



## **PARTICIPANT'S PACKET**

### **SESSION 2: Communication & Group Dynamics**

Thank you for joining us for “A Taste of CLI”! We hope this will be valuable to you, not only in your work at your parish and/or school, but also in your life! This packet has the worksheets you need for the second session: Communication & Group Dynamics. Your Youth Minister will schedule a time(s) to do this first session with you. This session should be completed prior to joining in our online session on July 26th, 2020.

# How Are You Feeling Today?



EXHAUSTED



CONFUSED



ECSTATIC



GUILTY



SUSPICIOUS



ANGRY



HYSTERICAL



FRUSTRATED



SAD



CONFIDENT



EMBARRASSED



HAPPY



MISCHIEVOUS



DISGUSTED



FRIGHTENED



ENRAGED



ASHAMED



CAUTIOUS



SMUG



DEPRESSED



OVERWHELMED



HOPEFUL



LONELY



LOVESTRUCK



JEALOUS



BORED



SURPRISED



ANXIOUS



SHOCKED



SHY

## MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS

(Maintaining Relationships)

### **Encouraging**

Being friendly, warm and respectful of others; showing regard for others: *"I am glad to see everyone here at the meeting."*

### **Expressing Group Feelings**

Sensing feelings within the group and sharing feelings with others: *"I think we all need a break."*

### **Harmonizing**

Attempting to reconcile disagreements; reducing tension; getting people to explore differences. *"Perhaps you would be better off if you would be specific rather than just accusing one another."*

### **Compromising**

When one's own opinion is involved in a conflict, offer a compromise that brings resolution. *"I appreciate Mary's idea, but I see things very differently. Since we're pretty evenly divided between these ideas, I'd like to suggest we look for another option or concentrate on developing Mary's idea."*

### **Gate Keeping**

Attempting to keep communication channels open, inviting everyone to participate, suggesting procedures that permit sharing remarks. *"John is trying to say something and is being cut off."*

### **Process Observing**

Watching how the group and sharing these perceptions with the group. *"Haven't we gone pretty far afield in this discussion?"*

## TASK FUNCTIONS

(Getting the job done)

### **Initiating**

Starting the discussion; proposing tasks, goals, and actions; suggesting a procedure. *"Let's write the ideas we have on the board and analyze them."*

### **Information or Opinion Seeking**

Requesting facts or information about group concerns or opinions. *"How many people are going to attend?"*

### **Information Giving**

Providing facts or information about group topic or concerns. *"In the past five years, we have collected only 90% of the amount expected."*

### **Consensus Testing**

Checking with the group to see how much agreement has been reached. *"Does anyone object to our doing this?" "Could we go around quickly and let each person tell us about his/her view on this question in a sentence or two?"*

### **Summarizing**

Pulling together related ideas; restating suggestions; offering decisions or conclusions for group to consider. *"Those who have spoken thus far seem to have made these points..."*

### **Clarifying**

Interpreting ideas or suggestions; clarifying issues before the group. *"I think what she means is that we do not know if we can afford that program"*

# PERSONAL FUNCTIONS

## **Self understanding**

Your capacity to see your own behavior, actions, and reactions in the group in an objective way, will make a big difference to how well you communicate with other group members, and how well you are able to identify and manage potentially destructive conflict.

## **Inter-personal understanding**

This is the ability to understand the other person's point of view and leads not only to much greater tolerance (which in turn reduces unproductive, or emotionally based, conflict), but also encourages many more ideas to be submitted to the group. This is because group members will feel better understood and less likely to have their ideas ignored or ridiculed.

## **Active listening**

Our natural disposition in a competitive world is to constantly seek attention, to fight to have our ideas heard, to attempt constantly to command the consideration of others or to put our side of the argument. But communication is a two way thing and if a discussion is to be productive, each person's position must be understood clearly along the way. Active listening is not simply a matter of restraining the urge to speak and listening instead, it involves both listening and making a conscious attempt to understand the other person's view. (Communication Workshop)

## **Managing conflict**

Conflict is the double-edged sword.

The absence of conflict means that the group is not reaching its full potential to identify problems and explore possible solutions. An excess of conflict, on the other hand, can be destructive to the group and undermine its ability to carry out any action at all. This means that conflict must be managed. The leader must pursue an agenda which is challenging enough and an agenda that prevents argumentation from blocking progress.

## **Stopping conflict escalation**

The problem with our traditional view of conflict is that we see it as a situation which is only resolved by having a winner and a loser. In this view, conflict is resolved only when one person prevails over the other, so it is a situation which is ripe for escalation. (More on this at tomorrow's workshop)

## **Disruptive behaviors**

There are many types of disruptive behavior which group members can engage in and which need to be dealt with to stop them from hindering the group's progress.

The problem, however, is that the person concerned is often unaware that their behavior is disruptive. In fact the group leader is just as likely to be the culprit as another group member. Taking this into account, there are a three rules to follow when dealing with disruptive behavior, and anyone in the group may initiate action to stop it:

1. learn to recognize disruptive behavior in yourself, and try to understand and to change it
2. point out disruptive behaviors to others tactfully, with good-will, and in a time and place which is appropriate
3. be open to others pointing out your disruptive behavior, and respond by changing it (this can often be done in good humor by poking gentle fun at yourself by saying such things as, "Yes, there I go running off at the mouth again".

## **Recognition**

People work best when they feel that they belong, that their participation is worthwhile, and that their contributions are valuable. What is often overlooked is the need to constantly reinforce this feeling in group members by giving recognition when and where it is due. By recognizing and acknowledging all actions which help the group to function well and achieve its aims, you will be consolidating and improving the capabilities of the group.

## DISRUPTIVE FUNCTIONS

### **Avoider**

Acts indifferently; withdraws from discussion; daydreams; wanders off, talks to others; fools around

### **Blocking or diverting**

A Blocker will take the discussion off on a tangent, arguing too much on a particular point, fixing on less important details

### **Clowning**

Occasional comic relief lightens the discussion; constant joking and remarks will disrupt the meeting

### **Excessive Competition**

This is not a friendly game, the competitor wants to win at all costs, giving no regard to other team members and certainly no concern for the opponent

### **Dominating**

A Dominator usually uses a loud voice, making definitive pronouncements, endless speeches, special interest pleading; this sort of behavior can produce a tense combative atmosphere

### **Help Seeker**

This person attempts to express insecurity, gain sympathy, or in other ways, deprecate self

### **Power seeking**

A power seeker clashes with the leader, forming cliques

### **Recognition seeking:**

The behavior usually includes excessive talking, advocating extreme ideas, add an example or repeat what has been said in different words, telling a meaningless anecdote

