications and corrections.
- Summarize the speaker's core message.

Traps

- Confuse listening with agreeing.
- Mix listening with evaluating.
- Assume responsibility for what is being presented (feeling the need to give advice.)

Probing

Statements or questions designed to elicit relevant data from another person.

Purposes

- Obtain more information.
- Clarify the other person's feelings.
- Clarify the other person's thinking.
- Test assumptions.

Procedures

- Ask open-ended questions (What, Why, How, Where, When, Who)
- Ask one question at a time.
- Give time to answer.
- Reinforce answers verbally and/or with body language.

Traps

- Confuse probes with leading questions.
- Fill silences instantly.

Feedback Giving

An invitation to another person or group to discover, explore and act on self-enhancing and organization-enhancing alternatives.

As such, it is an alternative to commanding, telling, ordering, persuading, cajoling, pleading, demanding, and the like.

Feedback relates to:

Recognizing success (confirmatory feedback)

- Encourage another person to repeat positive action and/or statements.

Developing new perspectives (corrective feedback)

- An invitation to another person/group to reexamine and change/enhance some perspective, belief, attitude, idea, etc.

Facilitating change of dysfunctional behaviors (corrective feedback)

- An invitation to another person or group to correct some behaviors.

Purposes

- To recognize success and good performance.
- To encourage the other to consider new perspectives and/or behaviors; and
- To express the point of view in such a way that the other can hear it; to minimize the other's need to be defensive.

Procedure

Be Assertive in giving your feedback!

Assertiveness

the ability to clearly communicate one's opinions, needs, wants, interests, feelings, etc. to another in a non-defensive and non-threatening way

Parts of an assertion message

- Description of the **PROBLEM** – specific behavior or statement(written or verbal), policy, etc. that is the subject of the discussion. (Validate with the other party your understanding of the problem).

Ito sa tingin ko ang problema.....

- Description of your **ASSESSMENT** – i.e. specific consequences of the behavior or statement;

Sa palagay ko kaya nagkaganito dahil.....

- Description of your **FEELINGS** and the **ROOTS OF YOUR FEELINGS** in relation to or arising out of the described problem;

At nasasaktan ako tuwing....nagagalit ako dahil.....

- Presentation of your **PROPOSAL(S)** on how to resolve or manage the problem.

Ganito ang nakikita kong maari nating gawin upang malutasan ang problema...

Components of Non-violent communication

1. Separate observation from evaluation

2. Express your feeling about your observation; separate this feeling from your assessment of yourself and of others.
3. Acknowledge the roots of your feelings, which are your own needs (e.g. I feel... because I need...)
4. Give proposals in a non-threatening and non-demanding way

The Balcony Perspective

- A. **Emotional balcony:** questioning and listening for emotional reactions
- B. **Rational balcony:** questioning and listening about underlying interests and needs
- C. **Creative balcony:** questioning and listening about ideas and creative options

What can we do to develop a Third Side Perspective?

The answer is: **GO TO THE BALCONY.**

In order to take the Third Side you must be able to step back from the conflict in question and see everyone's perspective. This vantage point helps you observe the conflict from a bird's eye view and to monitor the emotions, logic and proposed solutions that arise. We will begin with YOU and your own ability to achieve a Balcony perspective.

The Challenges

In conflict there are three challenges to manage – the first is managing the *emotional element* of the problem, the second is managing the *rational element*, and the third is enhancing the *creative element* in order to pry the parties away from their rigid, narrow, positions.

The Emotional Balcony

Questioning and listening for emotional reactions

This first segment will begin by addressing your own emotional reactions and then shift toward defusing the emotional reactions of others.

Managing your Emotional Reactions: Use questions to get at emotions and feelings

What are emotions?

What do emotions tell us?

What are some of the emotions YOU react with when in conflict or watching conflict?

Triggers exercise

What triggers—words, situations or conditions (verbally or physically)—cause YOU to react with strong emotions or lose your cool? Why?

Some questions:

What are my hot button issues?

Why do these bother me?

Write these down to share with the larger group.

Physical clues

What physical clues does your body give you? [face red, heart beats rapidly, fists clench]

Some questions:

What am I feeling?

What are my physical reactions? (listening to your own body)

Effective methods

What are the effective methods you use now to get up on the emotional balcony?

Going to the balcony is a place to:

Stop

- Take time to prepare
- Take a time out
- Count to 10
- Take a deep breath

Look (inside yourself)

- Look at your natural reaction: take sides, ignore, escape
- Name your emotions
- *Have* your emotions (rather than *be* them)
- Distinguish your emotions from their triggers

Listen

- Hear out your feelings so you don't have to act them out
- Listen to understand

Use a partner as your “balcony”

Be aware of how your body responds to conflict. Notice physical changes.

Know your “hot buttons” – words or situations that trigger your emotions.

Reframe the situation internally, control the story you tell yourself.

Focus on your ultimate goal and purpose for the conversation.

Slow the process down. Buy time to think ... take a break.

Don't try to guess the other person's intent. Tell yourself “a new story” about their intention

Help the other to the Emotional Balcony: Defuse their emotions

Now, you are on the balcony but where is the other person? They are still on the ground.

Your job is to calm them – to bring them to the balcony

So, in order to reach an eventual agreement your job is to help them calm down so they can think rationally. You must bring them to the balcony.

How to help the other to the balcony

How did we accomplish that—helping the other to the balcony? (*E.g.: extending arm, going down, reaching out...*)

Answer—we must use Unnatural Acts—Do what does NOT come easily.

The key to helping the other to the emotional balcony is to step to their side by listening to their emotions and asking questions about how they are feeling.

The Rational Balcony

Managing your Logical Reaction

Now that you have spent time considering emotional reactions, it is important that we shift to the

rational elements of going to the balcony.

Some beginning questions:

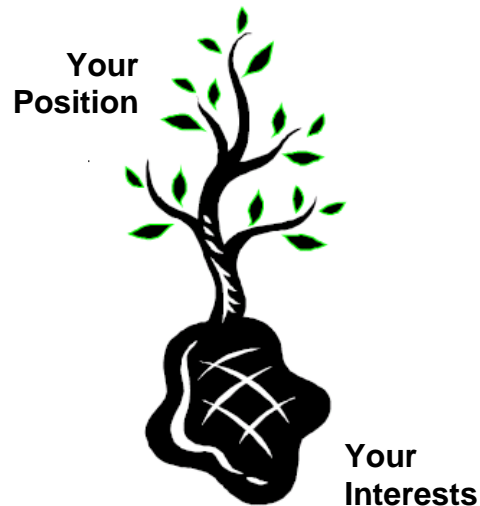
What is going through your mind when you are in a conflict?

What reasoning do you use when you are in a conflict?

What reasoning do you use to justify not getting involved in a conflict?

Tree of Positions and Interests

Positions	Interests
• What you say you want	• The reason behind your position
• The "only" solution	• The reason(s) for a position
• Often concrete and tangible	• Tend to be intangible
• A stubborn, strongly held view	• The answer(s) to the question "WHY?"
• The "bottom line"	• The source of the other's motivation
• A demand	• Your key to developing a creative solution



The Creative Balcony

Getting on your Creative Balcony

The following questions will help you get on your creative balcony.

- What are all the options to solve this problem no matter how wild or outlandish they may seem?
- What have I seen succeed in similar situations?

Apply these questions to your own situation and create a list of possible solutions to your conflict.