

# Creating A Learning Culture

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

A SERIES OF LEARNERS' CONFERENCES

## Introduction

This manual of learners' conferences has been made possible because of funding from the **National Literacy Secretariat**. We thank the Secretariat for its continued support.

The conferences outlined in this manual make reference to "accountability groups." They are groups of eight to ten participants who are assigned one instructor. This instructor serves as a facilitator of the small group as well as a consultant to the individual members.

Throughout this manual we have referenced **Maximizing Potential**. This text is available at the following address:

**Brother T.I. Murphy Learning Resource Centre  
95 Water Street, St. John's, NF, A1C 1A5  
709-579-6606**

If you have any questions concerning this manual please feel free to contact Ms. Ann McCann at the above address.

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## **Introduction to learning**

Session 1 (Full community)

### ***Goal***

- To involve participants in a discussion on learning
- To invite participants to reflect on themselves as learners

### ***Format of session***

#### ***1. Community building exercise***

"A look back"

Invite participants to think about the past two weeks of learning by considering the following questions:

- What was one success that you encountered?
- What was one challenge that you encountered?

Participants are asked to share their responses with the person next to them.

#### ***2. Description of main activity***

The facilitator asks participants to consider that all of us have come to this place with stories about learning. The following questions are presented:

- What is one message that you have about learning?
- If you were to give your learning story a movie title what would it be?

Participants share their responses with the person next to them. Participants are then asked to share their responses with the larger group.

"Choosing a partner"

Participants are asked to move into the middle of the room. Each participant is directed to mingle throughout the room and non-verbally choose a partner. When everyone has chosen a partner each pair is asked to discuss their experience. Participants are then asked to return to their seats. A community discussion of this experience is then prompted using the following questions:

- What was it like to choose someone?
- What were your fears about this exercise?
- Was there any excitement about this exercise?

The facilitator then asks the following questions to the entire group:

- How was your reaction to this experience related to how you learn?
- Is there a relationship between how you approached this exercise and how you approach your academic learning? Why or why not?

### ***3. Closure of session***

The facilitator summarizes by presenting the following points:

- We all have leaning stories.
- We all have the opportunity to create new learning stories by taking what has been positive and building on it.
- We have control and choice over how we learn
- Learning is an active process.

Participants are asked to share one word with the large group that summarizes their experience of today's activities.

### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

Participants are asked to become aware of the internal messages they give themselves during an average day of learning. They are asked to record these messages and bring them to the next session.

## **Introduction to learning styles**

Session 2.1 (Full community)

### ***Goal***

- To define leaning styles
- To discuss the implication of identification of individual learning styles

### ***Format of session***

#### ***1. Community building exercise***

Participants are asked to share the messages that they recorded since the previous session. The impact of these messages is discussed with consideration of the following questions:

- What are the effects of positive messages?
- What are the effects of negative messages?
- What can we do to promote the development of positive messages?

#### ***2. Description of main activity***

##### "Learning styles"

Participants are asked to respond to the following questions:

- How would you define learning styles?
- What are the different types of learning styles?
- Why is it important to be aware of your learning style?

Facilitator summarizes this discussion by defining learning styles, listing the types of learning styles and by confirming that we all learn differently.

##### "Alien exercise"

The following scenario is presented to the full group:

Imagine that an alien has come to earth and you are its guide. You have been assigned the task of teaching the alien one thing about the planet Earth. Consider the following questions:

- What would you teach it?
- How would you teach it?

A discussion on the variety of lessons and techniques is facilitated.

"Factors that contribute to learning style"

The facilitator presents material on the factors that contribute to learning styles as well as the characteristics of the three main learning styles. (See Maximizing Potential)

### ***3. Closure of session***

To summarize this session the facilitator invites the participants to consider how their instructional approach to teaching the alien is related to learning styles.

### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

Participants are asked to consider what is their possible learning style and what factors contribute to this.

## **Learning style identification**

Session 2.2 (Accountability groups)

### ***Goal***

- To have participants identify their learning styles.

### ***Format of session***

#### ***1. Community building exercise***

Participants are asked to share what they think their learning style may be and why they think this.

#### ***2. Description of main activity***

"Learning style checklists"

Participants complete the style checklist with the assistance of their group leader. (See Maximizing Potential)

#### ***3. Closure of session***

During the week that immediately follows this session, the leader of each accountability group meets individually with the participants to review the result of the learning style checklist.

#### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

Following the individual interview participants are asked to consider how this information may be used by them to develop an individual program plan.

## **Development of participant-driven support**

Session 2.3 (Individual interview)

### ***Goal***

- To assist the participant with the development of an individual support plan

### ***Format of session***

The accountability group leaders conduct an individual interview with each of their participants. The following guidelines can be used:

- Facilitator asks the participant if he/she is aware of his/her learning style preference.
- Facilitator discusses with the participant the results of his/her checklist.
- Facilitator reviews the characteristics of style preference with participant.
- A discussion occurs on how these characteristics apply to participant.
- Facilitator discusses with participant his/her responses to questions concerning current learning sessions.
- Facilitator reviews strategies to complement various learning styles as outlined in Maximizing Potential.
- A discussion occurs on which strategies are applicable and practical for the participant.
- An action plan for implementing and exploring selected strategies is developed.

### ***Follow-up suggestions***

Participant is encouraged to record any observations of him/herself as learner during the upcoming week.

## **Building supportive community**

Session 3 (Full community)

### ***Goal***

- To enhance a spirit of cooperation and support
- To consider how we support or do not support one another

### ***Format of session***

#### ***1. Community building exercise***

"A sense of goose"

This story from the book Chicken Soup for the Soul is read to the full community. The participants are then asked to share one word or phrase that they connected with from the story.

The following questions are then presented:

- What goal do we have in common as a group?
- How do we as participants and staff build a support system to help each other achieve this goal?

#### ***2. Description of main activity***

The facilitator is to consider the following points when leading these activities: Community development requires the following:

- a sense of each person
- knowledge of the effects of judgement and ridicule
- a need for cooperation
- creating a common vision

"Personal space"

Participants select a partner and stand at opposite ends of the room from one another. One person begins to walk slowly towards his/her partner. The stationary partner raises his/her hand in a "stop" message when he/she feels that his/her personal space is about to be invaded.

The group then process this with a discussion of personal space highlighting individual differences and ways to help each other feel safe.

### "Personal needs"

Participants are asked to turn to the person standing next to them and share one need that they have as learner. The group then processes this by having a discussion on needs and the role of compromise.

### "Hi-Low"

A sticker with "H" (for High) or "L" (for Low) marked on one side is placed on each participant's forehead. They are asked not to look to see which they have. They are then told that they are attending a cocktail party in which they have to mingle throughout the room socializing with the others. However, they have to snub those people with an "L" - who are of low class.

The group processes this with a discussion using the following questions:

- How did it feel like to be "L" or "H"?
- How long did it take to discover what you were?
- How did it feel to be snubbed?
- How did it feel to snub?
- How does such competition effect our daily learning?

### "Colored dots"

A colored sticker is placed on each participant's forehead (four or five different colors in all). They are asked not to look to see which color they have. They are then told that they are attending a cocktail party in which they are not to speak but have to get into their color-coded groups. They are instructed that they can be as creative and as helpful as necessary but are not allowed to verbally communicate.

The group processes this with a discussion using the following questions:

- How did it feel not being able to speak?
- How did you feel when someone offered you help?
- Is the use of language essential in helping one another?
- How does such cooperation effect our daily learning?

### ***3. Closure of session***

"Building a common vision" Each participant is given a small cardboard rectangle cut to resemble a brick. The "bricks" are of varying colors. On one wall the following phrase is posted: "A supportive (name of school) is.... ". The participants are asked to complete this statement on their brick. Each participant is asked to post it on the wall under the phrase. The bricks are left on the wall for a few weeks for everyone to see.

### ***4. Follow-up suggestion***

Participants are asked to consider what they can contribute to building a supportive community. They will be asked to share this in the next session.

## **Writing academic histories**

Session 4 (Full community)

### ***Goal***

- Introduce self case history analysis
- Participant identification of academic strengths and needs

### ***Format of session***

#### ***1. Community building exercise***

"Finding personal space"

Have the room set up with tables and chairs for as many participants as you expect. When they come into the room tell them to find a space where they feel comfortable. Tell them that they are free to ask anyone to move and/or to move any furniture that they wish so that they feel comfortable. When they have completed this task give them the attached journal sheet. Participants are to complete the sheet and then share responses with the full community.

#### ***2. Description of main activity***

"Writing academic histories"

The facilitator begins a discussion by introducing the following points:

- We all have an academic history (i.e., places, teachers, students, curriculum, etc.)
- Our history has implications for our future learning.
- We must reflect on this history to discover the messages we have acquired about our ability to learn.
- Our history provides us with an opportunity to identify academic strengths and needs.

The facilitator presents participants and instructors with the attached "Writing academic history" questionnaire. All are given time to individually complete this task.

Following completion the facilitator encourages a discussion in which experiences are shared and messages are identified. These messages are to be charted.

### ***3. Closure of session***

Participants are reminded that they were assigned a task in the previous session on which they were to consider what they can contribute to building a supportive community. They are asked to share their responses.

### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

Participants are asked to choose one negative message from their academic history and rewrite it in a positive manner.

## **Community building exercise**

Journal questions:

1. What feelings did you experience as you attempted to find your space?
2. Why did you pick this area?
3. What was easy/enjoyable about this task?
4. What was difficult/challenging about this task?
5. Give an example from your daily life at the Centre where you are able to have your personal space.
6. Give an example from your daily life at the Centre where you allow someone to take away your personal space.

### **Writing academic history**

1. Name every teacher that you can recall and state what you remember about them.
2. Which school did you like the most? Why?
3. Which school did you like the least? Why?
4. Which subject did you like the most? Why?
5. Which subject did you like the least? Why?
6. What was one of your most positive school experiences?
7. What was one of your most negative school experiences?
8. Which school rules did you find particularly difficult to obey?
9. How did you feel about homework and studying?
10. What things about school gave you problems?
11. What did you enjoy about school?
12. What role did your family play in your academic history?
13. How important is education in your family?
14. Read over your answers to the above questions. Write three statements that summarize this information.

## **Identifying obstacles to community**

Session 5.1 (Full community & Accountability groups)

### *Goal*

- To identify obstacles to community
- To identify solutions for these obstacles

### *Format of session*

#### *1. Community building exercise*

"Team art"

Ask the participants to form in groups of two with someone whom they do not know well. Give each team two colored crayons and one sheet of paper. Inform them that there is to be no verbal or written communication from this point forward. Give the direction that when the music begins, they are to work together to draw one picture. They are free to develop whatever they want. Remind them of the guideline of nonverbal communication. When ready, begin playing loud background music of contemporary selections. Allow 10 minutes to complete their drawing.

The facilitator leads a discussion with the following questions:

- What made this task difficult?
- How did the background music affect your work?
- What skills did you use to accomplish this task?

#### *2. Description of main activity*

The full group breaks into accountability groups with each group leader introducing the attached "Obstacles to community" questionnaire. Each participant is given ten minutes to complete this exercise. Following completion a small group discussion is held where responses are shared. Each group is asked to assign a recorder to chart the group's feedback.

The recorder is asked to keep the chart of the group's feedback and bring it to the next session for presentation and sharing.

### ***3. Closure of session***

Participants are reminded that in the previous session they were asked to rewrite one negative message from their academic history into a positive message. They are now asked to share this.

### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

The next full session will complete part two of this topic. Participants are encouraged to discuss solutions that they proposed during this session.

## Obstacles to community

### Accountability Group Questions

1. What happens when people live/work in a community where they do not feel supported?
2. Give one example from your experience at this learning centre where you are supported.
3. Give one example from your experience at this learning centre where you are not supported.
4. There can be many obstacles to learning. For each category below list two obstacles from your experience.
  - (a) obstacles that you create
  - (b) obstacles that other participants create
  - (c) obstacles that instructors create
  - (d) obstacles that the building creates
  - (e) obstacles that your life-style creates
  - (f) obstacles that your family/friends create
  - (g) other
5. For each of the above obstacles provide one possible solution.
  - (a) obstacles that you create
  - (b) obstacles that other participants create
  - (c) obstacles that instructors create
  - (d) obstacles that the building creates
  - (e) obstacles that your life-style creates
  - (f) obstacles that your family/friends create
  - (g) other

## **Removing obstacles to community**

Session 5.2 (Full community)

### ***Goal***

- To establish a plan to effectively deal with previously identified obstacles to community

### ***Format of session***

#### ***1. Community building exercise***

"Emotional temperature"

Participants are asked to think of a number on a scale of 1 to 10 that would describe how they feel at the present time. A score of 1 denotes an exceptionally low mood and 10 would mean an exceptionally high mood. In turn, participants are given the opportunity to say their first name, the number that they chose and explain in a few sentences why they chose that number. Three rules are established:

- You can pass.
- Show respect for all responses.
- Respect your own privacy.

The facilitator leads a discussion of the activity and ensures that the following points are made:

- We come to the same gathering with common goals and expectations.
- We bring varied experiences and needs.
- We bring different feelings.
- We need to be able to voice our needs to reach our goals. We need to listen to the needs of others.
- We need to respect individual differences.

#### ***2. Description of main activity***

The facilitator charts the answers obtained in the accountability groups during the previous session. The facilitator can process the first three questions by asking the recorder of each group to share a few of the responses.

The answers to questions 4 and 5 are to be charted on two large sheets of paper which are posted in the front of the room. They are titled "Obstacles" and "Solutions." The facilitator records all suggestions presented from the recorder of each group. The list is then read to the full group and time is given for people to make additions.

The facilitator then focuses the group on the "Solutions" sheet and discusses the following questions:

- Is this feasible?
- Whose responsibility is it?
- When should it be done?
- How should it be done?

Note: Caution is given for the pace of this activity. The facilitator may choose to carry this activity into another session or assign tasks to smaller groups. It is important that all identified plans of action be approved by the whole community. Groups are encouraged to prioritize action plans as time may not permit the resolution of all issues.

### ***3. Closure of session***

The session closes with a repeat of the opening exercise, "Emotional temperature." The same three rules apply.

### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

The facilitator is encouraged to ensure that everyone is aware of all action plans.

## **Expanding participant-driven support plans**

Session 6 (Individual interviews)

### ***Goal***

- To continue with the development of individual support plans
- To introduce and explore study strategies

### ***1. Format of session***

Participants meet individually with their accountability group leader to review the following questions:

1. What have you observed about yourself as a learner?
2. What time management skills do you currently use?
3. What organizational skills do you currently use?
4. What are your present study habits?
5. How do you prepare for tests?

Following this discussion each participant is given "The learning skills" checklist to complete. (See Maximizing Potential). Once finished they review the findings in each section with the leader.

### ***2. Follow-up suggestions***

Participants are asked to decide on one skill from one of the sections that they would like to strengthen or develop within the next week. 19

## **Time management and organization**

Session 7 (Full community)

### ***Goal***

- To introduce the topic of time management and organization.

### ***Format of session***

#### ***1. Community building exercise***

Participants are asked, in turn, to state their first name and one-word that describes how they feel about homework and or studying. They can use a word that someone else used if they choose. The facilitator then leads a discussion that explores common themes. Discussion is also held on the importance of study and completing homework and the skills necessary to manage time.

#### ***2. Description of main activity***

Each participant is given a blank time grid and is asked to take a few minutes to reflect on the week that has just passed. The grid is completed individually. Participants are asked to share with the people around them the patterns in their schedules. The facilitator then introduces the concepts of three types of time: fixed, free, and study. Participants are asked to review their grid and identify these three time concepts in their schedule. Discussion is held on the role of routine and habit in our schedules.

The following strategies are presented and discussed for consideration:

- Scheduling regular study sessions as fixed time (1.5-2 hours per school night)
- Use of daily agendas and calendars
- Monitoring progress and tallying achievement
- The use of "To do" lists
- Peer coaches
- Study wheels
- Goal ladders

Note: The facilitator is encouraged to research this subject and use materials and statistics from a variety of books on related topics.

### ***3. Closure of session***

Participants are asked to join their hands, crossing their fingers in prayer fashion. They are then asked to "freeze" their hands and observe how the fingers are joined and how comfortable and natural this is to them. They are asked to reflect on how often they hold their hands in this fashion and the total number of times they have done so in their lives, stressing the role of habit in doing such. They are then asked to change the thumbs, switching positions, with the one on bottom now taking top place. Participants are asked how this feels. The point is made that change, no matter how small, is uncomfortable. The connection is made to time management and the routines in our lives.

### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

Participants are asked to reflect on the various strategies outlined as well as to engage in self-observation on their current time management/organizational skill usage. Participants are also encouraged to observe the skills of one another and their instructors and converse with them concerning this.

## Memory and how to study

Session 8 (Full Community)

### **Goal**

- To introduce the topic of human memory and study strategies

### *Format of session*

#### *1. Community building exercise*

Participants are asked to select a partner and decide who will be the speaker and who will be the listener. They are told that they will switch roles in a few minutes. The speaker has one minute to tell the listener everything he/she did last week. The listener is told that he/she has one minute to repeat exactly what was said.

They are then told to switch roles. This time the speaker is given one minute to tell the listener everything that he/she can recall about fifth grade. The listener has one minute to repeat back exactly what was said.

The facilitator processes this activity with a discussion that includes the following points:

- Notice the difference between recalling last week as opposed to several years ago.
- The accuracy and reliability of our memory varies.

#### *2. Description of main activity*

Memory is introduced as three parts: sensory input, short term, and long term. Samples from the presenter's life are used to illustrate each part with participants being asked to contribute as well. Focus is given to learning via all our senses, the transient nature of short-term memory, and the goal of moving things into long-term memory via regular review.

Homework is then described as doing at home the work that was not done in school, while studying is defined as a process of preventing forgetting from occurring. The facilitator makes the point that statistics show that regular revision results in information being moved into long-term memory.

Specific memory strategies are then introduced and taught. These include the following:

skimming text	W5
applying concept	developing study sheets
memorization	linking
key words	chunking
flashcards	mapping
acronyms	acrostics
highlighters	PRQT

Note: The facilitator is encouraged to research this subject and use materials and statistics from a variety of books on related topics.

### ***3. Closure of session***

The facilitator closes the session by questioning, for purposes of reviewing concepts taught.

### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

The concepts introduced in this session can be reinforced in various classes by the instructors. The accountability groups can facilitate discussion on this and process the usage of memory strategies. Participants are encouraged to discuss and explore these strategies.

## **Test taking**

Session 9 (Full Community)

### ***Goal***

- To introduce test-taking strategies

### ***Format of session***

#### ***1. Community building exercise***

Participants are asked to identify which words surface when they hear the words "test" or "exams." The facilitator charts all answers given.

The activity is then processed around the amount of anxiety surrounding tests and the commonality of views.

#### ***2. Description of main activity***

A quick review of the previous session is held, with emphasis placed on memory and studying as an "input" process. Specific strategies are reviewed in a "testing" format. Discussion is held on the effectiveness of regular review and the use of memory strategies. The point is made that if the "input" process is followed regularly, test taking becomes a process of facilitating "output."

Participants are asked to think about figure skating competitions such as the Olympics. They are asked if they, as viewers, can clearly distinguish who is the best skater. The point is made that all those who get to compete are top- notch skaters of near equal ability. Who then walks out with the gold medal? The answer is the ones who are able to handle the anxiety and let themselves demonstrate the skills and knowledge that they have attained. A comparison is then made with test taking. Test-taking strategies are then introduced and discussed using the attached sheets. Students are given handout copies.

#### ***3. Closure of session***

The facilitator closes the session by questioning, for purposes of reviewing the concepts taught.

#### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

The concepts introduced in this session can be reinforced in various classes by the instructors. The accountability groups can facilitate discussion on this and process the usage of test-taking strategies. Participants are encouraged to discuss and explore these strategies.

## TEST TAKING

### -Test Preparation:

- Budgeting Time
- Regular revision
- Eat & sleep properly
- Manage stress

### - Predicting Questions:

- Take good notes
- Look for possible questions
  - old tests
  - notes
  - work sheets and assignments
  - chapter review
  - ask the teacher
- Identify teacher testing patterns
- Review course outline
- Ask for test outline
- Make up mock exam
- Share with peers

### - Test Management:

- Get a good nights sleep
- Arrive early
- Be positive, hang out with positive people
- Bring sweater and candy or gum
- Read entire test, marking easy ones
- Use study wheel, based on points
- Outline notes
- Follow directions and highlight keywords
- Start with easy ones
- Don't give up
- Answer everything
- Manage stress (breathe, visualize, affirmations)
- Make choices quickly and do
- Include outline for essay questions
- Leave extra space at the end of each essay
- Always review

## **Conflict resolution**

Session 10.1 (Full Community)

### ***Goal***

- To introduce the topic of conflict resolution

### ***Format of session***

#### ***1. Community building exercise***

Participants are quickly divided into three groups by counting. Each group is assigned to a table where they are given a large sheet of paper and a marker. One sheet asks the question, "What do children fight over?" The second sheet asks, "What do adults fight over?", while the third sheets asks, "What do world leaders fight over?" Groups are encouraged to chart their answers on the sheets. They are each given five minutes to complete. Once finished they are asked to post and present their answers. The activity is then processed by exploring the common themes, identifying that we all fight over the same type of things.

In the large group the facilitator then asks participants to think about the last time that they became really angry. They are encouraged to get in touch with that for a few seconds. Participants are asked to outline how they reacted to that anger. Facilitator charts responses. The activity is then processed by identifying the common themes, stating that we all react the same way, regardless of age or position.

#### ***2. Description of main activity***

A brainstorming session is then held on everything that is known about conflict. The facilitator charts responses and then presents an overhead on the three components of conflict: relationship, emotion and issue.

Participants are asked to select a partner for the next activity. They are instructed to think back to the last time they were angry and to reconnect with the feelings of that event. While still thinking about that time, they are asked to face their partner and join hands by pressing and holding their palms and fingers together. They gain a stance in which they are balanced. Without speaking they are asked to push against each other's hands, without breaking the connection, as they think about and feel the emotions of that anger. They are given 1-2 minutes to complete this. They are then told to stop and to try and talk out their differences in a peaceful manner immediately. Participants will find it difficult to discuss the issue while the anger is stinging within their bodies. The activity is processed on the basis of the three parts of conflict stated above, emphasizing their significance even in an activity in which they theoretically had no conflict.

### ***3. Closure of session***

The session is closed with the facilitator slowly drawing two footprints on a flip chart encouraging participants to guess what they are drawing. When guessing has stopped the facilitator asks what footprints have to do with conflict' The session is closed with a discussion on the importance of empathy in conflict resolution.

### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

Participants are asked to recall experiences of conflict and how they handled these experiences.

## Conflict resolution

Session 10.2 (Full Community)

### *Goal*

- To continue with the topic of conflict resolution

### *Format of session*

#### *1. Community building exercise*

A brainstorming session is held on the skills required to deal effectively with conflict. The facilitator charts all answers on a flip chart.

Participants are asked to select a partner and obtain a chair and identify who will be the speaker and who will be the listener. They are informed that they will switch roles momentarily. They are then instructed to place the chairs back to back so that when they sit, their backs will be against one another. Chairs must be placed so that one person can see the flip chart and the other cannot see. The person who cannot see is given a piece of paper and a pencil. The facilitator draws an object on a chart and the speaker must describe to the listener what the object looks like. The listeners, without being able to ask any questions are to draw what they hear. They are given a few minutes to complete it.

They are then told to switch positions and the exercise is repeated with a new image being drawn by the facilitator. This time, however, the listener is allowed to ask questions engage in a conversation. The activity is then processed with a discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of one-way and two-way communication. It is then linked with conflict revolution.

#### *2. Description of main activity*

The facilitator presents the attached information on "I-messages." Participants are asked to form two concentric circles. Using any personal experience participants are instructed to practice using "I statements." Each pair is to choose a listener and a speaker. The speakers make an "I statement" and the listeners repeat what they heard. They switch roles and repeat the task.

#### *3. Closure of session*

The facilitator leads a discussion of the main activity for the purpose of an overall summary.

#### *4. Follow-up suggestions*

Participants are asked to identify one person in their personal life with whom they can practice using "I-statements" during the following week.

## Conflict resolution

Session 10.3 (Full Community)

### *Goal*

- To heighten our awareness of how we deal with conflict
- To explore conflict resolution strategies

### *Format of session*

#### *1. Community building exercise*

The facilitator leads a discussion on conflict resolution through questioning. The questions may relate to the following points:

- Signs that indicate that we are losing control, such as tense muscles, tight stomach, louder voice, etc.
- When we acknowledge these signs it is time to "stop and think" about what will happen if we stay in this situation. It is time to break eye contact and walk away.
- People will try to antagonize us for various reasons.
- It is important not to give away our power to anyone.

#### *2. Description of main activity*

Before this session begins the facilitator obtains a volunteer to assist with a role-play. For the role-play any situation involving conflict can be used. At this point the role-play is performed out in front of the entire community twice. The first time inappropriate strategies are used and the second time appropriate strategies are used. The facilitator then leads a discussion to process this activity.

The larger community is then invited to break into groups of three. They are given the attached scenarios to role play. During their role-play one person observes while the other two perform. Each role-play is completed twice, as above. A general discussion is held after each role-play, with the observers giving feedback.

#### *3. Closure of session*

The small groups return to the larger community to discuss their experiences.

#### *4. Follow-up suggestions*

Participants are asked to record their response to two situations of conflict that they experience in the days after this session.

## Scenarios

1. During class you ask the instructor a question. Another student says, "Geez, what a stupid question." This is not the first time that this student has made such a comment and you feel it is an obvious attempt to put you down. Other students are watching for your reaction.
2. You are downtown with some friends and midway through the evening a person accuses you (in a very aggressive tone) of trying to seduce his/her partner. You know that this accusation is accurate.
3. You are in the ticket line for a concert that is about to be "sold-out." You are nearing the booth and suddenly someone jumps in the line ahead of you. You say, "Excuse me, but you just skipped the line." They turn to you and say, "What are you going to do about it?"
4. You are sharing an apartment with a roommate who is very messy and seldom helps with the chores. You have tried discussing this, but it has had no effect. After returning from a weekend away you find the apartment in a complete mess. It appears that a party was held the night before. Your roommate is watching television.
5. You are relaxing at home and watching your favorite television program when suddenly your brother takes the remote and changes channels. You voice your objection but he pretends not to hear you.
6. You are day dreaming while stopped at an intersection. Suddenly the person in the car behind begins to blow the horn to alert you that the light has changed to green. You notice that the person is also shaking his/her fist. You start to go but the car stalls. When you get it going the light has changed. The person behind you is getting out of his/her car!

## **Evaluating personal and academic progress**

Session 11 (Full community)

### ***Goal***

- To explore a process for continuous personal and academic progress

### ***Format of session***

#### ***1. Community building exercise***

The facilitator invites the group to individually share what they perceive as the most important quality they need to make their learning successful. The facilitator records all responses on the flip-chart. The facilitator then translates these qualities into a list of required skills. Discussion is held on this list.

#### ***2. Description of main activity***

Participants are asked to break into accountability groups where they explore possible ways of maintaining personal and academic progress. A recorder is selected for each group.

Groups return to full community to share findings. Facilitator charts all responses.

#### ***3. Closure of activity***

The facilitator leads a discussion that reviews the sessions held during the year. Participants are encouraged to share how these sessions have impacted on them as learners.

#### ***4. Follow-up suggestions***

Participants are encouraged to meet with their accountability group leader to discuss their participant driven support plans as it relates to future learning goals.