Interpersonal Communication Project

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Studies in Interpersonal Communication

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Introduction

- "Communication is best viewed as the continuous, complex collaborative process of verbal and nonverbal meaning-making" (Stewart, 2012, p. 15).

- "Interpersonal communication can be understood as one end of a continuum that has impersonal communication at the other end" (p. 15).

- "The main characteristic of interpersonal communication is that the people involved are contacting each other as persons" (p. 31).

Overarching Goal (OAG)

- My (OAG) is to optimize my empathetic and dialogic listening skills, with a view of making listening work for me, whilst simultaneously developing and sustaining more meaningful personal and professional relationships.

- According to Stewart (2012),

> Empathetic listening enables you to understand the other person, thoroughly and fully. Dialogic listening takes the process one step father. Rather than focusing mainly on what the other person is thinking and feeling, dialogic listening helps the two of you – or all the people in the conversation-build meaning together (pp. 192-193).

Burley-Allen (1995) likewise asserts that "active, empathetic listening mode can be a big step in making listening work for you" (p. 125).

Enlarging the Conversation

How do I enlarge my conversation through empathetic listening?

1. I must be attentive
2. I must be interested in other's needs
3. I must listen from an "OK-OK" attitude
4. I must not let the other person "hook" me
5. I must find other ways to indicate that I am listening (non-verbal cues and door-openers)
6. I must establish ground rules (Burley-Allen, 1995).

How do I enlarge my conversation through connecting relationships?

1. I must "commune" with others (Petersen, 2007, p. 18).
2. I must "apply love and acceptance" (p. 18) in how I listen, talk and value another
3. I must use "spring-boarding" (p. 19) to switch from superficial to serious discussions
4. I must remember that "poor communication blocks access to the deeper relationships" (p. 22).
5. I must ensure I am "being heard" (p. 22).

Enlarging the Conversation

❑ I will enlarge my conversation by focusing on **"Ours:"**

✓ According to Stewart (2012), "Empathetic listening can be helpful, as we said, but dialogic listening requires a move beyond empathy to focus on ours" (p. 202).

✓ "Focusing on ours prepares you to respond and inquire in ways that make it clear that "getting to the meaning" is a mutual process" (p. 202).

❑ I will encourage my conversation by **encouraging Nexting:**

✓ Stewart (2012) notes, "Your encouraging is a "nexting" move; it actively and relevantly keeps the collaborate co-construction process going" (p. 202).

Understanding My Personality Patterns

STRENGHTS	WEAKNESSES
• Loyal & friendly	• Often feel inadequate
• Humble	• Timid & soft-spoken
• Steady & stable	• Lacks self-confidence
• Good listener	• Passive
• Dependable attitude	• Vulnerable
• Trustworthy	• Too patient
• Sacrificial nature	• People-pleaser
• Loving & kind	• Unaggressive
• Multi-faceted & flexible (Carbonell, 2008)	• Indecisive (Carbonell, 2008)

Understanding My Personality Patterns

OPPORTUNITIES

- To relate well to most people
- To demonstrate leadership skills
- To demonstrate human relation skills
- To demonstrate conflict management skills (Carbonell, 2008).

THREATS

- Expectations of people for me to be sacrificial
- Invasion of personal and family time
- To get into rut doing routine activities
- Unwillingness to get out of comfort zone and take risks (Carbonell, 2008).

Interpersonal Communication Skills Test

Graph 1

- S – STEADY SPECIALISTS

Controlling My Behavior Blends

- Increase your confidence
- Fear not
- Speak out more often
- Be outgoing and less inhibited
- Be assertive
- Don't be insecure (Carbonell, 2010).

Interpersonal Communication Skills Test

Graph 2

- C/I/S – COMPETENT INFLUENCING SPECIALISTS

Controlling My Behavior Blends

- Guard against being judgmental
- Avoid bitterness and resentment
- Step out of your comfort zone
- Be thankful for everything.
- Be encouraging and a good example to others
- Take charge and do whatever you need to do (Carbonell, 2010)

Interpersonal Communication Barriers

Hearing what you want to hear

1. According to Burley-Allen (1995), "A listening barrier exists when someone hears what he wants to hear, not what is really communicated" (p. 54).
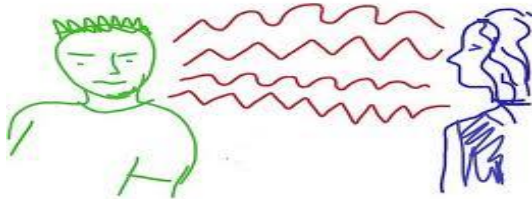
Proposed Solution

Burley-Allen (1995) contends that,

Nonverbals are cues to help you figure out what is going on between you and the other person. It is important to keep in mind that we tend to interpret what we hear and see through our own internal filtering experience (p. 74)

Interpersonal Communication Barriers

Perception-Reception-Attention

Proposed Solution - Active Listening

2. Burley-Allen (1995) notes,

"Listening is a highly selective, subjective experience. Information that conflicts with the listener's present ideas and beliefs may simply be turned out" (p. 50).

"The goal in active listening is to develop a clear understanding of the speaker's concerns and also to clearly communicate the listener's interest in the speaker's message" (McNaughton, Hamlin, McCarthy, Head-Reeves, Schreiner, 2008, p, 224)

Noise Pollution

❑ At the corpus of effective communication is the reduction and subsequent elimination of noise pollution.

▪ In the context of the helping profession, Slort, Schweitzer, Blankenstein, Abarshi, Riphagen Echteld, Aaronson, Van der Horst and Deliens (2011), conclude that, "Communication is deemed effective if it relates to positive outcomes for one or more of the participants (i.e. patients, family members, or health care professionals" (p. 614)

Internal Noise Pollution

❑ INTERNAL NOISE: There are many barriers that contribute to internal noise pollution including:

- Perception-Reception-Attention
- Hearing what you want to hear
- Biased listening
- Green Flag words (Burley-Allen, 1995)

External Noise Pollution

❏EXTERNAL NOISE:

- Importance of listening to Nonverbals
- Discrepancies
- Better-Quality Information (Burley-Allen, 1995).

Personal Action Plan

Interpersonal Communication Barriers

- Perception-Reception-Attention
- Hearing what you want to hear
- Biased listening
- Green Flag words
- Emotional listening
- Physical Barriers
- Semantic Barriers
- Reality versus Experience
- External distractions
- Discrepancies
- Better-Quality Information (Burley-Allen, 1995).

Empathetic Listening Development Plan

According to Petersen (2007), "Real listening gets us inside each other and there seems to be something in such human connection that touches and changes us" (p. 7). In other words, real listening connotes some form of nexting, as well dialogue through encouragement and collaboration.

Personal Action Plan

Interpersonal Communication Barriers

- Perception-Reception-Attention
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- Green Flag words
- Emotional listening
- Physical Barriers
- Semantic Barriers
- Reality versus Experience
- External distractions
- Discrepancies
- Better-Quality Information (Burley-Allen, 1995).

Dialogic Listening Development Plan

According to Stewart (2012) "Dialogic listening also requires a special form of encouraging. Basically, instead of encouraging the other person(s) to "say more," you're encouraging him or her to respond to something you've just put on the potter's wheel in response to something he or she has just said (p. 202)

Personal Action Plan

Interpersonal Communication Barriers

- Perception-Reception-Attention
- Hearing what you want to hear
- Biased listening
- Green Flag words
- Emotional listening
- Physical Barriers
- Semantic Barriers
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- Better-Quality Information (Burley-Allen, 1995).

Making "Listening Work for Me" Plan

According to Petersen (2007), "Feeling heard and understood has a lot to do with whether or not personal connection happens. We humans want to know that people care about us, value us, and take us seriously" (p. 19). In other words, my above- average listening skills, loyalty, caring disposition, and encouraging spirit all serve to enhance the connection process.

Conclusion

- In conclusion, molding one's "self-concept" (Feldman, 2011, p. 239) and becoming aware of one's "identity issues" (Stewart, 2012, p. 92) are critical processes involved in the enhancement and improvement of interpersonal communication. Moreover, the contextual application of empathetic and dialogic listening creates the necessary framework for and establishing authentic relationships. This presentation provides a clearly defined personality diagnosis and strategic behavior blend development plan that is sure to not only enlarge conversations, but also build successful and sustainable personal and professional relationships

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