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Human Behaviour I Workbook for Public Safety Communicators

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Answering the Call

HUMAN BEHAVIOUR I

WORKBOOK

FOR PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATORS





Human Behaviour I Workbook for Public Safety Communicators by

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Summary of Learning

This course has no official final exam. You will submit a term paper referred to as the Summary of Learning (or SL). You will be required to answer questions about what you learned throughout the course and to self-assess your cognitive and emotional growth. The following guide to the Summary of Learning is based on original work developed by Paul Peel.

Instead of a final exam or research paper, you are required to provide a Summary of Learning at the end of Human Behaviour I. The SL allows you to provide closure to and discern meaning from the total course. You will state tentative conclusions you have reached and indicate ideas and areas for future study.

For the **Summary of Learning**, you answer two questions:

“What happened?” and “Now what?”

The quality of your SL will be a major criterion for your grade, which accounts for 20 per cent of your final mark.

To progress with your SL, try sitting in the place where you usually study **Human Behaviour** and go through your notes, journal, assignments and projects. Be especially aware of your first impressions of the course. Remember your first day in class, and then move forward in time until you reach the present, attending to significant learning events as they unfolded. Sketch out a timeline or mind map of these events (answering “What happened?”) and do a rough draft of your SL.

In your SL, you will be looking at three areas of growth and change:

1. Physical Growth and Change
2. Cognitive Growth and Change
3. Affective Growth and Change

Identify how your behaviour has been affected by this course. The following guidelines may give you ideas of what to examine in your SL. Do not restrict yourself to these lists.

- Examine those aspects that reflect your growth and change (“What happened?”) and indicate possible further improvement, study and learning (“Now what?”).
- Give clear, specific examples to support your statements by relating an experience (who, what, when, where and how) that reflects this change.
- You may use graphs, charts, figures, pictures, diagrams, and so on.
- Focus on how you have changed. This answers “What happened?”

You probably will discover areas in which no change occurred. This indicates a possible new set of goals which answers “Now what?”

A. “What happened?” and “Now what?” regarding *PHYSICAL growth and change*:

This area is traditionally under-emphasized. Give examples to make the changes and new goals meaningful. You could include:

- your ability to handle fear,
- your ability to sit and relax,
- your sensitivity to your body’s cycles and needs,
- your breathing patterns, and
- your voice patterns.

Your ability to concentrate and ignore distractions (indicated by the length or ease of study times) relates to *cognitive* growth.

- Has your awareness of body processes changed?
- Has your awareness of nonverbal behaviour changed?

B. “What happened?” and “Now what?” regarding *COGNITIVE growth and change*:

Examine the intellectual aspects of your experience in this course. Review important information and your understanding of the ideas you encountered. Since this self-assessment reflects your journey toward

knowledge and understanding, state what you do not understand, as well as what you do understand.

Suggested Topic Areas (*give examples*)

- List new terms you have encountered. Specify how the use of these terms has increased your knowledge and understanding of human behaviour.
- Which ideas do you understand best? How have these ideas influenced your understanding of yourself and others?
- Which psychological or philosophical principles have you acquired? Give an example of an application.
- Which psychological research areas interest you the most? Why?
- What psychological interpretations do you use to help yourself or your friends and relatives to understand behaviour?
- What issues did you discuss with friends or family? Were there books or movies you could understand in a new way?
- What are your favorite terms and concepts from this course? Give examples of how you use them (speaking? writing?).
- How did your ability to describe and evaluate yourself and others change?
- How did your performance change during this course (for example, study habits, ability to read professional literature, use of reference materials, cooperative learning, discussions with others, class presentations)?
- How did you use visual, auditory, and kinesthetic senses to help you reach your goals?
- In which areas of human behaviour would you like to continue learning? How might knowledge of human behaviour be useful to you in the future?

C. “What happened?” and “Now what?” regarding *AFFECTIVE growth and change*:

Examine your attitudes, values, emotions, and social patterns, especially as they relate to course experiences.

Suggested Topic Areas (*give examples*)

- How has your ability to work with others changed? In what ways do you now work differently with males and females, older people and younger people, relatives and friends?
- Which of your values have you questioned as a result of information received through this course?
- How has your awareness of your feelings changed? Give specific examples.
- How does your attitude toward your instructor affect your performance in this course? In what ways have you let your instructor influence you? What do you value or criticize in your instructor’s style of teaching?
- How was your attendance, punctuality, participation? How do these reflect your attitudes toward the course?
- Which classes did you dislike? What distracted you the most? (Were they inner or outer distractions?)
- How involved did you let yourself become in class?
- How has your motivation or discipline changed?
- How much contact did you make with others in the class? Give examples of your relationships with other students in the course.
- What did you like best/least about the approach to understanding human behaviour in this course? How did you let this course help you understand yourself better?
- Now what? How will you use what you learned?

Personal Journal

Throughout the term you will take notes and reminders in a journal of things you want to comment on in your SL. A simple and effective way of remembering how you felt is to keep a personal journal. The journal is **not the SL**, but just records those things you wish to comment on in summary form at the end of the term. Without this journal, you may have a hard time remembering what happened on any given day. Despite having notes from class, you may forget how the lecture or discussions affected you. You may also forget how surprised you were by a classmate's reaction to a situation.

After every class, you should make a few notes on what you observed or how you felt about the topics we discussed. This will help you with your paper at the end of the term. The following pages have a list of affective descriptors you may use in writing your journal. You will also be able to observe how your views and your perceptions have changed from the start of the year.

Your entries do not have to be long. There are no right or wrong comments. They do not have to be politically correct, but you should not make bigoted or sexist remarks. Look at problem situations and ask yourself, "How did I deal with the problem that I noted? Did I practise good communications skills and come to a resolution with my adversary?"

You will be required to submit your journal twice during the term. The instructor will probably ask you to reflect on a controversial point, and then to write down your reflections in your journal. There are no right or wrong answers.

This will be a very easy 10 per cent to earn for your final grade.

Examples of journal questions:

- "Can you learn in a class that is continually being disrupted?"
- "Does gender make a difference in how good a 9-1-1 communicator is?"
- "Do you think dress codes should be enforced? Where? When?"

- “Does watching crime and action films cause people to become more violent?”
- “Should Canada have capital punishment?”
- “Can you use this theory of _____ in your personal life?”

Affective Descriptors List

HAPPY	SAD	ANGRY	AFRAID	CONFUSED
Alive	Bad	Accused	Afraid	Anxious
Cheerful	Blue	Agitated	Anxious	At an impasse
Content	Defeated	Annoyed	Apprehensive	Bewildered
Delighted	Dejected	Bitter	Awkward	Bothered
Ecstatic	Demoralized	Blamed	Burdened	Caught
Elated	Depressed	Defiant	Desperate	Dazed
Encouraged	Despairing	Disgusted	Disturbed	Disorganized
Excited	Despondent	Enraged	Dread	Doubtful
Fortunate	Discouraged	Frustrated	Exposed	Fearful
Glad	Disheartened	Furious	Fearful	Floundering
Good	Dismal	Hostile	Impatient	Foggy
Gratified	Dismayed	Incensed	Insecure	Lost
High	Distressed	Infuriated	Nervous	Mixed-up
Joyful	Down	Irritated	Panicky	Perplexed
Lively	Downcast	Lost	Pessimistic	Plagued
Moved	Forlorn	Mad	Pressured	Puzzled
Optimistic	Gloomy	Outraged	Restless	Shaken up
Overjoyed	Glum	Pained	Shaky	Stuck
Pleased	Grieved	Perturbed	Strained	Torn
Relieved	Hopeless	Pissed off	Tense	Trapped
Satisfied	Hurt	Provoked	Threatened	Troubled
Tickled	In the dumps	Regretful	Timid	Uncertain
Up	Listless	Remorseful	Troubled	Unclear
		Revengeful	Uneasy	Uncomfortable
		Seething	Uneasy	Undecided
		Sick	Unsure	Wondering
		Somber	Upset	Worried
		Sorrowful		
		Sorry		
		Spiteful		
		Troubled		
		Unhappy		
		Upset		

Affective Descriptors List, Continued

CAPABLE	HOPELESS	DISGUSTED	SURPRISED	WARM
Able	Abandoned	Appalled	Amazed	Appreciated
Bold	Blocked	Burned-up	Astonished	Benevolent
Competent	Burdened	Cut-off	Astounded	Calm
Confident	Defenseless	Devastated	Awakened	Cared for
Coping	Devastated	Fed-up	Baffled	Cherished
Durable	Disillusioned	Fuming	Bewildered	Comforted
Efficient	Discouraged	Incensed	Disbelief	Consoled
Energetic	Given up	Irate	Embarrassed	Earnest
Managing	Helpless	Nauseated	Shocked	Empathetic
Potent	Hindered	Offended	Stunned	Fond
Powerful	Impotent	Repulsed	Surprised	Good
Prepared	Incapable	Revolted	Taken aback	Important
Proficient	Insecure	Sickened		Important
Protective	Overextended			Interested
Proud	Overwhelmed			Kind
Ready	Powerless			Loved
Reassured	Pressured			Needed
Responsible	Resigned			Nurtured
Safe	Shaky			Pleasant
Secure	Small			Protected
Self-directed	Soft			Reassured
Skillful	Stressed			Soothed
Super	Suffering			Special
Sure	Suffering			Supported
	Unloved			Sympathetic
	Unsafe			Tender
	Unsure			Touched
				Trusted

Library Lab

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS

Name(s): _____ Course: _____

Instructor _____ Date: _____

1. CATALOGUE

The library in your school or college has an on-line catalogue that contains listings of books, periodicals, newspapers and audiovisual materials.

Choose one of the following topics: (**circle the topic you choose**).

COMMUNITY POLICING

CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

STATUTES

RESUMES

YOUTH

Different libraries feature different systems. As a consequence, you may have to adapt the following instructions slightly to your particular system. If you encounter any difficulties, you can ask a librarian for help.

- At the Library catalogue welcome screen, click on **Library Catalog**
- At the Lookup in catalogue by screen, click on **Words or Phrase**
- Type your topic in the words and phrase box and then click on **Search Catalog**
- Choose a title from the list and click on **View** to see the full record

Fill in the following information:

CALL NUMBER: _____

TITLE: _____

CAMPUS LOCATION: _____

- Click on the *TOP* button to return to the top of the screen
- Mark this record by clicking on the Mark Box
- Click on the Print/Capture button
- Type your E-mail user name in the E-mail box
- Click on the E-mail icon to mail yourself the results

2. REFERENCE BOOKS

The reference shelves are separated from the circulating bookshelves and are labeled Reference. Books are in order on the shelf by call number. Reference books remain in the library.

Go to the reference area and find this call number range: **HV**

Write down a title that interests you:

3. PAMPHLET FILE

Most educational libraries maintain a pamphlet file. Arranged by subject, these files contain maps, articles and pamphlets. You can normally borrow these materials, often for a two-week period. Locate the pamphlet file and try looking up *one* of these headings:

CIRCLE THE ONE YOU CHOOSE

Canada – Charter of rights and freedoms

Interpersonal Communication

Aged

Did you find any pamphlets? **YES** **NO**

4. MAGAZINES, PERIODICALS & JOURNALS

Most educational libraries separate their periodicals into two categories. Unbound current periodicals are in one section, while bound back issues are in another (or others). Current periodicals are usually arranged alphabetically by title, while back issues may be arranged by title or call number, depending on the library.

Locate the current periodical shelves in your library. Browse the display shelves for a minute. Write down a journal or magazine title that you see.

5. PERIODICAL INDEXES

Libraries have periodical indexes, in print and CD-ROM formats, that provide lists of articles from newspapers and magazines. They are an invaluable research tool, especially if your subject is quite specific: you may not be able to find any books on your topic, but it is likely that you will find at least a handful of articles on it if you use the periodical indexes.

- a) Locate the **PERIODICAL INDEX** area. Find a recent issue of the following index:

CANADIAN PERIODICAL INDEX

- b) Choose one of these subject headings. (Circle the one you choose.)

CRIME PREVENTION

POLICE – COMPLAINTS AGAINST

CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR

GROUPS (SOCIOLOGY)

This is an example of what the index will show you:

Crime and Criminals ← (article title)

Social support and the fear of crime. ← (subject)

Vincent F. Sacco. Can J. Criminology 35 No.2 (Apr.'93) p.187-96

↑
(author)

↑
(periodical
title)

↑
(volume)

↑
(issue)

↑
(date)

↑
(Page #)

- c) After looking the subject up in the index, write down the title of the article:

- d) What is the name of the periodical? (If it is abbreviated, look up the front section of the index to find out the periodical's full name.)

- e) Fill in the following:

Volume: _____ Page(s): _____

Issue/Month: _____ Year: _____

- f) Is the periodical available in the library?

To find out, look up the periodical's title in the on-line catalogue. For some systems, you can simply click on the *Periodical title* icon that appears on screen. Is your periodical title listed?

YES **NO**

If yes, and there is more than one library in your school or college, write down the name of the library where the periodical is located.

Why Do We Self-Disclose?

1. **Create an impression:** We tell positives about ourselves in a new social situation.
2. **Social Control:** By giving some information about ourselves, we may gain more control over someone else.
3. **Validation:** We may express our opinions to fit in with the group.

The question of how much information one should give out may often arise.

Controversy exists regarding the amount of information the police and medical communities should have about us, and of course, what is done with it. It is an issue for current and potential employee of the public safety system as much as it is an issue for members of the public. There are questions people may not want to answer. They may be embarrassed or unwilling to cooperate.

Call takers are obligated to ask certain questions as a job responsibility, but must be vigilant to avoid inappropriate lines of questioning. For example, an upset woman calls 9-1-1 to report that a man was staring in her window. Asking if he was good-looking would be inappropriate.

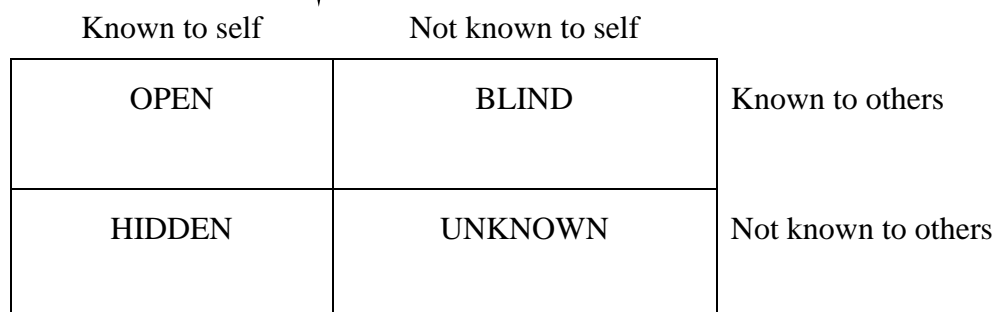
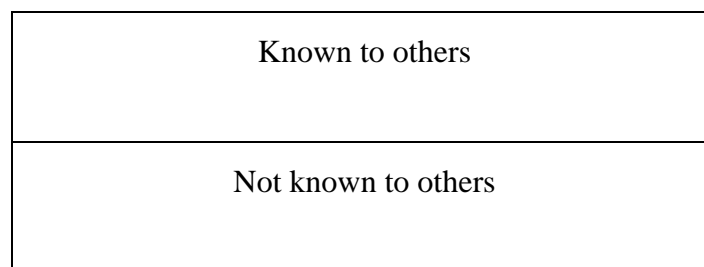
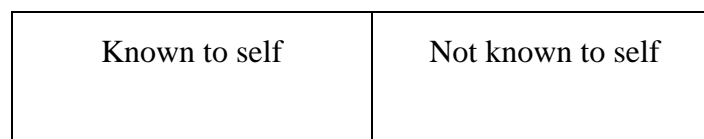
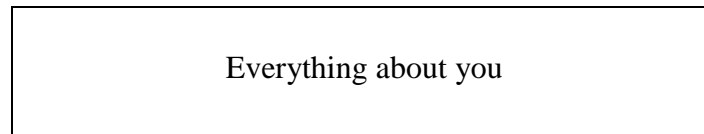
Self-Disclosure in Public Safety Communications

It is important for public safety communicator for 9-1-1, and particularly for the police, to get information about the person who is calling. Sometimes callers are not very cooperative, and much information is obscured. At other times, callers give more information than call takers care to know. In some cases, a lot of information about them will already be known to the call taker, but they themselves will be unaware of this.

Johari Window

A model has been developed to describe this process of disclosure or non-disclosure. The window takes its name from its creators' combined first names: *Joseph* Luft and *Harry* Ingram.

The model takes shape in the following way:



Activity: Reasons for Non-Disclosure

Instructions

Think about a person with whom you interact, and analyze your interactions with that person.

In the column to the left of each item, indicate the extent to which you use each reason to avoid disclosing.

5 = almost always 2 = rarely
4 = often 1 = never
3 = sometimes

In the column to the right of each item (except for those you've marked "never"), indicate how realistic the reason is.

5 = completely realistic 2 = mostly realistic
4 = mostly realistic 1 = completely unrealistic
3 = partly realistic/unrealistic,

How Frequently do you use this reason?		How realistic/ rational is this reason?
_____	I can't identify the chance to self-disclose with this person.	_____
_____	If I self-disclose, I might hurt the other person.	_____
_____	If I self-disclose, I might be seen as evaluating or judging the person.	_____
_____	I can't identify any information that I would self-disclose to the other person.	_____
_____	My self-disclosure might be used against me at some time.	_____
_____	I might have to make personal changes if I self-disclose.	_____

How frequently do you use this reason?		How realistic/ rational is this reason?
_____	I would look weak if I self-disclosed.	_____
_____	Self-disclosure would cost me control over this person.	_____
_____	If I disclose I might discover I am not worthy of the image I want to project.	_____
_____	Self-disclosure might project an image I do not want to project.	_____
_____	The other person might not understand my self-disclosure.	_____
_____	The other person might think of me negatively.	_____
_____	My self-disclosure will hurt our relationship.	_____
_____	You only self-disclose if you are emotionally disturbed.	_____
_____	Self-disclosure might lead to an intimate relationship.	_____
_____	Self-disclosure might threaten my physical safety.	_____
_____	I might appear inconsistent if I self-disclose.	_____
	<i>(Any other reason)</i>	

What insights does this information give you about your thoughts and feelings around self-disclosure with this person?

How do you feel about your level of self-disclosure with this person?
Why?

Responding to and Defusing Defensive Reactions

Using supportive behaviour rather than defensive behaviour in communications helps to prevent the other person from acting defensively.

Supportive

description
problem orientation
spontaneity
empathy
equality
uncertainty

Defensive

evaluation
control
strategy
neutrality
superiority
certainty

(Looking Out / Looking In)

How Can You Help Defuse an Abusive Situation?

The language you choose could very well influence the way people will respond to you. “You” language can sound very strong and accusatory. Using “I” language can help defuse defensive reactions in people. This means being descriptive rather than evaluative. Ask the person for specifics about the situation to clarify what is happening. Paraphrase their information in a way that calms the caller while still acknowledging that there is a problem. Identify what the person wants and needs from you. Ask him or her what he or she wants.

For example:

A break and enter victim tells you “I never used to have to lock my doors.” Instead of negatively saying, “You are living in the past,” a more positive and effective response would be to say, “It’s a shame that times have really changed. Maybe I can offer you some suggestions on safeguarding your home ...”

Activity: “I” Language

Instructions

With a partner, rewrite each of the evaluative “you” language statements below using descriptive “I” language.

“Don’t you ever do that again.”

“Why can’t you be on time?”

“I wish you’d try to be more reasonable.”

“You always take, but you never give anything back.”

“You don’t respect my property.”

“Why won’t you listen to me?”

Activity: Identify Feelings

Instructions

1. In groups, clearly identify the *apparent real statements* in the following statements.
2. Analyze and compare your responses to the possibilities listed at the end of the activity.
3. Restate the feelings so that they are clear.

Example: “That’s the most disgusting thing I’ve ever heard!”

Analysis: *The speaker is expressing disgust, but not clearly stating what he or she feels.*

Restatement: *I’m uncomfortable and upset with this statement.*

1. “That was a great evening!”

Analysis:

Restatement:

2. “You’re being too sensitive about that.”

Analysis:

Restatement:

3. “I’m confused about what you want from me.”

Analysis: Analysis:

Restatement:

4. “I don’t know what to do with him.”

Analysis:

Restatement:

5. “I feel as if you are trying to get back at me.”

Analysis:

Restatement:

6. “It can’t be done!”

Analysis:

Restatement:

7. “I’m not sure how to tell you this . . .”

Analysis:

Restatement:

8. “What’s up with you?”

Analysis:

Restatement:

9. “I feel as if my world is collapsing.”

Analysis:

Restatement:

10. “You’re hopeless.”

Analysis:

Restatement:

Analysis

1. This statement implies positive feelings but does not state what they are.
2. Here the speaker is labeling someone else's feelings rather than his or her own.
3. This is a clear statement of the speaker's feelings.
4. Emotion is implied but not clear so that we do not know what the speaker is feeling.
5. Saying "I feel" is not necessarily expressing feelings, it is an interpretative statement.
6. How does the person feel about the situation – happy, sad, frustrated?
7. What are the feelings?
8. It could possibly be one of many feelings, but a clearer statement would help us to know better.
9. This statement is metaphorical; it does express emotion but may be misinterpreted.
10. This is interpretation of behaviour and may evoke feelings but doesn't contain feelings.

Activity: Recognizing and Replying to Feelings

Instructions:

The following activity will give you practice in recognizing and replying to feelings. For each of the situations below:

- Identify and write down the main feeling(s).
- Write a formula reply; that is: “You feel [feeling] because [content].”
- Rewrite your formula reply in a more natural form.

1. She says to you, “I just can’t keep up with all the assignments. I wish the teachers would just lay off until I catch my breath.”

She is feeling

Formula reply: You feel _____

because _____

Rewrite in a more natural style:

2. A person says to you, “The doctor wants to run more tests before all the results are back from the first test. I’m not sure if that means there is more wrong than he had thought.”

She is feeling

Formula reply: You feel _____

because _____

Rewrite in a more natural style:

3. She says to you, “I really trusted her and confided in her a lot. Now I find that she’s blabbing about my business to everyone!”

She is feeling _____

Formula reply: You feel _____

because _____

Rewrite in a more natural style:

4. He says to you, “The exam results are posted and all of mine are in the top ten. That’s the first time it’s happened,”

He is feeling _____

Formula reply: You feel _____

because _____

Rewrite in a more natural style:

5. “I wish that instructor would get off my back. It seems that I just can’t do anything right by her.”

She is feeling _____

Formula reply: You feel _____

because _____

Rewrite in a more natural style:

Active Listening Skills

Active listening is a learned skill. It means that, as a listener, you assume responsibility for ensuring that you understand what the speaker is trying to communicate, and demonstrate that you are genuinely interested in what is being said. In public safety communications, active listening is particularly important to ensure accurate information and appropriate responses.

Check for Total Meaning

When people speak, they convey two types of messages: content, and attitudes or feelings. When you listen actively, you need to listen not only for the facts, but also for the feelings behind those facts. For example, if someone says, “Well, I’ve finally finished that project I was working on last week,” there is probably an underlying feeling such as fatigue or relief that needs to be recognized.

Use Questions to Clarify Meaning

During calls, you may find that you will need to clarify a message by asking a question or making a statement that is an implied question. The way you ask these questions often determines your success. Open-ended questions, that is, questions that require a sentence or more as an answer, encourage more discussion than closed questions which require a simple yes or no answer.

Questions can help or hinder the communications process. Most questions help by giving you the answers you need, and producing an atmosphere of trust and respect. However, some types of question hinder the process of communicating effectively. They threaten, embarrass or annoy the listener.

- *Critical questions* or a critical tone reprimand a person, or express doubts about his or her abilities or motives. Such questions are likely to cause resentment.
- *Leading questions* may cause the caller to mislead you. For example, if you ask someone “You saw a person in a red jacket, right?” he or she may agree just to be personable.

Probe for Information

A probe is a request or question that asks individuals to explore or reflect on their thinking or actions so they can increase their awareness of alternative perceptions or ideas. Here are some examples of effective probes you might use to get more information or solve problems:

- Tell me what you did next.
- What do think might be causing this to happen?
- Can you tell me a bit more about that?

Effective Paraphrasing

The aim of paraphrasing is to get feedback from the sender to confirm that you have a solid understanding of their message. You can check that you understand the total meaning of the message by ***paraphrasing*** or restating the ideas in your own words. Your paraphrase can be as long or longer than the original message. More importantly, you can paraphrase the feelings behind the message as well as the words themselves. In doing so, you acknowledge that you have understood the caller and you check out the feelings underlying the message.

Dealing with the other person's feelings shows empathy, that is, an understanding or concern about the effects of a situation. For example, if someone tells you about a situation that has made them angry, you might respond by saying, "I can see why you're angry. I'd probably feel exactly the same way if that happened to me."

Elements of Effective Paraphrasing

- **Direct** – focused
- **Specific** – no other information added
- **Non-evaluative** – no judgment or assumptions
- **Descriptive of Behaviour** – not looking for a motive, only classifying facts

Blocks to Effective Paraphrasing to Avoid

Blocks include behaviour on your part that seems helpful, but actually prevents communication. Such behaviour stops the victim from

expressing problems and feelings, or puts the victim down in some way.

Example: You are talking to a victim of domestic violence. Her husband has just been charged. She says, “I love him, I know he really doesn’t mean it.”

Advising

“You ought to think of your kids.”

“I think you should just leave him.”

- She may resent your advice and spend her energy reacting to your ideas instead of developing her own solutions.
- The advice may give her the feeling that you do not trust her ability to find a solution.
- She may become dependent on you to solve her problems.
- What happens if the advice doesn’t work?

Sympathizing

“I know just how you feel.”

“I feel so sorry for you, poor thing.”

- You send the message that she is helpless to change.
- You begin to “feel” her feelings rather than using empathy (expressing your understanding).
- You risk burnout.

Questioning

“How often does he do this?”

“Why do you stay in this situation?”

- She can get distracted from her problems while answering your questions.
- Questioning does not deal directly with her feelings and concerns.
- Questioning leads her.

Criticizing

“You must be encouraging him to do this to you.”

“You’re a mother how can you let your kids live in this environment?”

- She can feel judged.
- She can feel as if you are trying to change them.
- She can feel defensive and inadequate.

Double-Level Messages

Satir's Model of Double-level Messages

Virginia Satir was a psychotherapist specializing in communication skills for effective, healthy relationships. After many years of listening to her patients, she became aware of certain universal patterns in the way people communicate when under stress or when their self-esteem is diminished.

Feeling stress or low self-esteem leads to certain internal feelings – the stomach tightens, breathing turns shallow. You cannot hide these feelings, for every time you speak, *all of you* speaks. Discrepancies between verbal and non-verbal communication produce double-level messages. Your words say one thing while the rest of you says something else. There is a discrepancy or incongruence between your words and your gestures. The Johari window alludes to this incongruence.

Usually, the person is unaware of giving double-level messages or of being incongruent, and listeners are confused. They can either register the words and ignore the rest, or they can register the non-verbal parts and ignore the words.

How do you feel when faced with double-level messages? How would you deal with friends who appear to be stressed and yet, every time you ask them what is wrong, they reply that nothing is wrong?

Patterns of Double-Level Messages

1. **Placate** the other person so he or she does not get mad.
Words – Whatever you want is okay.
Body – I am helpless.
2. **Blame** the other person so he or she will regard you as strong.
Words – You never do anything right. What is the matter with you?
Body – Accuses. I am the boss.
3. **Compute** so you deal with the threat as though it were harmless.
Words – Ultra-reasonable.
Body – I'm calm, cool and collected.

4. **Distract** so you ignore the threat, behaving as if it were not there.

Words – Irrelevant; the words are about an unrelated subject.

Body – I'm off somewhere else. Humour.

Family and Societal Attitudes that Promote Double-Level Messages

Double-level messages are reinforced by what our families, as well as attitudes prevalent in our society, teach us about authority:

- “Don’t impose. It’s selfish to ask for things for yourself,” reinforces placating.
- “Don’t let anyone put you down, don’t be a coward,” reinforces blaming.
- “Don’t make mistakes,” reinforces computing.
- “Don’t be so serious, who cares?” reinforces distracting.

We must be aware of our normal pattern in personal relationships because it affects how we handle crises. It also affects how we communicate with our colleagues. Communicators may revert to typical double-level messages when under telephone stress. Some examples are:

- The person who tends to *placate* will apologize to the caller, will be bullied by the caller, and so on.
- The person who tends to *blame* will scold, yell at or insult the caller.
- The person who tends to *compute* is in heaven. The double-level message, that gets the minimum trouble in personal life, is a boon on the phone. But the person cannot use empathy.
- The person who tends to *distract* will often find the skill helpful; however, one way of distracting is to use humour, which can lead to trouble.

The following activity is intended to help develop strategies for dealing with double-level messages.

Activity: Double-Level Message Dialogue

Instructions

Scenario One – You and your friend have spent most of the morning golfing. You both played a terrible game. You arrive at the parking lot and realize you left the lights on. The battery is dead and the car will not start. Identify some double-level messages (DLMs) you might find yourself using.

- **Placating.** – “I’m so stupid... I always do this.... I’m sorry – don’t be mad.”
- **Blaming.** – “They should make cars with lights that go off automatically; if you hadn’t been talking to me I would have remembered; how come you didn’t notice?”
- **Computing.** – “Now this is an interesting situation; this will be a test of character; I’ve noticed that this particular kind of battery tends to run out of power more quickly.”
- **Distraction** – “Hey! Just think of it as an adventure! You know the last time this happened...”

Scenario Two – Divide into groups of four as if you were in a car, two in the front seat, and two in the back. Each of you will take a different DLM role. Decide on the DLM role each one of you will take. Try to take a DLM role that does not conform to your usual demeanour. Imagine you are on your way to a very special show which begins in 20 minutes (just long enough to make it on time). You and your friends won these tickets and are very excited. The driver asks, “Who has the tickets?” No-one replies. They appear to be lost. Now you and your car full of friends react to the discovery according to the DLM you have been assigned.

Debrief within each group, and then report back to the large group:

- How did you feel using a DLM that is not typical to you?
- How did you feel using a DLM that is typical?
- How did you solve the problem?

Scenario Three – You ordered some paint for the exterior of your house. You were told when you ordered it that it would be ready in three days. You have now been waiting for over a week.

- How do you react? How would you try to solve the problem?
- What are some of the DLMS you find yourself using in this situation?

Transactional Analysis

Transactional Analysis (TA) is a tool anyone can use to observe and change their behaviour. It was originally described by Eric Berne in 1958. According to Berne, “the unit of social intercourse is called a transaction.”

Definitions

Methods to Understand and Predict Human Behaviour

1. *Structural analysis*: the analysis of individual personality; ego states.
2. *Transactional analysis*: the analysis of what people say and do with one another.
3. *Game analysis*: the analysis of ulterior transactions leading to a payoff.
4. *Script analysis*: the analysis of specific life dramas that people compulsively play out.

The material in this section covers only the first two concepts.

Structural Analysis

- An *ego state* is a system of feelings accompanied by a related set of behaviour patterns.
- There are three ego states: parent (P), adult (A), and child (C)

Parent Ego State (P)

- Attitudes, perceptual styles and behaviours from outside sources, including parents, older siblings, authority figures, and the media.
- Two functions: nurturing parent (NP) and controlling parent (CP).
- Formed in the first five years of life.
- Your *parent ego state* is based on everything you saw your parents do and say.
- Specific to every person and representative of their early childhood experiences without editing.
- Imperatives such as *never, always, never forget that...*

Adult Ego State (A)

- objectively appraises reality; logical without feeling.
- Like a data-processing computer, it estimates probability.
- “Principally concerned with transforming stimuli into pieces of information and processing and filing that information on the basis of previous experience.” (Berne, 1961)
- Stores and uses information from all sources, including one’s other ego states as well as external sources.
- The adult ego state is fully functional by age twelve.

Child Ego State (C)

- Internal events: all urges and feelings.
- Responses to what is “seen and heard, felt and understood.” (Penfield, 1952)
- Two functions: adaptive child (AC) and free child (FC).

The following activities will help us see how these ego states influence communication.

Activity: Ego State

Instructions

Find a quiet place where you are unlikely to be interrupted. This activity requires a certain degree of introspection.

1. Parent Ego State

- Think of one behaviour that you copied from a parent figure and which you still use, perhaps with a spouse, friend or subordinate.
- Think of one parent message that you still hear in your head and obey, rebel against, or are confused about.

2. Adult Ego State

- Think of a recent situation in which you acted logically and made a rational decision based on the facts.
- Think of a situation in which your emotions were aroused, and yet you were able to act reasonably and appropriately in spite of them.

3. Child Ego State

- Think of one form of manipulation that you used successfully as a child, and that you still use sometimes to get your way.
- Think of something you did for fun as a child and that you still do.

Ego State Reaction Quiz

Instructions

Identify each reaction to the situation as either parent (P), adult (A) or child (C). There will be one of each in each situation.

- 1) A clerk loses an important letter.
 - a) “Why can’t you keep track of things you’re responsible for?”
 - b) “Check all those who might have used it lately.
Maybe Mrs. Smith can help.”
 - c) “Well, don’t look at me! I didn’t lose it!”
- 2) A piece of equipment breaks down.
 - a) “See if we can call someone to fix it this morning.”
 - b) “This damn machine is a pain in the neck.”
 - c) “It’s probably the operators’ fault. They’re so careless!”
- 3) The boss tells a secretary that she is not satisfied with his work. The secretary replies:
 - a) “Well, Mrs. Smith, the way you run this office makes it next to impossible to do any good work around here.”
 - b) “I’m not exactly sure how you want it done.
Could you explain it to me?”
 - c) “It wasn’t my fault! It’s those stupid instructions!”
- 4) Rumour has it that a co-worker is to be transferred.
 - a) Yeah? Tell me more! It’s probably a punishment!”
 - b) “Let’s not spread rumours. Let’s ask the boss what the truth is.”
 - c) “We really shouldn’t talk behind poor old George’s back.
He has a million problem.”
- 5) The boss has had an important proposal rejected.

- a) "Poor Mr. Jones, you must feel terrible. I'll fix you a nice cup of tea."
 - b) "You think you feel bad! Let me tell you what happened to me!"
 - c) "How can I help out?"
- 6) A pretty secretary wears a tight sweater to work.
- a) "Wooo, wowee, look at that!"
 - b) "Really! That shouldn't be allowed!"
 - c) "Hmmm..., I wonder why she wore that today."
- 7) Someone unexpectedly gets a promotion.
- a) "Well, she deserved it. With all those kids to feed, she needs all the help she can get, poor thing!"
 - b) "Oh boy! We all know how she got it, don't we, boys?"
 - c) "I thought I should have had that promotion, but I guess she's more qualified than I am."
- 8) The company has announced a reduction in personnel.
- a) "I should make plans in case I'm laid off."
 - b) "This company isn't worth working for anyway!"
 - c) "Okay, then, fire the women. They don't need the money like men do. They should go back home where they belong."

Elements of Transactional Analysis

Three Classifications of Transactions

1. **Complementary** –a message gets a predicted response from the other person. “Appropriate and expected and follows the natural order of healthy human relationship” (Berne)
For example, (Child/Parent, Parent/Child) or (Adult/Adult, Adult/Adult) or (Parent/Parent, Parent/Parent) or (Child/Child, Child/Child).
2. **Crossed** –an unexpected response to the stimulus can be a frequent source of pain between people
For example, (Child/Parent, Child/Parent) or (Adult/Adult, Parent/Child) or (Adult/Adult, Child/Parent) or (Child/Child, Parent/Child)
3. **Ulterior** – always involves more than two ego states. It is disguised under a socially acceptable transaction, for example, innuendo, sarcasm, and so on.

Four Life Positions

1. **I’m not OK – you’re OK**

Early childhood decision – powerlessness (“My life is not worth much”)

2. **I’m not OK – you’re not OK**

Introjective position – depressive behaviour (“Life isn’t worth anything at all”)

3. **I’m OK – you’re not OK**

Projective position – blaming (“Your life is not worth much”)

4. **I’m OK – you’re OK**

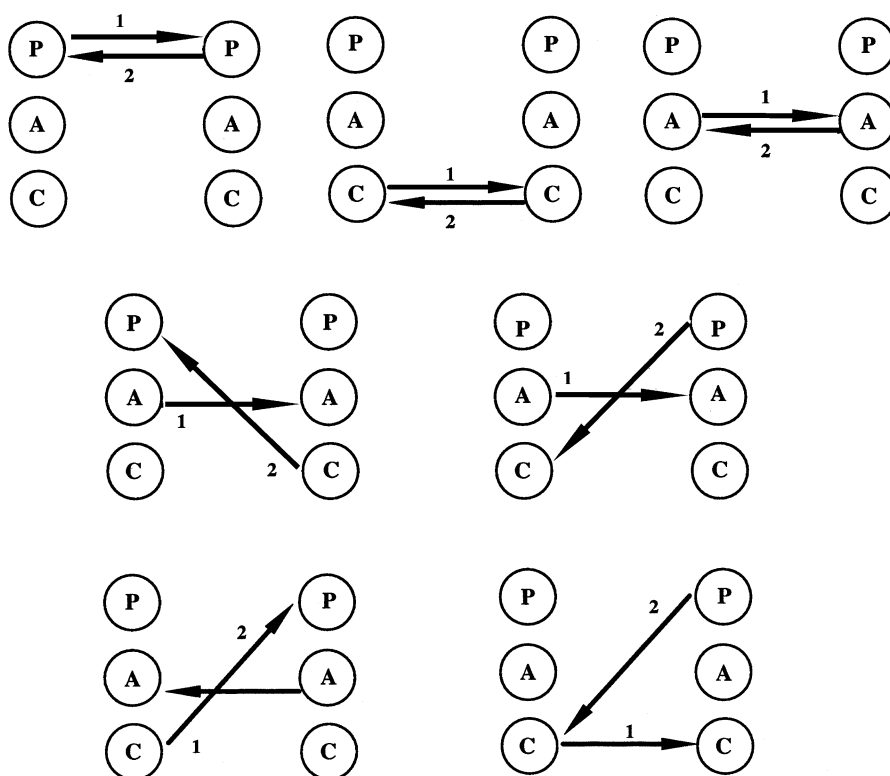
Adult ego state – good mental health – (“Life is worth living”)

Activity: T.A. Transactions

Instructions

Sergeant Green has noticed that Corporal Black seems to be moody and depressed. He suspects that Black is having problems at home. He has him in for a chat.

Prepare a few lines of dialogue between Sergeant Green and Corporal Black to demonstrate one of the transactions below (to be selected by the instructor). The line designated as “1” refers to the message from Sergeant Green to Corporal Black. The response, from Black to Green, is shown as “2”.



Activity: Perception Checking

Instructions

1. With a partner, write perception-checking statements for the following items.
2. Practise saying these statements out loud to each other.
3. Refine the statements to enable more complete perception checking.

Example:

You saw your friend talking intently with Pat, your recent date.

Perception-checking statement: “When I saw you talking with Pat, I didn’t know what was happening. It seemed like you might be discussing the class that you are taking together or you might have a more personal interest in each other. Are you interested in Pat as a friend or a date?”

1. Ever since the beginning of the program, your family members ask you how you are doing every week.

2. An instructor has returned an exam with a low grade to you , commenting that “This kind of work paints a bleak picture for the future.” You have approached him to discuss that remark.

3. You are talking long distance with an old friend and she remarks, “Oh, it’s okay, I guess,” about her current job.

4. You come home and your roommate is reading on the couch. When you say “Hi,” she turns away from you and keeps on reading.

5. You have been given a big assignment at work. Your supervisor asks you regularly if you are having any problems with it.

6. Your romantic partner tells you that he is planning to spend next Friday night with friends from work. You usually spend Friday nights together.

7. A week ago your neighbour raked a large amount of garden debris into a pile next to your property, promising to clean it up the next day. It is still there and blowing into your yard.

8. One of the people at your workplace has been looking at you a lot lately. Every time you look up, she is looking and smiling at you. You have decided to ask her why.

Crisis

A *crisis* is an unusual situation. People in crisis are not usually crazed persons wielding an ax. They are normal people thrust into an unusual situation.

What does crisis mean to you personally? Particularly now before you are formally trained as public safety communicators.

A state of crisis may cause a number of possible physiological and psychological reactions. You may feel that you are at your breaking point, stressed, unable to cope, or past your level of tolerance. You cannot process information, and you begin to feel a sensory overload.

Terminology

Normal – established or dictated by society, a recognized way of life

Abnormal – outside the norms or boundaries established by society
– constantly changing (what we perceive as normal might be abnormal to others)

Premorbid level of functioning – the level someone was at before a crisis/event

Equilibrium

Equilibrium for each person is a balance in mind, body and spirit that adds up to a sense of well-being. This equilibrium has elements of emotions, thoughts, feelings of safety, meeting of biological needs and personal health. When there is a rapid change, we may experience problems. We can reach a breaking point.

Every person has a breaking point. Most of the time people live in a state of balance or equilibrium, a steady state between emotions and thoughts. When this equilibrium is disrupted, a crisis can occur. The potential for crisis depends upon how completely the delicate balance has been upset. When equilibrium shifts rapidly, the person experiences a problem. If the problem is not resolved quickly, the person enters a state of stress.

Stress normally causes enough tension that the person works to resolve the problem and re-establish equilibrium, but if that does not occur

within a reasonable time, crisis occurs. A crisis can happen to anyone at any time in life. Crisis is the person's *response* to a situation, not the situation itself. In other words, a crisis is self-defined. In this way, circumstances that may cause a crisis for one person will only cause a temporary disruption in equilibrium for another.

Loss in Crisis

Inherent in every crisis is a loss. Somebody has lost or will lose something.

Types of Crisis

1) *Immediate crisis:*

- a) The victim has been robbed or beaten.
- b) His or her safety is gone.
- c) He or she may feel a biological need (injury) as well as a psychological one.

2. *Long term crisis:*

- a) Long-term crises involve periodic breakdowns when a person feels agitated or upset, or cries a lot.
- b) For example, people may experience a breakdown when they are waiting for a terminally-ill spouse or parent to die.

3. *Series of linked disasters:*

- a) A person's whole life is a crisis (beyond the norm); for instance, someone who is constantly getting beaten up or robbed and being thrown in the drunk tank.

Characteristics of a Crisis

At some point every person will face a crisis. Most people can deal with a crisis if they get a little help or sufficient time to resolve it.

- 1. The crisis is sudden. Usual patterns of life change and equilibrium breaks down.
- 2. The change is too great for the person to handle using his or her normal coping mechanisms, such as a death or fire. The change has personal significance which adds to the crisis. For example,

a person who is usually calm panics when he sees a car accident because his family died in a car accident. The problem may be new. A person's usual coping strategies do not work. For example, they have never been robbed before.

3. A crisis may last from minutes to several weeks. People cannot and do not remain in a state of crisis for long because the mind and body cannot maintain that state.
4. A crisis may trigger behaviour that is dangerous, unacceptable or self-destructive. This includes homicidal or suicidal responses.

For most people with good coping mechanisms, crisis states are fairly infrequent. Many of the callers to emergency services, because of various dysfunctional backgrounds, may have inadequate coping mechanisms, or their coping mechanisms have failed because:

- the problem is too great;
- the problem has special significance to them that makes it overwhelming;
- the problem occurs at a time of particular vulnerability;
- the problem is a new one, so appropriate coping mechanisms have not been developed; or
- the person's usual social support network has failed.

People at the height of a crisis do not have normal coping abilities. They are under incredible stress, and rational thought processes are gone. Characteristics exhibited under these circumstances include:

- sensory overload,
- extraordinary fear,
- inappropriate anger,
- extreme anxiety,
- altered memory, and
- distorted perceptions.

Crisis Intervention Techniques

Crisis intervention may be defined as the management of disruptive, assaultive, or out-of-control behaviour. You will use three kinds:

- nonverbal,
- paraverbal, and
- verbal.

Nonverbal

Close your eyes and imagine that you are having a hectic, highly stressful day. A difficult call comes in. What part of your body reacts? What does your jaw do? Your neck? Your breathing? Choose two or three areas to focus on.

Your best relaxant is oxygen. Place your hands on your abdomen and breathe, using your diaphragm. Always, always breathe before responding.

Para-verbal

You can control the way in which you respond to crisis situations in at least three ways:

- speed,
- volume,
- tone.

Pay attention to your bodily cues. Breathing properly helps with *speed*. Do not waste time having to repeat information; speak slowly and clearly the first time. Attending to your jaw, neck and eyebrows helps *tone*. Speak *quietly*; it has a calming effect. Breathe.

Verbal

Some verbal interventions will help when dealing with a caller in crisis:

- Identify yourself. Use the other person's name.
- Paraphrase. Affirm the underlying feelings you hear.
- Repeat, and tolerate repetition non-judgmentally.

- Gentle refusal: refer to and evaluate *verbal judo* (where the caller attempts to manipulate you).
- Ask questions one at a time. Be aware of sensory overload.
- Reinforce progress. Saying “That’s good” can make a big difference to someone who is struggling to regain control. Be careful not to patronize the caller.

Paraphrasing Skill

Paraphrasing is a communication skill in which a listener reflects the content or meaning of a person’s communication back to him or her, by rephrasing what that person just said. Paraphrasing is not parroting, or merely repeating what the person says. A good paraphrase clarifies the meaning for both speaker and listener. Paraphrasing can reveal deeper levels of meaning beneath the speaker’s words.

Empathy Skill

Empathy is a communication skill in which a listener reflects the *feelings* inherent in a person’s communication (whether verbal or nonverbal) back to him or her. Listeners can empathize with someone in different ways. For example, they can describe his or her feelings or use a supportive tone of voice. In a word, accurate empathy demonstrates that the listener is listening actively and is not judging the speaker’s feelings, but is merely helping to identify and clarify them.

Impact of Victimization

Before we become good interveners in a crisis, we have to learn what is going on with the victim. Regardless of what form of crisis we are talking about (for instance, a death or crime), most people react in a predictable way. A victim goes through three definite stages of behavioural, emotional, and physical stages when something bad happens to him or her. Try not to pigeonhole someone into a particular stage. We cannot predict what stage they will have reached in dealing with their issue, as everyone is different and has different life experiences. People may also tend to oscillate back and forth between stages. So think of a timeline with very general boundaries. The stages of crisis reaction as described by Bard and Sangrey (1979) are:

1. *Impact stage* – shock, disbelief, eating and sleeping disturbances, anger.
2. *Recoil stage* – understanding of what happened, feelings of revenge, self-pity, guilt.
3. *Reorganization stage* – learning to deal with the situation, and to move on; may become an activist for the cause.

Most call takers will deal primarily with the impact stage.

Some of the skills that you are going to need when talking to someone right after a crisis include:

- Practise *active listening* in a calm and encouraging manner.
- Avoid being judgmental or moralistic (do not say “I would never do that!”), or guessing or assuming what the person in crisis needs or wants.
- Do not try to rescue the person. (You have the power to send the police, fire, or ambulance to the aid of the person. However, you cannot save them from the event yourself. Remember, they called because something happened!).
- Be patient (not angry, impatient or critical) about their abilities or behaviours.
- You are going to have to be supportive and your questioning will have to reflect knowledge, intuition, and concern.

- Verbalize your concern. Check to see that they are okay. Let them express themselves. Listen to them.
- Give them information to help reduce their anxiety about the unknown. Let them know what will likely happen without being absolute.
- Reassure them that their reactions are normal.

Verbal Skills for Crisis Intervention

Good crisis intervention relies heavily upon good verbal skills. When someone calls 9-1-1, you need to use your verbal skills to assess quickly what his or her needs are.

Provide a grounding in reality

- Identify yourself and your position.
- Use the person's name when talking to them.
- Be calm.
- Anticipate their concerns, and give truthful information.
- Give reasons for your questions.
- Assure them that the information they are passing on to you is confidential.

Listen and respond appropriately

- Let them talk and assure them that you are listening.
- Use the active listening skills of empathy and paraphrasing.

Ask simple questions

- Ask *how* and *what* questions.
- Ask one question at a time.

Control the speed of conversation

- "Slow down please," "What happened?"

Provide appropriate support

- If person seems to be suicidal, keep them on the line and assure them that help is on the way.

Send for help and assure them that you have done so.

- Let the caller know what you are doing to respond to their situation.

Normal Emergencies and Cultural Reactions to Crisis

- People functioning *normally* will respond favourably to the approach just discussed. The fear or grief or terror they are expressing is caused by something awful, and they need to talk with a patient and levelheaded person who can help them to calm down.
- People from various backgrounds and cultures, however, respond differently in crisis situations. In some cultures, the norms of behaviour in crisis situations are different from others. For instance, people from some cultural groups may not want to talk about their feelings in a crisis, while others will not want to talk about anything else. The experiences that new immigrants to Canada had in their country of origin may also influence how they respond to a crisis. For instance, you may receive calls from people who have lived through the Vietnam war or the conflict in Bosnia. These people may have extreme reactions to crises, or they may be unusually calm. These reactions may also occur among people who have survived violence here at home.

Communicating with Victims of Crime and Violence

Victims' Reactions to Incidents

When people have been physically hurt or robbed, they will experience a variety of uncomfortable feelings. These feelings may range from mild to severe in intensity and may include:

- anxiety, fear, terror;
- shame, helplessness, a feeling of being overwhelmed;
- annoyance, anger, rage;
- unhappiness, sadness, grief;
- ambivalence, confusion, disorientation;
- control, adjustment;
- guilt, overcompensation for guilt.

These feelings make people more vulnerable and dependent. They may feel that they cannot cope or do not know what to do. These emotions lower a person's confidence and self-esteem.

Victim Telephone Contact

As a public safety call taker, you will probably be the first emergency service personnel talking to a victim of crime or violence. Once you have ensured that the appropriate emergency service is on the way, you want to help people return to their normal level of functioning as quickly as possible. You can help by allowing callers to vent their emotions by providing more details on what happened and by expressing their feelings about the incident. These details may go beyond what is needed to respond to the call. The victim may not feel comfortable talking to you at first. You may need to keep them on the line until assistance arrives, so it is important that you use your active listening skills to keep them engaged.

Characteristics of Good Call Takers

- *Interest* in and concern for others.
- *Empathy* for others – To feel what another person feels and to experience their emotions.
- *Open-mindedness* – To not show shock or horror or annoyance at people's feelings and values.
- *Good listening skills* – To be able to focus fully and intently on the caller.
- *A multi-solution approach* – to see the variety of ways in which people can solve problems without making judgments or believing in one right way.
- *Selflessness* – To be neither self-seeking nor need other people to make oneself feel good.

Listening Skills

- *No self-concern* – Attention is truly focused on the callers. Do not think of what you will say next but what the client is saying now.
- *Use the "third ear"* – This means listening in an active way and requires practise. (Your third ear is your mind.)
- *Listen for feeling words* and unexpressed feelings.
- *Ask for more information.* Do not assume you know without specifics. Use phrases and questions such as: "Go on," "Yes," "Uh-huh," "Could you give an example?" "Could you tell me more?" and "Exactly what happened?"
- *Paraphrase* – Paraphrasing provides clarification and feedback to the victim.
 - "I hear you saying that..."
 - "It sounds like you are feeling..."
- *Listen to the speech pattern* and how it fits with what is being said. Sometimes attentiveness to speech patterns can trigger a

feeling that you can follow up on. Listen to your own speech patterns, too.

- Tone: *flat or emotional*
- Level: *soft or loud*
- Speed: *fast or slow*
- Other emotions
- *Clarify* – Clarifying means asking for more information (listening) or offering it yourself (“It sounds to me as if you are also very angry?”).
- *Point out apparent contradictions or omissions* – This does not mean jumping on apparent errors, but making the client aware of them: “I’m confused. You said _____ before. How does that fit in with _____?” “Can we back up a minute? I do not understand _____.”
- **Summarize**

Special Problems

Every call taker needs to be aware of the following special situations:

- Getting overly involved.
- Callers you like too much.
- Callers you dislike.
- Difficult callers.

Remember to use your professional skills to assess the situation, assist the callers, and support them without becoming part of the problem.

Adapted from the Calgary Police Department Victim Services Training Manual

Violence in the Media

Since television became a widespread medium in the early 1950s, experts and public interest groups have argued about whether or not the amount of violence on television (and other visual media) has a direct effect on the amount of violence in society.

There was a classic experiment (Bandura et al., 1961), in which one group of children was shown violent film clips from a TV series called *The Untouchables*, while a control group of children was shown an innocuous program. The children from both groups were then allowed to go into a room where there was a Bobo doll and other toys to play with. (A Bobo doll is a tall toy that is weighted at the bottom in such a way that it bounces back up when you punch it down.) The children who watched the violent program chose the Bobo doll as their favourite toy. They were reported to punch it with a far greater frequency than the control group did.

An experiment such as Bandura's set the wheels turning in the world of psychology. People were really starting to think about the effects of television on peoples' lives, as in 1961 it was a relatively new technology. Within three years of the study, the Vietnam war would be broadcast into every living room in North America, and John Kennedy's assassination would be covered in great detail during prime time. We can make the case that television has influenced our lives, but can we say that watching violence makes us violent?

Since the Bobo doll studies, countless experiments have been conducted to verify whether violence on TV increases violence in real life. Results obtained have depended upon the methods used, and have proven to be contradictory. Violence in the media has *some* impact upon violence in real life, but how strong an impact is open to debate. For a person who commits an act of violence, it is invariably only one of several influences.

Some people *will* copy ideas they learned about in the media. For example, the movie *The Deer Hunter* has a number of scenes featuring Russian roulette, a game of sorts in which a person puts a bullet in one of a gun's six chambers, puts the gun up to his temple, and pulls the

trigger, hoping the trigger will strike one of the five empty chambers. Whenever there is a screening of the movie, some person goes home and plays this game. By 1984, it was reported (Radicchio, 1984) that at least thirty-four people in the USA had killed themselves in this way soon after watching the movie.

Risk Factors for Violence

The *Psychological Emergencies and Crisis Intervention* textbook describes likely candidates for violence. One way of determining these candidates is through determining *risk factors*. Many people predict that kids who come from a home where there is alcohol abuse, poverty, or an unstable relationship between the parents are more likely to be violent than kids from a stable and supportive household. There are countless exceptions, however. Kids who have grown up in the ghettos have moved on to be successful adults, and kids raised in the wealthy parts of our cities are involved in drive-by shootings. The man who shot Ronald Reagan came from a slightly more privileged background than Reagan himself did. Avoid stereotyping!

Violence concept from genetics research

1. Genotype = genetic factors: size, disposition, health, and so on.
2. Environment = diet, neighborhood, financial factors, parenting, education, war, and so on.
3. Genotype + environment = phenotype

We cannot predict to what degree heredity and environment each contribute to violent behaviour in adulthood, but we can assume that both play some role in a person's development. It is a combination of nature *and* nurture that causes us to become who we are.

Frustration as a Cause of Violence

We will look at *frustration* as a general arousal due to having a goal or number of goals blocked. Whether or not a frustrated person becomes violent depends on:

- the meaning or worth of the goal to the individual;
- the phenotype of the person (for example, two people pursuing the same goal are both blocked, yet only one becomes violent. How do you explain the difference?);
- whether or not the goal *can* be achieved by becoming violent (for instance, knowing you can win a fight because you are

bigger than the victim). This is a classic spousal assault situation.

Violent Incidents

As public safety communicator working for the police, fire, or ambulance, you will on a constant basis send units to scenes where someone is hurt due to an act of violence. Many of the fights will have evenly matched combatants, there may be substance abuse issues, and the police will usually treat it as a “consensual fight”, or charge both parties with assault. Most of the persons that call for assistance are witnesses such fights and they are usually motivated by not wanting to see someone get hurt or killed. They may also be intoxicated and may not cooperate with you. They may be the girlfriend of the guy who is losing the fight. In these cases they may be upset and verbally abusive if you ask many questions, or questions which require more than an answer to “Who, what, where, and when?”

Domestic Assault

There has been a shift in thinking in recent Criminal Code legislation. As society has become more accepting of families and relationships as being very diverse in their composition, the deciding criteria for who is the *bad guy (or gal)* is no longer restricted to the stereotypical abusive male in a heterosexual relationship.

Even though a majority of cases of spousal assault involve the male beating his female partner (wife or common-law), one has to think beyond the concept of heterosexual intimate partner to that of the person who is in the position of power. Domestic violence is about power, plain and simple, and power is maintained through control.

The following circumstances are all domestic assault and violence.

- A son or daughter who abuses their mother
- Same sex or opposite sex couples who are violent against each other
- A boyfriend who abuses his girlfriend yet he does not live with her (or vice versa)

Characteristics that Might Identify Potential Batterers

- Do the potential batterers report having been physically or psychologically abused as children? Did their fathers batter their wives?
- Have the potential batterers been known to display violence against other people? Do they own guns and intend to use them to protect themselves against others?
- Do they lose their temper more often and more easily than seems necessary? Do they damage or destroy objects in fits of anger?
- Do they drink alcohol excessively?
- Do they display a high level of jealousy when you are not with them? Do they act jealous of significant other people in your life? Do they expect you to spend all your free time with them, or keep them informed of your whereabouts at all times?
- Do they become enraged when you do not listen to their advice? Do they have rigid ideas of what people should do? Do they stereotype people?
- Do they appear to have a *Jekyll and Hyde* personality, at times being excessively cruel while at others being exceedingly kind?
- Are you afraid when they become angry with you? Does *not* making them angry become an important goal?
- Do you think or feel you are being battered?

If any of the above rings true, then the probability is high that:

- *if being controlled*, you are a battered man or woman, or are at risk of becoming one;
- *if controlling*, you may be a batterer, or are at risk of becoming one.

In both cases, you should consider seeking help immediately.

Categories of Spousal Abuse

Diana H. Russell, in her book *Rape in Marriage*, compares the abuse battered women experience from their husbands to the torture and brainwashing of prisoners in war camps. She lists eight categories of abuse; we have added two. We have also listed examples of abuse. These examples were generated for each category by a support group. (Note that, although the following examples use *he* and *him* to describe the abuser, abusers can of course also be female.)

Isolation

- You change residences.
- You are kept in the home.
- You are not allowed to associate with friends or family.
- He attempts to turn you against your friends and family.
- You feel isolated by his jealousy.
- You avoid people because you fear he will embarrass, criticize or humiliate you in front of them.
- He controls your communication with others, for example by listening in on your phone calls, or opening and censoring your mail.
- He does not allow you to have outside interests.
- He says you can go out but expects you to stay home.

Focus on His Anger

- He forces you to listen to him.
- He deprives you of basic physical needs such as food and sleep.
- You lose your identity, self-esteem, self-worth, and you are deprived of your friends, or of happiness in general.
- You are developing survival techniques, you walk on eggshells around him, and you feed his ego.
- You live for him rather than for yourself.

- You have to cater excessively to his needs, doing things merely to please him, such as making dinners or dressing up.

Threats

- He makes threats on your life; he says he will kill you if you speak to another man.
- He threatens to hurt you.
- He threatens to take your children away.
- He feels threatened if you stay, or if you go.
- He makes subtle threats, or open, non-specific threats.
- He threatens through body language.
- He threatens to remove financial support.
- He threatens to find someone else if you will not have sex with him.

Occasional Indulgences

Amidst all these threats, he will attempt to placate you with occasional indulgences:

- Compliments, flattery.
- Privileges.
- Hugs.
- Apologies.
- Gifts – candies, chocolates, flowers by taxicab.
- Being taken out to dinner.

Degradation – Insults – Humiliation

- He embarrasses you in public, by grabbing you for instance.
- He insults your physical appearance or your child-care abilities, he calls you stupid, he discounts your housekeeping, your cooking, and he attacks your self-worth, saying “What good are you?”
- He blames you for his problems.

Exhaustion

- He deprives you of sleep, food or money.
- He set expectations that you cannot match; he imposes too many responsibilities on you; he expects you to be the perfect wife, asking you why you are tired when he knows all too well why you are.
- He does not allow you to be sick.
- There is too much sex, not enough affection.
- He intimidates you.

Power

- He restrains you physically or uses physical violence to gain control.
- He denies you your basic rights.
- He has recourse to the law to assert power.
- He withholds sex as a means of control.
- He does not respect your wishes with regard to sex, making you commit sexual acts you do not want to do.
- He controls the finances.
- He controls your freedom, your sleep, your access to the car.
- He makes you eat things you do not want to eat.
- He does not allow you to have a private life (“What I do is my business, what you do is my business.”).
- You must report to him.

Enforcing Trivial Demands

In addition to the above, he may enforce trivial demands upon you.

- He tells you how and what food to cook, how to prepare food, when to serve it, and at what temperature.
- He reprimands you for missing small details in your household duties.

- He berates you for missing the garbage pickup.
- He tells you how much bath water you can use.

Psychological Unavailability

- He does not listen to you; he ignores you.
- He only allows you to listen, or expects you to say what he wants to hear.
- He imposes conditions on his displays of affection towards you.
- His conversation is insincere; he only pretends to communicate with you.

Crazy Making

- He denies that there is a problem in your relationship.
- He tells you that you are crazy.
- He lies to his friends about your relationship.
- He finds you to be at fault for everything.
- You feel like a hostage, or an extension of your husband.
- He has a *Jekyll and Hyde* personality, sometimes kind, sometimes cruel.
- He tells small lies about unimportant things.
- He says, “You’ve never had it so good” or “I have made you what you are,” when in fact you feel as if your life is falling apart.
- He says something bad is going to happen to you.
- He teaches you lessons.
- He tells you one thing but expects something else.

Summary

We hope this information is useful to you in recognizing the techniques that people use to abuse other people. If you feel isolated, exhausted or threatened, it is not because something is wrong with you, but because something has been done to you.

The Battered Woman – Twenty Myths & Realities

1. **Myth:** The Battered Woman Syndrome affects only a small percentage of the population.
 Fact: In 1978, an estimated 500,000 Canadian women – one in ten – of those married or living common-law, were battered by the men they live with.
2. **Myth:** Battered women are masochistic.
 Fact: This myth suggests that she experiences some pleasure, often akin to sexual pleasure, through being beaten by the man she loves. This myth places the burden of guilt on the woman, allowing the man's abusive behaviour to continue.
3. **Myth:** Battered women are crazy.
 Fact: This myth places the blame for the battering on the woman's negative personality characteristics. Battered women's survival behaviours have often earned them the misdiagnosis of being crazy.
4. **Myth:** Middle-class women do not get battered as frequently or as violently as do poorer women.
 Fact: Lower-class women are more likely to come in contact with community agencies and so their problems are more visible. Middle and upper-class women do not want to make their battering public.¹
5. **Myth:** Religious beliefs will prevent battering.
 Fact: Some women have spoken of religious advisors who have advised them to pray for guidance, become better wives, and go home and help their husbands. Meanwhile, the battering continues. Other women tell of humane religious advisors who have understood their problems and helped them to break out.
6. **Myth:** Battered women are uneducated and have few job skills.

1 For an illustration of this predicament, look up Elspeth Cameron, *No Previous Experience: A Memoir of Love and Change*, Toronto: Viking, 1997. Life among Toronto's privileged did not prevent Cameron from suffering spousal abuse, which she describes in this memoir.

- Fact:** They are homemakers, teachers, real-estate agents, lawyers, psychologists, nurses, physicians, businesswomen, politicians, and successful corporate executives.
7. **Myth:** Batterers are violent in all their relationships.
- Fact:** Most men who batter their wives are generally not violent in other aspects of their lives.
8. **Myth:** Batterers are unsuccessful and lack resources to cope with the world.
- Fact:** A study from England reports that physicians, service professionals and the police had the highest incidence of wife beating. As a group, batterers would be indistinguishable from any other group of men in terms of capability.
9. **Myth:** Drinking causes battering behaviour.
- Fact:** Men beat their wives whether or not they have been drinking. Drinking is only one component of the battering relationship.
10. **Myth:** Batterers have psychopathic personalities.
- Fact:** One trait they do have in common with diagnosed psychopaths is their extraordinary ability to use charm as a manipulative technique. The batterer can be either very, very good or very, very horrid. But, unlike the psychopath, the batterer feels a sense of guilt and shame at his uncontrollable actions.
11. **Myth:** Police can protect the battered women.
- Fact:** Often the police do not even want to get involved. 58 per cent of murdered women compared to 24 per cent of murdered men were killed by family members. This homicide between man and woman is not a crime of passion but rather the end result of unchecked long-standing violence.
12. **Myth:** The batterer is not a loving partner.
- Fact:** Victims have described the men who batter them as fun-loving little boys. Batterers can be playful, attentive, sensitive, exciting, and affectionate with their partners.
13. **Myth:** A wife batterer also beats his children.

- Fact:** This statement is true. Reports show that there are a higher percentage of child beaters among wife batterers than among men who do not abuse their wives.
14. **Myth:** Once a battered women, always a battered woman.
Fact: Women who receive some beneficial intervention rarely remarry another batterer.
15. **Myth:** Once a batterer, always a batterer.
Fact: Batterers can be taught to relearn their aggressive responses: Assertion rather than aggression, negotiation rather than coercion.
16. **Myth:** Long-standing battering relationships can change for the better.
Fact: Relationships that have been maintained by the man having power over the woman are stubbornly resistant to an equal power-sharing arrangement. At best, the violent assaults diminish in frequency and severity. Unassisted, they simply escalate to homicidal and suicidal proportions.
17. **Myth:** Battered women deserve to get beaten.
Fact: Batterers lose self-control for their own personal reasons, not because of what their wives have done or have not done. This myth frees the men of responsibility for their own actions.
18. **Myth:** Battered women can always leave home.
Fact: A battered woman needs assistance to end her victimization.
19. **Myth:** Batterers will cease their violence when they get married.
Fact: The batterer's suspiciousness and possessiveness increase after marriage, along with his rate of violence.
20. **Myth:** Children need their father even if he is violent ("I'm staying for the sake of the children.").
Fact: Children feel enormous relief when they leave a violent home to live with a single parent. Many children from homes where the father beat the mother have severe emotional and educational problems.

The Children of Battered Women

Children usually witness the violent episodes in the family. They may be the person who reports the violence. How will you deal with a child phoning in who says to you, “My mommy is hurt! Help me!” “Make my dad stop!”? What if the little person on the other end of the phone can barely speak English?

This will be very difficult for you to deal with emotionally. If you have your own children or still remember what it was like to be young, it may hit close to home.

Children who grow up in families where spousal abuse occurs often suffer severe and long-lasting problems. Even if they are not physically battered, they are psychologically and emotionally abused by their exposure to the violence between their parents.

Children as Victims

It is only in the past few years that the children have been considered as victims too. The transition houses have child care workers to help deal with their issues, and Social Services are more apt to become involved in their protection.

Physical Abuse of Children

- Over half (53 per cent) of the men who batter their wives beat their children as well, as a means of discipline.
- Over one third of the women who are battered will at some point beat their children.
- Men who batter are frequently suspected of sexually abusing their daughters.
- When a pregnant woman is beaten, the child may be miscarried or be born with birth defects or mental retardation.

(Walker, 1983).

Effects of Family Violence on Children

People who live in a violent home lose some of their self-esteem. They may hide behind a tough facade that often masks feelings of insecurity, fear and vulnerability. They may be unable to trust someone else. They

may suppress their feelings and suspend fulfillment of their own needs. They may use violence as a way to solve problems and have difficulty in expressing their feelings and problems verbally, and of coping with them in general. They participate in a dishonest conspiracy of silence shared with the abuser by denying or minimizing the violence. Children may also develop what is known as a *radar gaze*, as they attempt to block out the violence or avoid attracting attention to themselves – they may stare fixedly at the television or off into space.

Depression, stress and psychosomatic illnesses are common. Babies may exhibit apathy or a failure to thrive. Children may be behind developmentally, suffer from severe rashes, be overweight, have allergies to a large number of foods, or experience hair loss. They may have difficulty in developing a separate sense of identity because they are so caught up in the family conflict and preoccupied with it. This problem can lead to social and peer isolation.

Children may have problems in school, have difficulty in experiencing pleasure, develop poor impulse control and limited tolerance, or show a martyr-like suffering behaviour. Both sexes will develop behaviour in accordance with the role models available to them. Girls often become withdrawn and submissive. Boys may throw frequent and severe temper tantrums and use aggressive behaviour: they may be cruel to animals or other children, or violent with inanimate objects. In addition, some children believe that they are somehow the cause of family violence and experience guilt as a consequence.

(Boyd & Klingbeil; Wright, J., 1982, p.46)

Relationship with Parents

The children do not develop *normal* relationships with their parents. There may be a role reversal as children assume some or most of the parental responsibilities. Boys may relate to their fathers only on a play level and, as a consequence, they will make no demands for parental responsibility or understanding. Girls can be severely punished for showing anger to their fathers. As a result, they may come to identify with the aggressor and show anger towards the mother.

As children become older, they often find it impossible to stay neutral. They start to take sides. As they begin to attach blame to one parent or another, their guilt builds. Some men who grew up in an abusive household may fear marriage because they do not want to be like their fathers. Others will continue the cycle of violence as they learn that violence towards women and children is tolerable. Such was the lesson learned by the killer in the 1989 Montreal massacre from his abusive father. (81 per cent of men who batter were abused as children or witnessed violence between their parents, compared to 24 per cent of non-battering men). (*Walker, 1983*)

Women who grow up in an abusive household are often insecure about their ability to interact positively with men. They may fear and distrust men and have problems forming an equal relationship within a marriage. Some may seek to gain affection through sex. Children of both sexes may abuse alcohol or take drugs, run away, or get into trouble through truancy. (In one study of 100 juvenile offenders, it was found that over 80 per cent had been abused as children, with 40 per cent beaten unconscious.)

(Steeler 1979, p. 46)

Psychological Models Explaining Why Women Stay in Abusive Relationships

Learned Helplessness

The term *learned helplessness* was coined by Seligman (1975) when he worked with animals. He found that subjects exposed to inescapable shocks, who then were given the chance to escape, did not. Further, the natural response of avoiding something adverse can be further extinguished by rewarding the individual to stay in the bad situation.

This very thing happens to a female locked into the *battered wife syndrome*. She feels that she cannot escape and even when given the chance to leave, will not. Also, if she is rewarded by presents or praise for “taking her lumps” or for keeping her family together, she sees the abuse as a way of life rather than the crime it is.

Co-Dependency

Domestic abuse is a parallel to drug abuse when we look at co-dependency. The substance abuser/wife beater is never held accountable for their negative behaviour. Instead, the victims adjust their behaviour to accommodate the “bad guy” and therefore both parties are co-dependent in maintaining the relationship as it is.

Example:

- Male is an alcoholic. He goes for beers with the guys after work every night.
- He comes home every night at 19:30 hours.
- The kids have to wait until 19:30 hours to eat dinner. If the kids are fed before he gets home, he gets mad.
- Rather than confront the issue of his substance abuse, family amends their life to avoid his anger.

Co-dependency affects the participants in this relationship. This is a closed system (abuse) versus open system (love). Avoiding abuse may include pretending that there is no problem and therefore supporting the other person’s negative behaviour. Rather than dealing with the roots of the problem, energy is focused on avoiding abuse rather than dealing with it.

Characteristics of Relationships

<i>LOVE (Open System)</i>	<i>ADDICTION (Closed System)</i>
Room to grow, expand; desire for partner to grow.	Dependence, based on security and comfort; intensity of need and infatuation used as proof of love (may really be fear, insecurity, loneliness).
Separate interests; other friends; maintain other meaningful relationships.	Total involvement; limited social life; neglect of old friends, interests.
Encouragement of each other's expanding, secure in own worth.	Preoccupation with partner's behaviour, dependence on partner's approval for own identity and self-worth.
Trust; openness.	Jealousy, possessiveness, fear of competition, "protects supply".
Mutual integrity preserved.	One partner's needs suspended for the other's; self-deprivation.
Willingness to risk and be real.	Search for perfect invulnerability – eliminates possible risks.
Room for exploration of feelings in and of relationship.	Reassurance through repeated, ritualized activity.
Ability to enjoy being alone.	Intolerance – unable to endure separations (even in conflict); hang on even tighter. Undergo withdrawal – loss of appetite, restlessness, lethargy, disoriented agony.

<i>BREAKUPS</i>	
Acceptance of a breakup without feeling a loss of adequacy or self-worth.	Often a unilateral decision. Feeling of inadequacy, worthlessness.
Hope that the partner will be happy, despite the breakup; friendship possible.	Violent ending: often hate of the partner, attempts to inflict pain. Manipulation to get the partner back.

<i>ONE-SIDED ADDICTION</i>
Denial, fantasy; overestimation of partner's commitment.
Search for solutions outside of oneself – drugs, alcohol, new lover, change of situation.

Why Women may Return to an Abusive Relationship

There are a number of variations on these reasons that can apply.

1. Economic dependence
2. Misinformation regarding their legal rights, i.e.- immigration laws, property entitlement.
3. Saving face within the community.
4. Love of the abuser – “He will change if I love him *even* more.”

How Can I Protect Myself if I Am Not Ready to Leave?

- Consult a lawyer; know your rights.
- Post the police's phone number by the phone. Know where you would go in an emergency if you had to leave.
- Keep extra car keys, money, and clothes in a hidden place or at a friend's. Keep a twenty-dollar bill pinned to your clothing.
- Alert your neighbors to call the police if they hear a fight.
- Keep your friends and neighbors informed of the violence or threats. Their evidence may later be useful.
- Keep a diary of what has happened and how you feel. The notes may later be used in court.
- Preserve written evidence such as bank statements, notes of threats or apologies, and other documents.
- Familiarize yourself with the family finances.
- Save money for an emergency in a separate bank account.
- If you are not self-supporting, prepare to support yourself by taking courses or become self-supporting by re-entering the workforce.
- Find out about resources and self-help groups in your community that can help you (for example, Al-Anon and Al-Anon-Alateen for families of alcoholics) and make use of them.
- Find a counsellor who will support you so that you can build up your self-confidence and find the strength to change your situation from being a victim to having control of your life.
- Lay a charge of assault and leave home while the charge is being heard.
- Try to predict from previous behaviour when the violence might occur and simply leave or send for help.

Adapted from The Canadian Woman's Legal Guide

Criminal Harassment

Criminal Harassment Law: Canadian Criminal Code (1995)

Section 264

- (1) No person shall, without lawful authority and knowing that another person is harassed or recklessly as to whether the other person is harassed, engage in conduct referred to in subsection (2) that causes that other person reasonably, in all the circumstances, to fear for their safety or the safety of anyone known to them.
- (2) The conduct mentioned in subsection (1) consists of:
 - (a) repeatedly following from place to place the other person or anyone known to them;
 - (b) repeatedly communicating with, either directly or indirectly, the other person or anyone known to them;²
 - (c) besetting or watching the dwelling-house, or place where the other person, or anyone known to them, resides, works, carries on business or happens to be;³ or
 - (d) engaging, in threatening conduct directed at the other person or any member of their family.

Uttering Threats

Section 264.1

2 2(b) 'Directly or indirectly' means that the person harassing you is using his or her friends or family, or your friends or family, to contact you by any means. Also, he or she is phoning you, writing you letters, leaving notes for you anywhere, and so on.

3 2(c) "Besetting or watching the dwelling-house, or place where the other person, or anyone known to them, resides, works, carries on business or happens to be" means that the person harassing you is nearby, be it in a car, standing across the street, or across the food fair in a mall, and he or she is continuing to watch you and whomever you are associating with. This condition continues over a day, a week or longer.

- (1) Everyone commits an offence who, in any manner, knowingly utters, conveys or causes any person to receive a threat
 - (a) to cause death or serious bodily harm to any person;
 - (b) to burn, destroy or damage real or personal property; or
 - (c) to kill, poison or injure an animal or bird that is the property of any person.

Reasonable Degree of Fear

As a call taker, ask yourself: “If you were the victim, would you be scared?” Trust your instincts but be aware that different people respond in different ways.

Elements of the Offence

To get a conviction, the prosecution must prove:

- (1) That the accused was in fact the person engaging *knowingly* in the behaviour;
- (2) That the effect of the behaviour was to cause the complainant to “reasonably fear for [his or her] safety or the safety of anyone known to [him or her].”

Risk Factors Involved with Criminal Harassment

The following items may indicate increased risk.

- An escalation in the behaviour of the suspect; for example, calls on the phone or lurking around the victim’s house and workplace.
- A history of previous violence by the suspect.
- Attacks against personal property or pets or friends of the victim.
- Bizarre occurrences: for example, the suspect steals garbage to gain insight into the victim’s personal life (what he or she is eating or reading, for instance).
- The suspect continues to follow the person despite being warned to stop by the police on an earlier occasion.

- The gender and age of the person being harassed: single females between the ages of 18 and 30 are most at risk..

None, some or most of these factors may be present in Criminal Harassment situations.

Delayed Reporting of Criminal Harassment

As public safety communicators, you may get calls from people complaining of being followed or stalked by a stranger or an ex-partner. They may have delayed calling the police for some time. They may not report because of:

- A fear of not being believed by police;
- A difficulty in accepting that someone they have been involved with could be capable of conduct that scares them;
- A feeling that they can handle the situation by themselves.

Your job as a public safety communicator is to let them know that they are believed and that you will initiate an investigation by sending a member to talk to them.

What a Victim of Criminal Harassment Can Do

If people are being stalked, harassed or threatened, they should know it is not their fault. Victims of harassment should report the incident to the police. They should explain how they have been intimidated. It could be *just a feeling*, but the fact that people are in fear for their safety, or that of their friends, family or pets because of a statement made by another person is reasonable grounds for suspecting there is criminal harassment. If the offender persists in harassing and threatening, the victim should continue to keep the police informed and keep a journal of what is going on as well. (The journal should be a detailed written record of the incidents that occurred, their dates and times, and the victim's emotions at the time.)

If the situation escalates, people being harassed should consider doing the following:

- Staying at a friend or relative's place for a while;
- Moving to a different residence;

- Changing their phone number and making it unlisted. Once they have the new phone number, they should be very cautious about who they give it to.

Even if they have filed a complaint with the police, they will not be able to receive twenty-four-hour protection from them. As a consequence, it cannot be emphasized strongly enough that they need to know what to do to protect themselves.

People who feel they could be in danger or in harm's way should do some or all of the following:

- Keep any and all written notes the offender has sent them. It is preferable that they handle such communications as little as possible, and place such material in a plastic bag to be retained for investigative purposes.
- If they are receiving harassing phone calls, they should tape them on their answering machine, or buy a special recording device to do so, noting the date and time of each recording. (It is not illegal in Canada to tape your own conversations, even without the other person's consent. However, you need the consent of at least one of the parties involved before you can tape a conversation in which you are not participating.)
- They should keep a detailed journal of all contacts, calls, threats and related incidents. They should document all harassing phone calls, including content, in this journal.
- They should consider obtaining a *restraining order* (with enforcement clause), or a *peace bond* if appropriate.
- They should inform friends, family and, if necessary, co-workers and office security staff of the situation to enlist their support, and to prevent them from unintentionally making the situation worse by providing sensitive information to the harasser.
- They should limit their physical vulnerability. For example, they should try to vary their schedule and have others accompany them when departing and arriving at their residence or elsewhere.

- When they are alone and they must leave their cars in parking lots, they should tilt the driver's seat forward when exiting the car. This way, when they return, they can see if someone is hiding behind the front seats while they are still at a safe distance from the car. If they neglect this precaution, they should look into the back seat before entering the vehicle, even if the doors were left locked.
- While they are driving, people being harassed should be observant of any vehicles that pull away from their point of departure at the same time as they do, and if they notice such activity, they should note the license plate number. If they believe they are being followed and feel threatened, they should drive to the police station. They should not allow fear of embarrassment to cloud their judgment and place them at greater risk.

Although some cost is involved, they may also wish to:

- Change and unlist their phone number, and/or acquire call display or a cell phone.
- Purchase an alarm system, get a dog, or install extra security.
- Contact a personal security company, depending on the level of danger for themselves or their family.
- Relocate, either temporarily or permanently.

It is extremely important that they attempt to avoid a hostile confrontation with the individual who is stalking them. Stalkers and their reactions are highly unpredictable. They may respond violently to a confrontation.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs – Organizational Examples

Maslow proposes that there is a hierarchy of needs that each individual needs to have met. At the top of this hierarchy is self-actualization but there are many steps to get there.

SELF-ACTUALIZATION NEEDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning new skills • Solving difficult problems • Accomplishing a goal • Self-expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of potential • Self-fulfillment • Achievement • Creativity • Development
EGO NEEDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title/position • Compliments • Importance • Freedom • Power • Self-respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prestige • Promotion • Dignity • Excellence • Status • Awards/recognition
SOCIAL NEEDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work group acceptance • Supportive supervisor • Sense of belonging • Team spirit • Tolerance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional affiliation • Acceptance • Group membership • Equality
SECURITY NEEDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pension • Job security • Comfort • Self-preservation • Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure parking (night) • Safety • Preparation for the future • Justice
PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic wage/salary • Working conditions • Hunger • Sex • Excretion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest • Thirst • Activity • Normal body temperature

When needs on the lower levels are not met, then stress increases and functioning decreases.

Stress

Hans Selye

“We can blame a fumbling scientist for introducing stress into our lives. It was in the 1930s and an ambitious young endocrinologist named Hans Selye had a bad habit of dropping his lab rats, chasing them around the room, and trapping them beneath a sink. When they developed ulcers and shrunken immune tissues, Selye did some tests and realized what was happening: his clumsiness was making the rats sick. Searching for a word to describe this response to life under tension, Selye borrowed a term from engineering – and ‘stress’ was born.”

(from “Taming the Stress Monster” Thrive@Health, The Healthy Living Experience. Thursday 5/29/97 – Internet)

Hans Selye was born in Vienna on January 26, 1907, and died in Canada on October 16, 1982. He is known as the father of stress research. He was also the founder and director of the Institute of Experimental Medicine and Surgery at the University of Montreal.

Stress Definitions

- Simplest definition: Nonspecific response of the body to any demand.
- Stress is the common denominator of all adaptive reactions in the body.
- Stress is the state manifested by a specific syndrome which consists of all the nonspecifically-induced changes within a biological system.
- The physical reaction of the body to stress is basically the same, regardless of the stressor.
- Complete freedom from stress is death.

Stages of Stress

The four stages of stress are understress, eustress, overstress, and distress.

Understress

Lack of arousal to the events around us.

Eustress

Eustress is positive stress. When our minds and bodies are in balance, we feel energetic, adaptable, approachable and relaxed.

Overstress

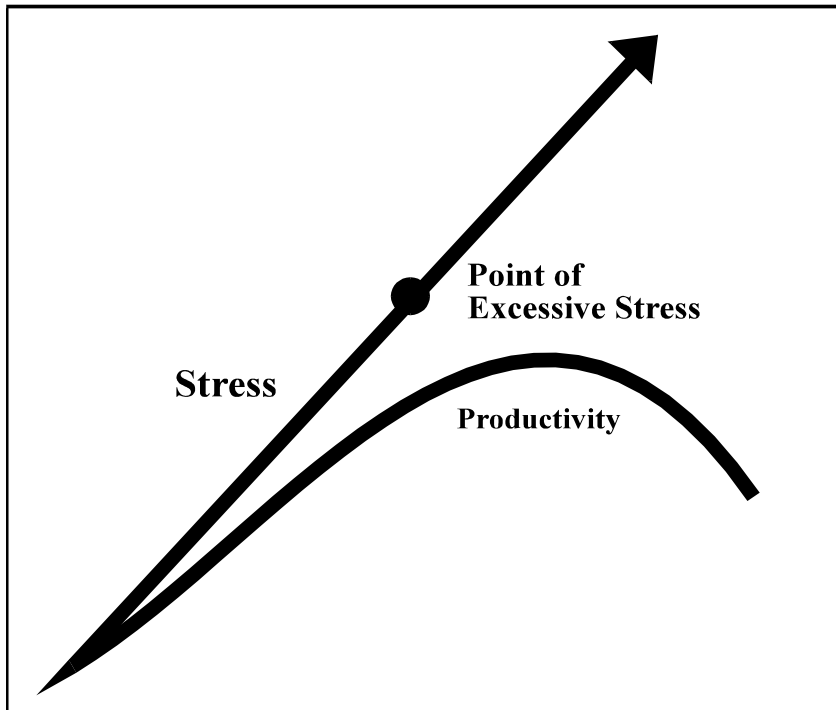
We feel overstress when we are tired, anxious, aggressive or defensive.

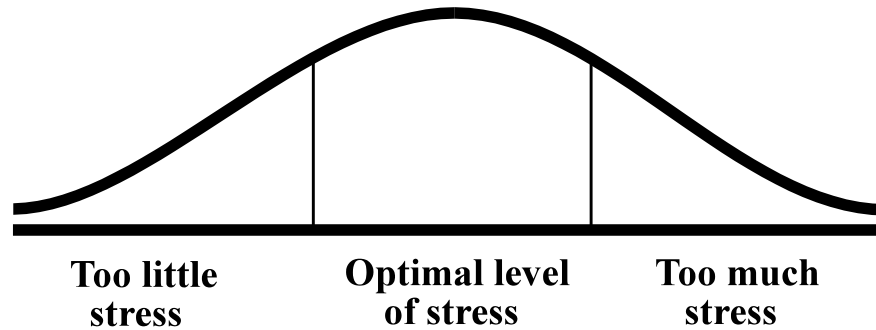
Overstress is continual stress that causes us constantly to readjust elements of our lives. People have trouble returning to a homeostatic (or balanced) state when they are overstressed.

Distress

Distress is more extreme than overstress. It is a continual stress that leads to fatigue, exhaustion and physical and mental breakdown. This type of stress can lead to disease.

Eustress vs. Distress





Stress Types

Cumulative Stress

- *Cumulative stress* may not show up for months, or even years.

Acute Stress (Critical Incident)

- *Acute stress* may overwhelm a person's usual coping ability.
- It requires debriefings.

Delayed Stress (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)

- The *delayed stress* reaction does not show up at the time of the critical incidents.

General Adaptive Syndrome (GAS)

- Manifestation of stress in the body.
- Three stages – alarm reaction, stage of resistance, and stage of exhaustion.

Alarm Reaction

- Aware of stressor.
- *Fight or flight* response.
- Faster heart rate, higher blood pressure, greater muscle tension, and so on.

Resistance Stage

- The body attempts to restore its equilibrium (homeostatic state).
- Short-term stress – resistance state continues until stressor ceases.
- Long-term stress – body loses its ability to adapt.

Exhaustion Stage

- The body's ability to resist diminishes if stressors continue or return repeatedly.

- Depletion of adaptive energy and failure of the immune system.

Local Adaptive Syndrome (LAS)

- Manifestation of stress in a limited part of the body.
- Three stages – inflammation, degeneration and tissue death.

What Stress Is Not

1. Stress is not simply nervous tension. It occurs in lower animals.
2. Stress is not an emergency discharge of hormones from the adrenal medulla.
3. Stress is not the only reason for which the adrenal cortex starts to secrete its hormones, the corticoids. Hormones can be secreted without any evidence of stress.
4. Stress is not always the nonspecific result of damage. Normal activities can produce considerable stress without causing conspicuous damage.
5. Stress is not the same as a deviation from homeostasis, the steady state of the body. Any specific biological function eventually causes marked deviations from the normal resting state.
6. Stress is not anything that causes an alarm reaction. It is the stressor that does that, not stress itself.
7. Stress is not identical with the alarm reaction or the GAS as a whole. Stress is not a nonspecific reaction. The pattern of stress reaction is very specific. It affects certain organs in a highly selective manner.
8. Stress is not a specific reaction. It can be produced by any agent.
9. Stress is not necessarily something bad. Stress in moderation can have good or bad effects.
10. Stress cannot and should not be avoided. Everyone is under some degree of stress. Stress can only be avoided by dying.

(From Selye, Hans. The Stress of Life. Revised edition, Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1975. Pp. 62-63.)

Common Personality Traits of Emergency Service Workers

- Set extremely high personal standards.

- Pride themselves on a perfect job.
- Frustrate easily when they encounter failure.
- More interested in detail than the average person in other professions.
- Action oriented.
- High need for stimulation.
- Easily bored.
- Risk takers.
- Highly dedicated.

Stressor Categories

Environmental	Psychosocial	Personality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noise• Dirt/dust• Overcrowding• Temperature extremes• Clutter• Weather conditions• Speed on calls• Confined space• Lighting• Seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family relationships• Conflicts with fellow workers• Conflicts with administration• Abusive callers• Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inability to say <i>no</i>• Need to be liked• Anxiety about competence• Sensitivity to criticism• Extremely high expectations of self• Guilt about mistakes

Stress Management

To maintain professional competence, it is important that you care for your health. Shift work has both physical and psychological effects that you must counter. For more about shift work, see below.

Healthy Interventions to Counteract Stress

Balance

- Life beyond the job.

- Work *with* home life.
- Colleagues in the profession *with* friends outside of the profession.
- Work *with* hobbies.
- Left-brain activities *with* right-brain activities.

An Immune Booster

Do you want to ward off colds this winter? Try physical exercise. New research shows that working out regularly gives your immune system a healthy boost. Experts at North Carolina's Appalachian State University compared women who walked briskly five times per week with women who were sedentary, and found that the immune systems of the walkers were about 20 percent stronger. (Immunity was rated according to levels of disease-fighting T cells and immunoglobulins.) In addition, the exercisers were laid up by colds only half as often as the non-exercisers. Any aerobic exercise, done on a regular basis, should provide the same immune benefits. But do not overdo it – excessive training may lower immunity.

Fragrance as a Stress Fix

Are you feeling frazzled at work? A whiff of a favorite scent may be all you need to ease your stress, say researchers at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. In his study, Robert A. Baron, Ph.D., simulated on-the-job stress by asking 65 adults to perform complex mental tasks such as proofreading under high- and moderate-stress conditions. The subjects completed more tasks and reported feeling more relaxed when they worked in a room where a pleasant-smelling air freshener had been sprayed.

There is a direct link between receptors in the nasal passages and the brain. Fragrance may trigger a surge in brain chemicals that produce good feelings to counteract the effects of stress. Wearing perfume will not work, however, because your nose adapts easily to fragrances worn on the body. Fragrance preferences vary from person to person, as well, so what you find soothing may actually increase another's stress. For

maximum stress relief, try to vary your choice of scent from time to time.

Activity: Identifying Personal Stressors

Instructions

In groups of four, identify the following personal stressors.

These things about an important relationship with another person bother me (*list three things*):

These things about other people bother me (*list three things*):

These things concern me about myself (*list three things*):

These things about my level of income bother me (*list three things*):

** The identification of these stressors is the beginning of the process of stress reduction.*

Conflict Resolution

Not only is the work that you can expect to be doing in the future going to present you with a number of stressors, you can also expect that times in your personal life will be more stressful than they are now ... or at least different.

Common “pet peeves” or issues may include:

- Not keeping personal information confidential.
- People having lower standards than oneself.
- Lack of professionalism.
- Not being on time.
- Being lazy and not “carrying their load”.
- “Back-stabbing”.
- Not keeping their word.

The Problem Solving Process

Many of the stressors identified are the source/cause of most conflicts. People in the helping professions are usually highly motivated people and as a result examine problems from many perspectives before acting upon them. Not only do most of us try to think about the “roots” of the problem, we will hope to maintain a level of harmony in the work place, by not saying anything. We may hope that someone that is more out-going than ourselves will tackle the problem. However, this lack of action can lead to bigger problems in the future as the problem will not go away by itself. If it does not go away, you become more stressed.

Informal Conflict Resolution Model

The following model will assist in understanding of the problem. It will not always generate consensus! As implied, this is informal. However, clear communication is essential even when dealing with small problems.

- Identify the problem in terms that can be measured
 - how many times they were late
 - how annoying the smell of their perfume is
- Look for possible solutions. Entertain **all** suggestions regardless of how far fetched
- Choose the best solution.
- Implement the solution. Both sides have to agree on the process.
- The solution has to be reassessed to ensure compliance.
- If it did not work, what is the next best solution?

Leave Work Problems and Emotions at Work

We have to be very careful to separate the “emotion” from the “message”. Often informal conflicts end up focusing on the stress felt due to emotions. If the conflict is not solved at work, the common response is to take it home. How many dinner conversations have you had in your life which focused on a problem totally unrelated to your family or your circle of friends?” If you are taking your problems home with you, the problem may become “chronic” and may require mediation by a co-worker or supervisor. Try to resolve the problem where it started and not let it take over other parts of your life.

Effects of Shift Work

Shift work affects most people's normal biological rhythms and, if not understood and countered, can lead to personal difficulties. The following items are some of the problems encountered by people who work shifts.

Chronic sleep problems and fatigue 60 to 80 per cent of shift workers

Stomach disorders 4 to 5 times more likely

Mood swings or depression..... 5 to 15 times more likely

Serious on-the-job accidents Higher

Drug and alcohol abuse Higher

Divorce and spouse abuse Higher

Normal Nocturnal Physiology

At night:

These slowdowns occur so the body can divert energy to:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| • blood pressure drops | • Protein formation |
| • Breathing slows | • Repair work |
| • Digestion slows, then stops | • Cell maintenance |
| • Heart rate slows | • Memory consolidation |
| • Urinary output decreases | |

When Shift Work Disrupts Sleeping Patterns

Desynchronization

This occurs when body cues do not match environmental cues. People are less able to perform at their peak, where all body rhythms are coordinated with each other and with the environment. The body also regulates its temperature and for most people temperature drops when they are sleeping. You can avoid desynchronization by adhering to a regular schedule, which stabilizes body rhythms, and by generally providing consistent time cues to body rhythms.

Sleep-Stage Cycles

Non-Rapid Eye Movement (NREM) Sleep has four stages and lasts about 90 minutes.

- **Stage 1**

This is the transition from wakefulness to sleep. It averages about 10 minutes in duration and is characterized by slow eye movements. The person's mental state moves from realistic to distorted thinking.

- **Stage 2**

About half of the night may be spent in stage 2, in episodes of about 20 minutes in duration. There are no eye movements, but the brain registers response to stimuli.

- **Stage 3 – 4**

These stages are also called delta or deep sleep because of the presence of high amplitude, low frequency (slow) brain waves. It is difficult to differentiate between stages 3 and 4. These stages are the ones that can include sleepwalking, enuresis (bed-wetting), nightmares, and sleep talking. Children are in this stage for up to 25 per cent of sleep time, while in elderly people it is often absent.

Rapid Eye Movement (**REM**) is so named because of the presence of rapid conjugate eye movements.

- **REM Sleep**

- The brain wave pattern is similar to wakefulness.
- It is controlled by the primitive brain stem.
- Spinal reflexes are inhibited, resulting in paralysis.
- It is the state of consciousness linked to dreaming.
- If awakened during this state, 90 per cent of people will report a vivid dream.
- The heart and breathing rates are irregular.
- Oxygen consumption increases.
- More blood flows to the brain than during wakefulness.
- As night progresses, the REM period lengthens.
- Between 20 and 25 per cent of the night is spent in REM

sleep.

- There are four to six REM periods a night lasting from 10 to 45 minutes.
- A new REM cycle starts approximately every 90 minutes.

Effects

After the first three hours (two cycles), the night is dominated by Stage 2 and REM. If you cut your sleep short by two hours, you will lose half of your REM sleep. If you reduce REM sleep one night, your body will include more the next night to make up for the loss (shift workers tend to dream more). So a full night's sleep is essential – you cannot skip it without penalty.

All Delta sleep occurs within the first three hours. If you don't get delta in the first three hours, you must repeat stages 1 and 2; you cannot simply pick up where you left off. Again, this points to the need for a stable sleep cycle.

Strategies to Get a Good Night's Sleep

- Avoid caffeine for at least four hours before bedtime. The half-life of caffeine is eight hours. Three cups of coffee doubles your adrenaline level. (See *Common Caffeine Sources* on the following page.)
- Avoid alcohol. Depressants disrupt sleep.
- Avoid nicotine. It is a stimulant with an addictive reaction: after several hours without it, the body experiences symptoms of withdrawal.
- Maintain a consistent 15– to 30-minute pre-sleep ritual.
- The earlier to bed after night shift, the better. As the metabolism rises, your temperature rises; your body functions are eventually incompatible with sleep. The number one complaint resulting from this is premature waking.
- Eat lightly – carbohydrates and fruit, no protein or fat. Breakfast should be high protein, gradually shifting to carbohydrates as bedtime approaches. Maintain a normal meal schedule, and eat at least one meal with your family each day.
- Drink water – two liters a day.
- Be aware of your limitations; for example, you are not at your peak during your low temperature periods.
- Communicate with family and friends.
- Avoid inconsistent napping; plan your naps.
- Get up at your usual time even if you have not slept well.
- Your sleeping environment is important. The most important thing is to ensure it is blacked out. Wear earplugs or use white noise to block out extraneous sounds. Keep your room cool; you will rest more efficiently when the temperature is below 65 degrees.

Common Caffeine Sources

Source	Amount	Caffeine in milligrams
Coffee		
Automatic percolated	178 ml/6 oz	75-140
Filter drip	178 ml/6 oz	110-180
Instant regular	178 ml/6 oz	60-90
Instant decaffeinated	178 ml/6 oz	2-6
Tea		
Weak (from one bag)	178 ml/6 oz	20-45
Strong (from one bag)	178 ml/6 oz	79-110
Cocoa Products		
Chocolate milk	225 ml/7.5 oz	2-7
Hot cocoa from mix	178 ml/6 oz	6-30

Milk chocolate	56 g/2 oz	3-20
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Dark chocolate	56 g/2 oz	40-50
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Cola

Regular	300 ml/10 oz	31.5
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Medications

Some cold remedies	1 pill	15-30
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Some headache relievers	1 pill	30-32
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Some weight-loss aids	1 pill	120-200
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Human Information Processing

As a public safety communicator, you will be expected to deal with information coming at you from various sources, such as:

- The radio, the telephone, a CAD system;
- Various other screens on computers: 9-1-1 screens;
- Other people in the office talking to you.

Factors Affecting Capability

- **Ability to concentrate:** your concentration can be affected by the amount of rest you have had, your diet, your emotional state, and your personal problems.
- **Amount of practice you have had:** do you know all there is to know about your equipment so that what you are doing is second nature?
- **Natural abilities:** Some people are just better than others at doing three things at once.

Reaction Times and Human Abilities

The average human reaction time is 470 milliseconds. This is just under half a second. For example, in hockey, if a puck is shot at a goalie, he has about half a second to see it, place his glove or stick in the way, and make the save. Doctors in sports medicine have spent countless hours trying to teach goalies and other athletes to react as fast as they can, but there are limits. The human body simply cannot work more quickly than it was designed to work. Really good athletes anticipate and guess well, but their reaction times are no faster than yours or mine.

Thus, from the time you receive some new sensory information, it takes about half a second to process the information and react to it. As a public safety communicator, when you are required to respond it will take about half a second.

Capability when One is Overloaded

We become overloaded by doing one task, and then adding another one, and then another. Needless to say, our capabilities for each task tend to go down as we take on new ones.

Activity: Multi-Tasking

Instructions

Work in groups of three. One person will read a story, while another person concentrates on remembering the story while tapping out a rhythm. Then the third person adds other tasks.

1. Start by tapping out a rhythm in 4/4 time (1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4), until the leader says “Stop”.
2. As you are listening to the story you will be tapping out the rhythm in 4/4 time (1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4), until the leader says “Stop”.
3. Once you appear able to handle the tapping and listening tasks, the third person in your group will start to read another story to you. The task will be to remember both stories and to keep tapping until the leader says “Stop”.

Chances are good that the motor activity will break down first. For instance, if you are listening to the radio, talking on the phone and trying to type error-free at the same time, it is likely that your typing will break down first.

Evaluate your reaction times when faced with many tasks. You will perform the tapping task, and within two minutes the leader will say “Stop”. (You will probably stop within half a second as this is all you have to concentrate on.) Next you will do the tapping task and one story will be read to you. Again within two minutes the leader will say “Stop”.

- Is the reaction time slower?
- How much of the story do you remember?

Next you will have two stories read to you while doing the tapping task. After two minutes, the leader will say “Stop”.

- Do you remember anything about the two stories?
- What did you notice?
- How did the experience feel?

The overload of many tasks reduces your capability. Practicing the tasks individually and then simultaneously will allow you to increase your capabilities to the limit of the human body.

Resume Writing

Covering Letters

To many employers the covering letter is the most important part of the resume package. This letter is your introduction, and it should be to the point, clear and confident. If the job add says “We are looking for “X, Y, and Z” then your letter should state that you have “X, Y, and Z” or a very close approximation.

Components of a Covering Letter

Beginning

- Cite where you found the ad or job posting on the position including any dates it was posted or ran in the newspaper.
- Avoid “To whom it may concern”. If you are unable to find out who is hiring for the position, address the letter to the “Personnel Manager” or “Selection Committee”.
- Include the position title in bold at the beginning of the covering letter. For example, **RE: Position as 9-1-1 Operator Langley Detachment**. This eliminates the possibility of mistakes and lets the employer know exactly which position you are applying for.

Middle

- Information about you not found in resume but pertaining to job
- Body of the letter should be two or three paragraphs maximum.
- State your strengths, and how you can meet their expectations.

End

- Thank the employer for reading resume.
- Ask for interview with an open-ended statement such as “I look forward to meeting with you to discuss this position. Please contact me at your convenience.”
- Give the phone number at which you can be reached.

Building an Effective Resume

Your resume should be word processed and updated regularly. If you move or change your phone number, make sure this information is changed on your resume immediately.

People cling to their first impressions. Your resume is a custom-designed, self-marketing tool tailored to your career objectives. Take the time and effort to make your resume reflect the professionalism a public safety communicator requires.

Basic Resume Formats

Chronological

- Emphasizes your previous job experience and is written in the order of the positions you have held, beginning with the most recent position and working backwards

Functional

- The functional style highlights your skills with a lesser emphasis on the job titles and dates of employment.

Combination

- Makes use of the strengths of both the chronological and the functional resumes.

Comparison of Resume Formats

Chronological	Functional	Combination
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most widely used	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Least widely used	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Popular format
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shows career development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highlights transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shows both career development and transferable skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easiest to prepare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needs skill in preparing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harder to prepare
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easy to read	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employers can find hard to read	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be confusing if not written well
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highlights steady employment record	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hides gaps in employment history	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can minimize gaps in employment history

Sections of a Basic Resume

Section 1 – Personal Information

(Age, religion or political affiliation not required)

- Name
- Address
- Phone

Section 2 – Job Objective

- Describe the job you are seeking and your most relevant qualifications.

Section 3 – Work Experience

- List your current job first.
- Choose experience and skills directly related to the job objective.
- Start each listing with an action word.(For example; developed, operated, dispatched, composed)
- Emphasize the important tasks and allude to any special recognition you have received.

Section 4 – Education

- Your most recent educational information. List what you have completed first. List where, when, and degrees or certificates earned. Brief description of the course work.
- If you are still in a program, list it first. Put dates as “Sept. 1996 to current.” Include what your certificate or degree is anticipated to be.
- Indicate other certificates and qualifications such as first aid or a radio communications license.
- Indicate high school information including where, what school, and the year graduated.

Section 5 – Other Activities

- Employers are often looking for well-rounded persons.
- List your hobbies and your sports.
- Volunteering
- Community service
- Family activities
- Memberships in organizations

Section 6 – References

- “Available upon request” statement is appropriate.
- Have two or three reference names on a separate page that you can give to your interviewer, if asked.
- Copies of certificates, awards or special recognition can be attached to this page.
- Be sure to ask prior permission to use the references you list

Steps in Resume Writing

1. Gather Facts

Include:

- Employment and education history, skills and accomplishments.
- Create a fact sheet listing former employer details (names, addresses, supervisors, dates of employment).
- Job titles and job descriptions.
- Educational institutions (program, area of study, awards or recognition received)
- Volunteer experience, hobbies and memberships.
- Possible references (names, addresses and telephone numbers)

2. Decide which Qualifications to Emphasize

- Emphasize your strongest qualifications.

- If your education background is stronger than your work history, list it first.

3. Choose Resume Format

- Chronological, functional or combination

4. Write a draft resume

- Simple and clear
- Emphasize accomplishments and achievements
- Use action words to describe your work (checklist of transferable skills and personal life skills)
- Be honest about your skills
- Don't sign or date your resume

5. Edit

- For grammar, typos, formatting
- Key points and headings stand out
- Simplify wording
- Avoid using abbreviations