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Instruction in Conflict Resolution

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Foreword

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system developed by the U.S. Office of Education and now sponsored by the National Institute of Education (NIE). It provides ready access to descriptions of exemplary programs, research and development efforts, and related information useful in developing more effective educational programs.

Through its network of specialized centers or clearinghouses, each of which is responsible for a particular educational area, ERIC acquires, evaluates, abstracts, and indexes current significant information and lists this information in its reference publications.

The ERIC system has already made available—through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service—much informative data, including all federally funded research reports since 1956. However, if the findings of specific educational research are to be intelligible to teachers and applicable to teaching, considerable bodies of data must be reevaluated, focused, translated, and molded into an essentially different context. Rather than resting at the point of making research reports readily accessible, NIE has directed the separate ERIC clearinghouses to commission from recognized authorities information analysis papers in specific areas.

In addition, as with all federal educational information efforts, ERIC has as one of its primary goals bridging the gap between educational theory and actual classroom practices. One method of achieving that goal is the development by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills (ERIC/RCS) of a series of sharply focused booklets based on concrete educational needs. Each booklet provides teachers with the best educational theory and/or research on a limited topic. It also presents descriptions of classroom activities which are related to the described theory and assists the teacher in putting this theory into practice.

This idea is not unique. Nor is the series title: *Theory Into Practice* (TIP). Several educational journals and many commercial textbooks provide teachers with similar aids. The

ERIC/RCS booklets are unusual in their sharp focus on an educational need and their blend of sound academic theory with tested classroom practices. And they have been developed because of the increasing requests from teachers to provide this kind of service.

Topics for these booklets are recommended by the ERIC/RCS National Advisory Committee. Suggestions for topics to be considered by the Committee should be directed to the Clearinghouse.

Bernard O'Donnell
Director, ERIC/RCS

Theory

This paper is intended for use by teachers who are concerned with making effective responses to conflict in the classroom. In it, we will describe the nature of adolescent conflict and its expression in the classroom setting. We will also describe the differences between conflict, competition, and cooperation. It is our contention that these three should be viewed realistically—not as “problems” which must be punished but as normal, healthy responses in the process of maturation. Our aim is to assist teachers in recognizing conflict, competition, and cooperation as vital tools in the learning process. We believe that education should provide students with the opportunity to learn ways of resolving conflict productively and creatively.

One important way to do this is to examine how we conduct our own classes. How do we manage, and thereby teach our students to manage, conflicts in the classroom? Conflicts exist about course methods and goals, about authority, and about procedural issues. Simons (1972) reports pitting smokers against non-smokers in a college class to decide whether smoking is to be permitted. Even this procedural issue can create real involvement and provides the opportunity to observe conflict strategies in operation.

In some classes, cliques develop which may interfere with classroom activities. If such groups are either openly hostile or simply disruptive, the teacher has an excellent opportunity to help students discover sources of their hostility or lack of cooperation and to involve them actively in creating a more productive atmosphere.

The use of tests provides another opportunity for exploring competitive or cooperative impulses among students. The teacher may wish to give students the chance to design the system of testing which best suits the needs of the group. Or, the teacher may suggest that groups of students work together on an exam, sharing information, insight, and the grade. This creates a real experience of interdependence among students and may remove much of the stigma attached to standard testing procedures. The study of conflict must not be relegated to any particular discipline. It can best be understood when it is approached from a

variety of perspectives, when its study is not seen as an awkward imposition on the existing curriculum, and when it is dealt with as it occurs in the educational setting.

beyond the day-to-day management of the classroom, though, a self-contained unit can be designed and productively used. We have included several specific exercises in this booklet which can be used in demonstrating effective self-disclosure, confrontation, and intergroup competition. It should be noted at the outset, however, that simulations and exercises cannot be productively used alone. Adequate preparation and follow-up are essential.

Perhaps the best source for exercises on conflict and conflict resolution is a series of volumes prepared by Pfeiffer and Jones and published by University Associates of La Jolla, California. Some of the exercises in this paper refer to the Pfeiffer-Jones volumes. Note, though, that page numbers may vary as the volumes have gone through several printings. Because teachers borrow and adopt from one another, it is difficult to trace the originator of any exercise. In cases where an exercise here refers to one also in a Pfeiffer and Jones publication, it should be noted that it has been revised and adapted for the specific purposes of this paper.

The idea that conflict and conflict resolution are central concepts in a society can be traced back to the writers of antiquity, and undoubtedly Karl Marx clearly viewed conflict as a critical aspect in societal analysis. Yet North American sociologists emphasized the contrasting concepts of stability and equilibrium. Not until 1956, when Coser published *The Functions of Social Conflict*, was the conflict perspective introduced into American sociology with the following concepts:

conflict—a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals

nonrealistic conflict—arises from the need for release of tensions or aggressive impulses which seek expression no matter what the object; thus its aim is the expression of aggression rather than the attainment of a goal

Simmel, upon whose writing Coser based his book, provides us with these definitions:

competition—indirect conflict in the sense that any damage done to the adversary is unintentional; it is conflict which "consists in parallel efforts by both parties concerning the same prize," a prize not held by either competitor

cooperation (unity)—a shared agreement on goals and the

value of working together for their attainment despite the presence of some antagonism or disagreement?

Communication and Conflict

Until recently, speech communication has either (1) studied conflict through formal speeches occurring during the time of the conflict, (2) treated conflict as chaotic or irrational acts inappropriate for study, or (3) simply ignored conflict situations. Recently there has been growing recognition that communication theory and conflict theory are related. One view held is that *for parties to be in conflict they must also be in communication*. More specifically, in *Perspectives on Communication in Social Conflict*, Simons suggests that speech communication provides the way to study the *message patterns* in conflict interactions.

Attitudes about Conflict

It can be a useful activity to explore attitudes about conflict. We may find that some students may tend to avoid confrontation; others may have learned to see it as healthy or productive. Some questionnaires have been developed to help explore and evaluate these attitudes. For example, a questionnaire developed by Morris can be used to measure each student's degree of dogmatism, trust in others, and attitude toward aspects of communication and conflict.³ Another questionnaire, "What Would You Do? A Self-Inventory of Your Reactions to Situations," can be used to reveal each student's reactions to a number of conflict situations.⁴

Levels of Conflict

For ease of study, conflict situations can be divided into the following levels:

1. *intrapersonal* or conflict within one's self
2. *interpersonal*
 - a. between marriage partners
 - b. friends and acquaintances
 - c. problem-solving groups—In 1974 Janis examined the historical background of U. S. disasters in Vietnam, the Bay of Pigs, Korea, and Pearl Harbor. He found in each case the phenomenon of "groupthink," an absence of conflict or a mode of group problem solving when concurrence-seeking becomes so dominant in a cohesive ingroup that it tends to override realistic appraisal of alternative courses of action. He then formulated a series of recommendations designed to prevent the recurrence of groupthink. Taken together

they give high priority to conflict, the open airing of objections and doubts.

3. *intergroup*

- a. ethnic, racial
- b. economic, labor-management

4. *international*

Generalizations

The major ideas that form the conflict perspective can be summarized as follows:

1. Realistic conflict is not a disease; it is natural, since there is a limit to resources, and what one party has limits another.
2. Groups vary in power, groups seek to increase their power over others, and groups constrain member behavior so as to increase group power through conflict.
3. Conflict can have many positive functions; for example, by venting hostilities groups are able to protect themselves from sudden disintegration because of an accumulation of pent-up anger and disagreement.
4. The absence of conflict is not necessarily good.
5. There are many mechanisms by which conflict may be controlled.

Conflict Resolution Methods

Communication can play *both* a functional and a dysfunctional role in conflict resolution. Tedeschi argues that most conflicts can be viewed as bargaining situations in which there is an opportunity for one party to influence the other.⁵ Small-group and attitude-change studies suggest that communication among parties often contributes to conflict resolution. Raven and Kruglandski observed that under reward power, communications are likely to consist of promises and exchanges of information regarding the positive outcomes each side has in store for the other, thus increasing the likelihood of a mutually satisfactory agreement. However, equipped with punitive capacities, the sides are likely to communicate threats which, because of their offensive nature, might intensify underlying interpersonal conflict.⁶

Rapoport, in his book *Fights, Games and Debates*, suggests that through the use of three communication strategies, conflict can be conducted as a debate:

1. Assure understanding. State the opponent's case in a way acceptable to the opponent so that the opponent sees that you understand the opponent's position.
2. Recognize validity. State what portions of the opponent's

beliefs you can accept as valid so that areas of agreement are recognized.

3. Assume similarity. Get your opponent to assume that you are like the opponent by treating the opponent as if the opponent were like you.

Filley's *Interpersonal Conflict Resolution* gives recommendations for such problem-solving strategies. In attempting to examine each of five different conflict resolution methods originally proposed by Blake and Mouton, it was found that confrontation problem-solving (as opposed to withdrawing, smoothing, compromising, or forcing) is the most effective but also the most difficult to achieve (Burke, 1969).

A classic series of studies with preadolescent boys may provide an answer (Sherif, 1961). The experiment had three stages. In the first, two groups of boys were brought to a camp and kept isolated from each other while they solidified themselves as a group. The groups became known as the Rattlers and the Eagles. In the second stage the two groups were brought into contact in a series of competitive group activities and mutually frustrating situations that produced a high level of intergroup hostility. Attending a movie together and eating in the same mess hall produced jeers, catcalls, insults, and food-throwing fights. Stage three was dedicated to the reeducation of the intergroup enmity by means of introducing superordinate goals—desirable and compelling goals that could only be achieved through the mutual cooperation of the Rattlers and the Eagles. The superordinate goals included such things as the drinking-water problem—a water shortage was staged and the help of all the boys was required in order to track down the trouble. Stage three was successful in reducing the existing tensions between the groups.

Conflict and the Adolescent

An appreciation of the explosive potential of the adolescent experience of conflict is imperative for the teacher concerned with facilitating productive learning experiences. A brief description of the adolescent "identity crisis" may serve to lay the groundwork for the assertion that creative ways of dealing with conflict are vitally important in the educational process. Adolescence is a period characterized by dramatic changes and intense uncertainty. It is a time of rapid physical growth, ever-increasing sexual awareness, intense desire for intimacy complicated by an equally strong desire for independence. Furthermore, the adolescent simultaneously seeks definite answers to a whole new set of questions and often feels compelled to reject even the most thoughtful adult responses as "old fashioned."

The origins of adolescent conflict rest in the ongoing interaction among family members. The literature describing the Oedipal complex and the desired resolution of hostilities is abundant. What concerns us here, however, is the post-Oedipal period: that stage in development where the child's relationship with parents generates a new emotional struggle of extreme urgency and immediacy. The adolescent's experience of sudden increase in physical size and strength, coupled with the onset of puberty, leads to the perception of self as an adult. The adolescent is eager to assume increasing responsibilities and develop new intimate relationships, yet the skepticism and reluctance of parents give rise to self-doubt and the inevitable "identity crisis."

Certainly anyone who attempts to help confused parents solve problems with their adolescent children must be cautious. No simple solution exists. Complete nonintervention on the part of parents only exacerbates the condition. For clearly the adolescent is not prepared to accept full adult responsibilities or to enter permanent intimate relationships. What's more, adolescents are aware of this and are acutely sensitive to the fact that the stature they wish to project is only possible with enormous emotional "lifts" in their shoes. It is precisely because of their painful awareness of their own "phoniness" that they look for and are quick to jump on any apparent adult inconsistencies. It is vitally important, then, that parents and teachers take care to behave consistently with adolescents and still more important that they beware of their own potential defensiveness when confronted with charges of hypocrisy.

Parents of adolescents are unavoidably caught in the web of conflict. The adolescent is chiefly concerned with a need for love. The resulting security parental affection brings leads to rejection of parental concern and a greater eagerness to express love toward some new love object. Herein lies the core of the struggle for identity and the resolution of adolescent conflict. Without the loving concern of parents (and the subsequent interventions and restrictions) the adolescent does not establish personal self-worth and does not gain the self-confidence required in establishing intimate relationships.

American society provides no demarcation line, no rite of passage, no universally accepted point where a child becomes an adult. As a result, parents and children are uncertain when to "let go," and in many families the tension between parent and child never fully subsides and never gives way to a relationship based on mutual respect and equality. It is for this reason that Buhler argues that the problem of identity is all too often never resolved.

As she states it, "Self-doubt and uncertainty about goals is a characteristic of our time, not just an age-characteristic problem of the adolescent years. These questions pursue many people far into adulthood and, tragically, sometimes even into advanced years."⁷

In light of the above, it seems to us that teachers of adolescents have two unique responsibilities: first, to be aware of the nature of the conflict students bring with them into the classroom and, second, to facilitate the expression of and effective management of conflict as part of the educational process. Frank has provided an excellent rationale for the teaching of conflict resolution in the schools. He concludes, in part, that a failure to deal with affective concerns may, in some cases, seriously impair the student's capacity for cognitive involvement.⁸ It is important to note that schools do not merely prepare students for the "real world"; rather, for the student, the school is the "real world." With this in mind, teachers must search for ways to assist students in handling the very real sources of conflict the classroom begets. Some catalysts built into most educational environments are forced interaction among persons whose personalities "clash," interpersonal and intergroup competition (and a consequent "win-lose" or "success-failure" ethic), real and assumed discrepancies in power, and the inevitable conflicting values of different generations.

The teacher of adolescents surely is in a delicate situation. As teachers ourselves, we are not unsympathetic to the real pressure many instructors face in meeting academic requirements imposed on them from above. It is our hope, however, that this booklet will assist teachers in identifying conflict in various forms and will stimulate innovative approaches in dealing with the educational potential conflict provides.

NOTES

1. Lewis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (New York: Free Press, 1956), pp. 8, 41, 49.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 28, 29, 57.
3. This questionnaire can be found in "Communication in Conflict. Resolution: A Prototype Course for Undergraduates" (Appendix K). (ED050090)

4. The questionnaire is adapted from Bjorn Christiansen, *Attitudes toward Foreign Affairs as a Function of Personality* (Oslo: Oslo University Press, 1959), pp. 254-275, and appears in Anne Thompson Feraru's *International Conflict* (New York: Learning Resources in International Studies, 1974).
5. J. T. Tedeschi, "Threats and Promises," in *The Structure of Conflict*, ed. P. Swingle (New York: Academic Press, 1970), pp. 155-191.
6. B. H. Raven and A. W. Kruglandski, "Conflict and Power," in Swingle, pp. 69-109.
7. Charlotte Buhler, "Loneliness in Maturity," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 9 (Fall 1969): 169.
8. Allan D. Frank, "Conflict in the Classroom," in *Conflict Resolution through Communication*, ed. Fred E. Jandt (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 254.

Practice

The theory section has described some of the major concepts and research findings emphasized in the study of communication and conflict resolution. In the section that follows, the teacher will find activities designed for classroom use in speech, English, social studies, guidance, or other curricula to enhance the student's skills in conflict resolution. The practice section will emphasize those skills described in the preceding section in six major activity categories: role playing, gaming, games and exercises, simulations, films, and complete resource packages.

Role Playing

Role playing, creative dramatics, and interpersonal communication may be used to generate data concerning the process of communication. Focused observation of specific behavior (non-verbal communication, use of descriptive statements, evasive answers, evaluative statements, etc.) may provide a clearer picture of the styles of interaction which serve to reduce or stimulate tension, understanding, and problem solving.

A. Eight role-playing situations appear in Morris, "Communication and Conflict Resolution: A Prototype Course for Undergraduates" (ED 050 090). While these are written for college students, they can easily be adapted for other audiences. Some that have proved useful follow:

1. Four roommates. Two have sloppy personal habits, the other two are neat. The two neat ones confront the other two with their gripes.
2. Two roommates. One always has company, the other feels her privacy is being violated. The issue has smoldered for some time. Being good friends, they discuss the issue.

B. A series of activities designed especially for young children appears in *A Preliminary Handbook: Children's Workshops in Creative Response to Conflict*, by Bodenhamer, Burger, and Prutzman. Some examples follow:

1. *Loosening-Up Theatre Exercises*. Create a high energy level and prepare people for role playing. The facilitator simply asks children to imitate all actions and sounds. The sillier

the motions, the more likely a safe atmosphere for more productive work will be created.

2. *The Mirror Exercise.* Consists of two people trying to mirror or imitate each other's actions. No one leads; rather, both persons try to simultaneously determine the action.

3. *Skits and Puppet Shows.* Used as attention grabbers. Shows can be developed from children's books, or the facilitator may wish to do some nonsensical warm-up shows. Later the facilitator can ask the group to create a situation which involves conflict; then the puppets act it out. The show may be interrupted at a critical point where the children can brainstorm for ways to settle the problem.

4. *Grab Bag Dramatics.* A fun cooperation exercise. Divide the class into small groups, each taking a laundry bag. The bag should contain a number of objects—one for each member of the group. Everyone draws one object from the bag and then the group works to put together a skit using all the objects and relating them all to each other.

C. Practice confrontations (from David W. Johnson's *Reaching Out*, pp. 165-166).

1. Form a triad. One person is the confronter, one is the person being confronted and the third is an observer. The confronter is asked to remember some point when the person being confronted did something destructive to himself or herself or others. The more recent the incident, the better. Then, the confronter attempts to utilize constructive confrontation skills (p. 165) in dealing with others, and the observer talks about the effectiveness of the confrontation.
2. Same procedure as above. Role play the following situations:
 - a. A person who often criticizes the behavior of others
 - b. A person who is extremely shy in groups
 - c. A person who frequently embarrasses other individuals by gross remarks and bad table manners
 - d. A person who often jokes about other people's problems
 - e. A person who constantly expresses a great deal of affection for everyone
 - f. A person who is so "nice" as to be "unreal"

Gaming

Gaming is a specialized word. Mathematically oriented game theorists present us with unique ways of categorizing conflicts, a classification scheme which permits comparisons between different levels of conflict. Types of games include Prisoner's Dilemma (which involves trust and distrust); positive sum (which

involves cooperation), and zero sum (which involves conflict as one benefits only at the cost of another).

Most generally used are "2x2 games" which involve two players each with two choices of action. The outcome of the game, the "payoff" to each player, depends on their joint choices. With two players, each with two choices, there are four possible outcomes or combinations of choices. The instructor can change aspects of the situation (such as the payoffs, the number of plays, the characteristics of the players, instructions to the players, and the conditions under which the game is played) in order to show what effects these variations have on the players' choices.

The most commonly used gaming exercise is Prisoner's Dilemma (Pfeiffer and Jones, *Structured Experiences*, Vol. III, pp. 60-63). Prisoner's Dilemma can be used to demonstrate the effects of trust and distrust, competition, and other variables. The teacher may wish to lead a discussion on the effects of high and low trust on interpersonal relations, on win-lose situations, on zero-sum games, and on the merits of collaboration vs. competition.

Other games for analyzing conflict theory in the classroom are described by Smith and Harriss in "Methods for Introducing Analysis of Conflict Theory Into the Speech Communication Classroom."

Games And Exercises

Puzzlement: A "Mild" Confrontation (Contributed to Pfeiffer and Jones by Robert R. Kurtz. See 1973 *Annual Handbook*, pp. 30-31). This exercise is intended to help group members confront each other in helpful ways, to stimulate feedback, and to share the feeling related to giving and receiving feedback. The exercise takes about an hour and a half and is intended for groups of six to sixteen members who have some experience working together. Participants should be informed of the purpose of the exercise before it is begun. The facilitator instructs each member to look around the group and choose the person whose behavior most "puzzles" her or him. Participants are asked to "lock in" on the person and not to change later. Each person takes a turn, announces his or her candidate, and describes the puzzling behavior. The person chosen has several options. He or she may (1) choose not to explore the question at all, (2) explore or explain in personalized terms why the behavior may be puzzling, or (3) explore what it is in the relationship that might foster the puzzling behavior. After each pair interacts, they should ask for feedback from the group. This will provide a source of "consensual validation or disconfirmation" to help clear the air.

Coin Game (Krupar, p. 113). This exercise explores how the characteristics of individual members of a group are related to cooperation or competition. Follow-up discussion should focus on what characteristics of individuals seem connected to the creation of tension, frustration, or cooperation in the group setting. The facilitator should tell participants to bring a dollar in change to the next meeting. All participants should also write down observations concerning the interaction characteristics of members of their own families. Each participant should also note his or her own characteristics or the major traits characterizing transactions with others. The Coin Game can be played in 45 minutes and involves any number of groups of six persons.

The groups of six sit together in a circle and members are told to place their change in front of them, and to give as much or as little as they wish to other members of the group. After five minutes, groups should discuss what happened and why, as well as the implications individuals see about their own behavior outside the group. Then members are told to *take* as much change from other members as they wish and to discuss the same questions again. Finally, new groups are formed to discuss the experience: (1) Why did you give your money to a particular member and not to another? (2) What determined how much you gave, and why? (3) How might the giving and taking of money relate to the giving and taking in an interpersonal relationship? (4) How do you feel about your own behavior? (5) How was your behavior in this group compatible with the perceptions of yourself you jotted down before the session began?

Power Game (Krupar, pp. 113-114). This exercise is intended to demonstrate three things: (1) how various persons react to power; (2) how some people persuade others to entrust them with authority, and (3) how people feel about others who have gained power. The game requires a set of play money and an hour's time.

The facilitator informs the group that this game is aimed at helping members answer questions about power, authority, leadership and decision making. Then the group is divided into smaller groups of seven and each person is given an equal share of money. Each group discusses what a leader should be and do and what obligations the leader has within a group. Each group must then select one member whom members feel best represents them. This can be done by redistributing the money any way the group feels it should be done. People may give money to others or may take from others, hoard it or give it away in turn. After ten minutes, the person with the most money is the leader. She or he is entrusted with all the group's money. The groups then discuss

how they feel about this person as a leader and whether they feel this person is the best representative of the group.

The leaders of the various groups then meet together and, as holders of all the money and power, have fifteen minutes to decide whether to keep the money or redistribute it. After time has elapsed, with or without a decision, leaders return to their groups and discuss the following: (1) How do particular members of the group react to power? (2) Was the use of money realistic and useful as a source of power? Why or why not? (3) How do people persuade others to entrust them with power? and (4) How do the group members feel about those who have gained power?

Intimacy Program: Developing Personal Relationships (Pfeiffer and Jones, *Structured Experiences*, Vol. III, pp. 89-93), Adapted from S. D. Jourard, *Disclosing Man to Himself* (Princeton, N. J.: Van Nostrand, 1968). The objectives of the program are to hasten the getting-acquainted process, to study the experience of self-disclosure, and to work towards authenticity in groups. It should be used with caution. Though it can be effective in aiding self-disclosure, it can also be a threatening experience for some participants. Under most conditions there is no risk; however, participants should not be required to take part. The exercise takes approximately an hour and a half and involves any number of dyads.

The facilitator introduces the program with a short explanation of the objectives and the value of self-disclosure in building trust, and then group members pair off with the persons whom they know least well. The guidelines are distributed and the rules are explained. Pairs meet for an hour (less if time requires) and then small groups of six to eight meet to discuss the experience. For variation, groups larger than dyads may be used, guidelines may be augmented by questions suggested by the group, or the program can be carried out between people who already know each other.

Intimacy Program Guidelines

During the time allotted for this experience you are to ask questions from this list. The questions vary in their degree of intimacy, and you may want to begin with less intimate ones. Take turns initiating the questions. Follow the rules below:

1. Your communication with your partner will be held in confidence.
2. You must be willing to answer any question you ask your partner.

3. You may decline to answer any question asked by your partner.

- How important is religion in your life?
 What is the source of your financial income?
 What is your favorite hobby or leisure interest?
 What do you feel most ashamed of in your past?
 What is your grade average at the present time?
 Have you ever cheated on exams?
 Have you ever deliberately lied about a serious matter to either parent?
 What is the most serious lie you have told?
 How do you feel about couples living together before marriage?
 Have you ever experienced premarital sex?
 Have you ever been arrested or fined for violating any law?
 Have you any health problems? What are they?
 Have you ever had a mystical experience?
 What do you regard as your chief personality fault?
 What turns you on the most?
 How do you feel about interracial dating or marriage?
 Do you consider yourself a political liberal or conservative?
 What turns you off the fastest?
 What features of your appearance do you consider most attractive to members of the opposite sex?
 What do you regard as your least attractive features?
 How important is money to you?
 Are your parents divorced?
 What person would you most like to take a trip with right now?
 How do you feel about swearing?
 Have you ever been drunk?
 Do you smoke marijuana or use other drugs?
 Do you enjoy manipulating or directing people?
 How often have you needed to see a doctor in the past year?
 Have you ever been tempted to kill yourself?
 Have you ever been tempted to kill someone else?
 Would you participate in a public demonstration?
 What emotions do you find most difficult to control?
 Is there a particular person you would most like to be attracted to you? Who?
 What foods do you most dislike?
 What are you most reluctant to discuss right now?
 What is your IQ?
 What was your worst failure, your biggest disappointment to yourself or your family?
 What is your favorite TV program?
 What is the subject of the most serious quarrels you have had with your parents?
 What is the subject of your most frequent daydreams?
 How are you feeling about me?

What are your career goals?

With what do you feel the greatest need for help?

What were you most punished or criticized for as a child?

How do you feel about crying in the presence of others?

Do you have any misgivings about this group?

What is your main complaint about the group (this class)?

Do you like your name?

If you could be anything or anyone—besides yourself—what or who would you be?

Whom in this class don't you like?

Expressing Anger: A Self-Disclosure Exercise (Pfeiffer and Jones, *Structured Experiences*, Vol. IV, pp. 104-105). This exercise is useful for studying the styles of expressing anger in a group setting and the effects of anger in groups, for legitimizing the presence and expression of anger, for identifying behavior which provokes anger in others, and for exploring ways of dealing with anger. Anger is often difficult to express and difficult to accept in others. It is recommended that the facilitator know participants well and explain this exercise carefully in advance to group members. Group members should not be required to participate. Any number of groups of six to twelve may be directed simultaneously, and the exercise takes about forty-five minutes.

Each participant receives four strips of paper, a felt-tipped marker, and a strip of masking tape. The facilitator tells members of the group to complete four sentences as they are read with the first response that occurs, without censoring or changing it in any way. After each response is recorded, participants are instructed to tape their answers to their chests, chairs, or the wall behind them. The sentences are: (1) I feel angry when others . . . (2) I feel that my anger is . . . (3) When others express anger toward me, I feel . . . (4) I feel that the anger of others is . . . Participants then share responses with others in their groups, focusing on the impact of sharing their feelings about anger. They are encouraged to give others feedback to the extent that their answers seem consistent. The whole group may then share generalizations and discuss approaches to anger in interpersonal situations.

Think-Feel: A Verbal Progression (Pfeiffer and Jones, *Structured Experiences*, Vol. III, pp. 70-71). The aims here are to distinguish between thought and feeling, link feeling feedback to observable behavior, and practice empathizing. An unlimited number of small groups of three to five may participate, and the time required is forty-five minutes.

The facilitator discusses the goals, forms the groups, and explains that four rounds of communications will occur and that they will be interrupted whenever necessary. A few minutes of processing will follow each round. Each round begins when the facilitator writes a phrase in clear view of the groups. The facilitator instructs the participants to begin a five-minute conversation by completing the statements.

ROUND 1: "Now I see..." (should focus on the nonverbal behavior of other group members) 2 minutes for processing.

ROUND 2: "Now I think..." 2 minutes for processing.

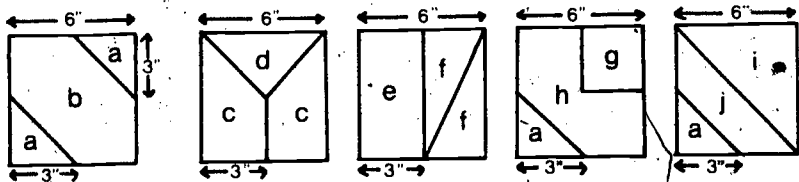
ROUND 3: "Now I feel..." (may wish to emphasize that groups commonly confuse thoughts with feelings. Suggest that members avoid the statements, "I feel that..." and "I feel like..." and use only the phrase "Now I feel..." followed by an adjective.)

ROUND 4: "Now I think you feel..." (conversations should be two-way to determine whether perceptions are accurate).

A discussion of the result, focusing on the learning goals, should follow the experience.

Broken Squares (Ruben and Budd, pp. 74-75). This exercise is intended to highlight key factors in cooperative and competitive communication within a group. The activity is designed for use with a number of groups of five participants each and requires approximately forty-five minutes. Each group should be seated around a table.

Each group is given a packet containing five envelopes with the materials illustrated below.



Each group is told to make five equal-size squares by utilizing the materials in the envelopes. They may proceed any way they choose observing the following rules: (1) no talking or gesturing, (2) participants may *give* pieces to others but may not *take* any pieces, (3) participants may not pool all the pieces into a single pile nor may they contribute pieces to a central pile. All pieces given by a participant must be given to a specific person in the group.

To construct the packets, begin with five 6-inch cardboard squares. Mark them as indicated in the diagram and cut along the lines. Note that all pieces marked with the same letter should be of the same size. Mark letters in pencil so they may be erased before the exercise. Label each of the envelopes: A, B, C, D, E. Sort the labeled pieces and put them in the envelopes according to this pattern: A (i, h, e), B (a, a, a, c), C (a, j), D (d, f), E (g, b, f, c). Erase the penciled puzzle piece letters and label the pieces with the letter designating the appropriate envelope. This will help in reassembling after the exercise.

Some useful discussion questions might be: How closely were the rules followed? Which ones were broken? Why? Once an individual completed a square, was that person content to withdraw from the group even though others had not yet been successful? How willing were people to give up pieces? What are some of the parallels between things that happened in this exercise and things that happen in society?

Win As Much As You Can: An Intergroup Competition (Pfeiffer and Jones, *Structured Experiences*, Vol. II, pp. 62-67). This exercise demonstrates the merits of both competitive and cooperative models in intragroup and intergroup relations and illustrates the effect of "win-lose" situations. The game takes one hour.

Octets are formed and are divided into dyads (pairs are seated at the corners of an imaginary square, approximately eight feet from the center). The octets will be known as "clusters." Each partnership is given a copy of the tally sheet and asked to study it. The facilitator reads the following directions aloud:

- (1) The name of this exercise is "Win As Much As You Can." You are to keep that goal in mind throughout the experience.
- (2) There are three key rules:
 - (a) You are not to confer with other members of your cluster unless you are given specific permission to do so. This prohibition applies to nonverbal as well as verbal communication.
 - (b) Each dyad must agree on a single choice for each round.
 - (c) You are to insure that other members of your cluster do not know your dyad's choice until you are instructed to reveal it.
- (3) There are ten rounds to this exercise. During each round you and your partner will have one minute to mark your choice for the round. Remember the rules. You may now take one minute to mark your choice for round 1.

- (a) (After a lapse of one minute) If you have not marked your choice, please raise your hand. (The facilitator should make sure all are finished but should keep the game moving.)
- (b) Share your decision with other members of your cluster.
- (c) Mark your score on the tally sheet for round to the payoff schedule.
- (d) Are there any questions about the scoring? (The response to all questions concerning the purpose of the activity should be: "The name of the game is 'Win As Much As You Can.'")

Rounds 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9 are conducted like round 1. The bonus rounds (5, 8, 10) are preceded by three minutes when dyads may discuss the exercise with other members of their cluster. After round 10, each cluster is asked to compute its net score (e.g., +18, -21, +6, and +2 = +5; it is possible for a cluster to score 100 if all dyads choose Y, the collaboration option in each round).

The following key points may be raised in the discussion:

- (1) Does the "You" in "Win As Much As You Can" mean you as a dyad or you as a cluster?
- (2) The effects of collaboration and competition should be considered.
- (3) How does the cluster's net score compare to the possible net score of 100?
- (4) How does this experience relate to other group situations?

For variations, the exercise can be carried out using money instead of points, process observers can be assigned to each cluster, or partnerships may be placed in separate rooms to minimize the chance of breaking the rules.

"Win As Much As You Can" Tally Sheet

Instructions: For each of ten rounds you and your partner will choose either an X or a Y. Each round's payoff depends on the pattern of choices made in your cluster. The payoff schedule is as follows:

-4 X's: Lose \$1.00 each	-1 X : Win \$3.00
	3 Y's: Lose \$1.00 each
-3 X's: Win \$1.00 each	
1 Y : Lose \$3.00	-4 Y's: Win \$1.00 each
-2 X's: Win \$2.00 each	
2 Y's: Lose \$2.00 each	

You are to confer with your partner in each round and make a joint decision. In rounds 5, 8, and 10 you and your partner may first confer with the other dyads in your cluster before making your joint decision, as before.

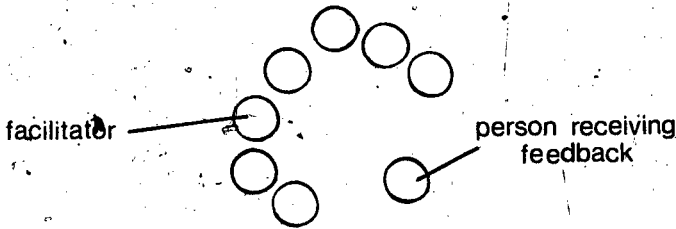
SCORECARD

BONUS ROUNDS	ROUND	YOUR CHOICE (CIRCLE)	CLUSTER'S PATTERN OF CHOICES	PAYOFF	BALANCE
	1	X Y	X Y		
	2	X Y	X Y		
	3	X Y	X Y		
	4	X Y	X Y		
payoff x 3	5	X Y	X Y		
	6	X Y	X Y		
	7	X Y	X Y		
payoff x 5	8	X Y	X Y		
	9	X Y	X Y		
payoff x 10	10	X Y	X Y		

Leveling: Giving and Receiving Adverse Feedback (Pfeiffer and Jones, *Structured Experiences*, Vol. I, pp. 79-81). The objectives of this exercise are to let participants compare their perceptions of how a group sees them with the actual feedback obtained from the group, to legitimize giving negative feedback, and to develop skills in giving negative feedback. Eight to ten participants constitute an optimal group, and approximately ten minutes per participant is necessary.

The facilitator explains the objectives, and participants are asked to write down the first names of all group members, beginning with the facilitator and proceeding clockwise. Names should be written down the left-hand side of the paper with a space between each name. Participants then write a short piece of adverse feedback about all members, including the facilitator and themselves. The following information should be given: (1) feedback will be given anonymously, (2) the feedback should consist of a list of three to five adjectives rather than a sentence, (3) each participant must comment on all others, and (4) this task should take about 15 minutes.

The facilitator collects the papers and the chairs are arranged as diagrammed below.



If there are no volunteers to be the first to receive feedback, one is designated. The format for this part of the exercise is as follows: (1) individuals are asked to anticipate the feedback they will receive and to share that with the group, (2) the comments about the individuals are read, (3) the individuals compare the similarities between the anticipated comments and the actual feedback, and (4) individuals are asked to share their feelings about receiving adverse feedback, and other members of the group are asked not to react either verbally or nonverbally to these feelings to avoid an overload of feedback. Each person who receives feedback is asked to name a successor to go "onstage." Finally, the facilitator leads a discussion about the exercise, focusing on the stated goals. For variation, the feedback may include positive data, the feedback may be given face to face, or each participant may be asked to leave the room while others attempt to decide on that individual's adverse feedback.

Conflict Fantasy: A Self-Examination (Submitted to Pfeiffer and Jones by Joan S. Stepsis. See 1974 *Annual Handbook*, pp. 22-23). The goals of this exercise are to facilitate awareness of strategies for dealing with conflict situations, to look at methods of responding to conflict, and to introduce the strategy of negotiation along with the skills necessary for successful negotiation. This exercise is intended for eight to forty participants and requires forty-five minutes.

The facilitator guides the group through a fantasy designed to aid in determination of individual conflict strategies. (The leader should feel free to embellish the fantasy, and to change the setting to meet the needs of the group.)

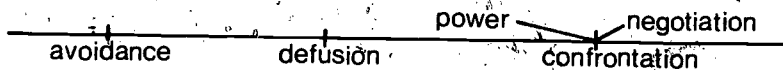
- I. *Getting Into the Fantasy:* Ask participants to get comfortable, close their eyes, and get in touch with themselves at the present moment (the sounds around them, the feel of their bodies, etc.).
- II. *The Fantasy:* The facilitator says, "You are walking down a street (or a hallway or a trail) and begin to see in the distance a familiar person. Suddenly you recognize that it is the person you are most in conflict with at the present moment. You realize that

you must decide quickly how to deal with this person. As he or she comes closer, a number of alternatives flash through your mind. . . . Decide right now what you will do and then imagine what will happen." The facilitator pauses to let the fantasy develop. "It's over now. The person is gone. How do you feel? What is your level of satisfaction with the way things went?"

III. *Getting Out of the Fantasy:* Participants are asked to begin returning to the present and then to open their eyes when they are ready.

Each member of the group spends five minutes writing (1) the alternative ways of acting considered, (2) the one chosen to act upon, and (3) the level of satisfaction felt concerning the imagined outcome. Then groups of three are formed to discuss the information that has been written, and one member of each group keeps a list of all types of alternatives mentioned during the discussion.

The whole group then reconvenes to share all the alternatives generated, and the suggestions are listed on newsprint for all to see. The facilitator displays a Continuum of Responses to Conflict Situations and explains it and then asks participants to sort the alternatives into appropriate strategy categories.



Finally, the facilitator leads a discussion of the level of satisfaction experienced by persons choosing the various strategies on the continuum. Volunteers may be asked to describe briefly their fantasy experiences. The fantasy descriptions may provide a basis for attempting to isolate and develop specific skills needed for problem-solving (win-win) negotiations. Further sessions may then focus on developing the ability to use empathic listening, descriptive statements, statements of behavioral objectives, and so forth.

Conflict Resolution: A Collection of Tasks (Pfeiffer and Jones, *Structured Experiences*, Vol. I, p. 70). This is a list of several activities which can be used to generate data about how groups resolve conflict. It is important that the leader be sensitive to how much data can emerge and that adequate time be allowed for processing.

1. *Lineup*. Ask participants to position themselves according to the order of their influence in the group. The person at the head of the group is most influential.
2. *Choosing a Family*. Everyone chooses a family from among the others present and explains the reasons for the choices made.
3. *Ambiguity*. An unstructured situation is set up by directions such as the following: "During the next thirty minutes the task of your group is to decide how it wants to spend its time."
4. *Similarities*. Participants develop a list of all possible pairs of group members and rank order them on similarity.
5. *Kelly's Triangle*. Everyone develops a list of all possible triads in the group and two people are listed as similar and the third is described as different from the other two.

Trust Games (Quaker Project, p. T-7). These are exercises intended to build trust and provide group members with the experience of affirmation. In the *Blindfold Trust Walk* people divide into pairs and one person leads the other (who is blindfolded) around the room, explaining where they are going, what to expect, and assuring that person that he or she will not bump into anything or fall. The person who is blindfolded must have complete trust in the leader. After a few minutes, the leader tells people to switch roles. When all participants have had a chance to be led and to lead, the group convenes to discuss how each experience felt. The *Trust Fall Game* has worked very well with young children (8-11). Eight to ten children stand close together in a circle and hold out their hands. One child, standing fairly rigid in the center, falls and is caught by those in the circle closest to the direction of his or her fall. The child is then either passed to others or stood upright again. This game develops cooperation, trust, and a sense of support for each participant, especially if each member is allowed to fall.

Simulations

The important defining characteristic of simulations is the representation of a *model* of some external reality through which the players interact in much the same way they would in reality. Thus, this defining characteristic of simulations as representative models of reality sharply contrasts simulation techniques with gaming. That a simulation is an *operating model* through which process and change may be observed is accepted by most scholars in the field. Simulations normally require several hours to complete.

- A. Jandt (*Conflict Resolution through Communication*, pp. 7-21) has devised a simulation which focuses on communication and

conflict. The simulation is an attempt to structure a situation in which intense social conflict is likely to occur. Based upon a real-life situation described in the January 30, 1970 issue of *Life*, the simulation requires the participants to interact as members of a major chemical company planning the construction of a new plant, highly skilled and professional people who share a common vacation area, activist students attending a state college, permanent residents of an offshore island, and elected government officials and chamber of commerce members. The participants must deal with the chemical company's plans to construct a chemical plant on Resort Island. This simulation is being used for instructional and research purposes.

B. Ruben and Budd (pp. 103-105) have designed an exercise to increase understanding of the processes of conflict, confrontation, and conflict resolution as they relate to individuals and groups trying to complete a task. The activity requires several hours. Classes are divided into two groups according to height or eye color. One group, "The Talls" or "The Blue Eyes," has a number of advantages. Each team is to assemble a puzzle. A prize is awarded to the team that finishes first.

C. David W. Zuckerman and Robert E. Horn's *The Guide to Simulations/Games for Education and Training* (Lexington, Massachusetts: Information Resources, Inc., 1973) lists and describes hundreds of simulations, many of which may be used for conflict studies. Some of the appropriate ones are listed below:

1. *Campus Crisis Game*, p. 362.
2. *Confrontation*, p. 363.
3. *Generation Gap*, p. 329.
4. *Human Relations*, p. 366.
5. *The Road Game*, p. 369.
6. *Simsoc*, p. 358.
7. *Starpower*, p. 414-415. (Especially recommended, *Starpower* creates a low mobility three-tiered society and stimulates discussions about the uses of power.)
8. *Strike*, p. 369.
9. *You! Crisis Resolution Game*, p. 362.

Films

- A. "Factory" available from Filmmakers Library, 290 West End Avenue, New York, New York 10023. Rental \$40.00. Documents the boredom and alienation of the factory worker.
- B. "The Prejudice Film" available from Motivational Media, 8271 Melrose Avenue, Suite 204, Los Angeles, California

90046. Rental \$35.00. Recommended for high school age. Reviews prejudice in our society.
- C. "Through Conflict to Negotiation" available from various rental libraries. Chronicles Saul Alinsky's work in Rochester, New York.
- D. "Twelve Angry Men" available from United Artists 16, 729 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019. This feature movie available for a rental of \$84.00 if no admission is charged. Pfeiffer and Jones, *1972 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*, pp. 13-16, has an exercise to compare the accuracy of predictions based upon group consensus-seeking to those made by individuals. The film itself is an excellent lead-in for discussions of groupthink.
- E. "Understanding Aggression" available from Prentice-Hall, Inc., Film Library, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632. Rental \$47.45. Examines aggression from a psychological perspective.

Complete Resource Packages

- A. Donald M. Snow and Stephen Kaylor, *Introduction to Game Theory*. New York: Learning Resources in International Studies, 1975. Recommended for use with "Introduction to Game Theory," a slide-tape presentation available at \$20.00 a copy from the Film Marketing Division, 1455 East Colvin Street, Syracuse, New York 13210. The estimated time for this learning package is one to two weeks.
- B. Anne Thompson Feraru, *International Conflict*. New York: Learning Resources in International Studies, 1974. \$2.00. Recommended for use with a slide-tape presentation, "Fights, Games and Debates," available from the Consortium for International Studies Education, 60 East 42nd Street, New York, New York 10017, for \$20.00. The estimated time for this learning package is three to six weeks.
- C. *A Preliminary Handbook: Children's Workshops in Creative Response to Conflict*, contains a series of activities designed especially for young children. Available from Quaker Project on Community Conflict, 133 West 14th Street, New York, New York, 10011.

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