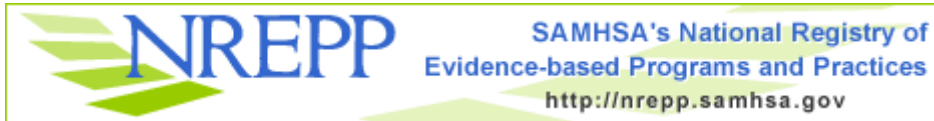


Based on
**TCU Mapping-Enhanced Counseling
Manuals for Adaptive Treatment**

As Included in NREPP



IDEAS FOR BETTER COMMUNICATION

A collection of topic-focused applications for substance abuse treatment clients in corrections settings for improving relationships through communication.

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SPECIAL VERSION FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE (CJ) POPULATIONS

TCU Mapping-Enhanced Counseling manuals provide evidence-based guides for adaptive treatment services (included in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices, NREPP, 2008). They are derived from cognitive-behavioral models designed particularly for counselors and group facilitators working in substance abuse treatment programs. Although best suited for group work, the concepts and exercises can be directly adapted to individual settings.

When accompanied by user-friendly information about client assessments that measure risks, needs, and progress over time, *TCU Mapping-Enhanced Counseling* manuals represent focused, time-limited strategies for engaging clients in discussions and activities on important recovery topics. These materials and related scientific reports are available as Adobe PDF® files for free download at <http://www.ibr.tcu.edu>.

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TCU MAPPING-ENHANCED COUNSELING MANUALS FOR ADAPTIVE TREATMENT

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Communication Roadblocks

*Source: TCU / Institute of Behavioral Research. From treatment manual
"Straight Ahead: Transition Skills for Recovery"*

Communication Roadblocks

Communication Roadblocks is part of the Straight Ahead: Transition Skills for Recovery manual developed at TCU. This session features a leader's script, with notes and handouts for leading a solution-focused or strengths-based discussion of dealing with perceptions that interfere with communication. Participants are invited to think about things they do and are aware of in others that get in the way of effective communication. Materials for a "mini-lecture" highlight healthy and unhealthy reactions to communication problems. Guidelines for leading an exercise to improve listening also are included.

Communication Roadblocks

STEP 1

Introduce the topic of communication roadblocks:

In this session we'll take a look at some things that contribute to communication problems and discuss some ideas for overcoming those difficulties.

This idea of sending and receiving messages is the basis of communication. A conversation or discussion with another person involves a series of messages sent and received by both people. A message has a verbal part (words, expressions, tone of voice) and a nonverbal part (gestures, eye contact, posture). Breakdowns can happen when we don't send a clear message or when the other person doesn't send a clear message. Likewise, communication breaks down when we don't fully understand the other person's message or when the other person doesn't fully understand our message.

Communication can break down for other reasons, too. For starters, when we're under the influence of drugs or alcohol we are less able to send and receive messages clearly. Here are some other factors that can influence how well we communicate: illness, lack of sleep, lack of interest, poor self-esteem, anger and other intense emotions, distractions, boredom, and the feelings we have for the person with whom we are communicating.

In today's sessions we'll look at some ideas for improving our ability to send and receive clearer messages and avoid communication breakdowns.

Ask participants to help you make a list of communication difficulties they have encountered. Use flip chart or chalkboard to list the responses and discuss briefly using some of the following questions.

What are some reasons why people don't always communicate well?

What is your own personal "pet peeve" in communication? What really irritates you?

Do you have any "bad" communication habits you'd like to break?

How can you tell when you are really communicating well with someone?

Communication Roadblocks

Transition:

Communicating well with another person is not always easy. For all of us there are “roadblocks” that sometimes get in the way. During the remainder of the session we’ll explore some ways around the most common communication roadblocks.

STEP 2

Distribute *Communication Roadblocks* handout. Use it to lead a discussion about common perceptions and feelings that get in the way of communication. Suggested discussion questions are included for each point on the handout.

We assume people know what we’re talking about.

Our own thoughts and ideas are usually very clear to us. As a result, we sometimes don’t explain things well or we use words or slang that others may not understand. We’ve all had experiences where we are talking about one thing, and the person we are talking with thinks we are talking about something else. This contributes to communication problems because it leads to misunderstanding. It can also result in feelings of anger or frustration in both people. When people feel angry, frustrated, or misunderstood communication often breaks down.

What can we do to help overcome this type of roadblock?

How can we help make sure people understand what we’re saying?

Closure point: Accept that people won’t always understand what you’re saying. Be patient, and try not to get angry. Look for signs that your message was not understood or was taken in the wrong way. Be ready to clarify or repeat what you said in a different way.

We assume people know what we’re feeling (or that they should!).

It’s normal to want understanding and sympathy from others, but it’s not helpful to assume that other people should know what we are feeling. We sometimes hear people

Communication Roadblocks

say “*She should have known I was upset*” or “*If he really cared he would have known I was feeling blue.*” The truth is—no one is a mind reader. It’s our responsibility to tell others what we are feeling. When we assume others know what we’re feeling communication may break down. Once again, the door is open for miscommunication and anger. Also we may experience hurt feelings because the other person didn’t respond the way we wanted them to

How can we overcome this communication barrier?

What can we do to express our feelings more clearly?

Closure point: Even people who love you with all their hearts may not always know what you’re feeling. Use *I-statements* to send a clear message about what you feel, and what you need.

We don’t listen very well.

Listening is hard work. Sometimes we don’t listen well because we get distracted by things like the television set, the radio, or the baby crying in the next room. Sometimes we get distracted by our own thoughts—we begin to plan what we’re going to say next while the other person is still talking. And sometimes we cut people off - we interrupt them or don’t let them finish their thoughts.

Not listening is perhaps the biggest communication roadblock of all. If we don’t listen well, we seldom truly understand what the other person has said. This leads to misunderstanding and confusion. The speaker may begin to feel insulted, frustrated, and angry. No one likes to be cut off in mid-sentence. Good communication depends on good listening.

How can we overcome this communication barrier?

What are some of the ways we communicate to others that we are listening to them?

Closure point: The best way to improve your listening habits is to practice. Concentrate on what the other person is saying instead of your own thoughts and ideas. Catch yourself before you interrupt. If you’re not willing to listen, use *I-statements* to say so. For example, “*I’m not able to concentrate on what you’re saying right now because I’m watching the football game. Let’s talk later.*”

Communication Roadblocks

We sometimes overreact to what other people say.

When we don't care for another person's thoughts, ideas, or opinions we sometimes respond with anger or sarcasm. We may also stop listening and start debating, trying to prove our point of view is right. We may assume it's alright to cut someone off in mid-sentence if we don't agree with them. In this case, communication breaks down because we stop listening. This can be very damaging, especially in relationships with people we care about. If we constantly overreact to ideas or opinions that are different from ours we may wake up one day and find that no one wants to talk with about anything except the weather!

How can we overcome this communication barrier?

What are some things we can do to help avoid overreacting to what other people say?

Closure point: Remember that **listening to** is different from **agreeing with**. Sometime you may feel you have to interrupt just to show the other person how strongly you disagree. Of course, the choice is yours. Another choice is to stay calm, keep listening, then use *I-statements* to express your thoughts and feelings on the issue. (*"I hear what you're saying and I don't agree with you at all!!"*)

We're not always clear about saying "no."

This is often the case when we feel pulled in two directions (we want to say "no" and we also want to say "yes"). Sometimes we say "yes" when we really want to say "no," and then we feel angry and resentful about it. Other times we say "yes" when we want to say "no," then cancel at the last minute. Sometimes we let ourselves be pressured into saying "yes" because we want to be liked or not seen by others as "square" or "dweebish." Not being clear about saying "no" is a communication roadblock because it creates confusion. It can really be a roadblock when it causes us to feel angry and resentful, either at ourselves or toward others.

How can we overcome this communication roadblock?

What are some things that have helped you say "no" clearly?

Who do you have the hardest time saying "no" to?

Closure point: Keep in mind that you have the right to say "no." Develop a style for turning people down with which you feel comfortable. Ask for time to think when you need

Communication Roadblocks

it so that you avoid feeling pressured. Use *I-statements* to help you deal with people who try to pressure you. For example, “*I’m not interested, thank you. I want you to quit asking me!*”

Transition:

It may sound odd, but communicating about *communicating* is an important step in improving relationships with partners, family, and friends. Share the information from the handout and this discussion with someone you feel you would like to communicate with more effectively.

STEP 3

Begin the following exercise by again noting that listening is a key communication skill. Remind participants that practice helps improve listening habits.

Ask participants to help you quickly generate a list of good listening habits. Use flip chart or chalkboard to record responses. Prompt with the following questions:

How do you know when someone is really listening to you?

What really shows you that someone is listening?

Next ask participants to choose a partner. Explain that each partner will be given three minutes to speak. Ask them to decide who will go first. Whoever goes first will talk for three minutes while the other listens, then they will change roles and the “listener” will become the “speaker.” Let them know that you will keep time and remind them when to change roles.

Make a quick list of the following topics on flip chart or chalkboard, and suggest that the speakers chose one of these topics to talk about:

Communication Roadblocks

How you met your current partner or spouse
Tell about a hobby or talent you're proud of
The funniest thing that ever happened to you
Your goals for the future

Monitor the time and have the partners switch roles at the end of three minutes.

Lead a discussion of the exercise using some of the following questions:

How did it feel to do this exercise?

Was it easy or hard to listen for three minutes? Explain why.

When you were listening, what was the hardest thing for you to remember to do? What was the easiest?

When you were speaking, did you feel you were being listened to? What made you feel you were being heard?

What did you learn from this exercise?

Summarize the discussion with some of the following points:

Communicating well is hard work. We're all guilty of communicating poorly from time to time. It's helpful to become aware of the things that get in the way of your ability to communicate effectively and to learn skills for overcoming those barriers. It can make a big difference, both in relationships and in the workplace.

Many communication problems stem from poor listening habits. The best remedy is practice. Challenge yourself to practice listening well. Look for opportunities everyday to practice good listening.

Thank participants for their input.

Communication Roadblocks



Watch out for these **COMMUNICATION ROADBLOCKS**

We Assume People Know What We're Talking About...

But they don't always - so be patient!

Look for signs that your message was not understood or was taken the wrong way. If that's the case, try again to get your point across.

We Assume People Know What We're Feeling...

Don't count on it!

Use I-statements to send a clear, honest message about what you're feeling.

We Don't Listen Very Well

Listening is hard work!

It helps to concentrate on what the other person is saying instead of your own thoughts and ideas.

We Overreact Sometimes to What Other People Say

Especially when we disagree!

Listening doesn't mean agreeing. Stay calm, try to listen and respond using I-statements to express your views.

We're Not Always Clear About Saying "No"

Fence-sitting creates confusion!

Ask for time to think when you need it. Avoid saying "yes" when you want to say "no."

Repairing Relationships

Source: Neurobehavioral Treatment/NDRI/ Matrix Institute

Repairing Relationships

Repairing Relationships provides worksheets and group leader instruction for facilitating a session on strategies to examine and begin to repair past relationship problems, including listing and reflecting on specific issues. Taken from a core set of materials developed by Matrix, Inc. (at UCLA), and adapted by NDRI, the intervention features an informational handout for participants as well as leader questions designed to encourage discussions about the situational aspects of communication problems.

Repairing Relationships

Step 1

Introduce the topic of making repairs in important relationships:

In this session we'll explore the importance of taking responsibility for our part in relationship problems and look at some ideas for "damage control." In other words, things we can think about in order to start or continue the process of making repairs.

It's human nature to look at friends and family members who we consider to have good relationships and to imagine that these people never have problems, arguments, or disagreements. We may think that in these apparently happy relationships, no one ever hurts the other's feelings, no one is ever selfish or hard headed, or no one ever gets on the other person's nerves. No one does things the other person doesn't like. No one forgets to take out the trash.

In reality, one thing that solid, healthy relationships seem to have in common is not a lack of problems or conflicts, but rather a commitment on the part of both partners to restore harmony and satisfaction to the relationship after dealing with their differences. We call this "making repairs," and that means that in relationships, like anything else in life, we have to be mindful, and be ready to take responsibility for "fixing" our mistakes.

Think about it. Every culture and civilization that's ever existed has words like "I'm sorry" or "Please forgive me," along with rituals, practices, and expectations about how amends should be made. It is as though, as human beings, we realized a long time ago the importance of stepping up to the plate to make repairs and preserve our cherished relationships.

When people have struggled with addiction, it is not unusual for relationships to have suffered. This awareness is behind the wisdom of the 8th, 9th, and 10th steps in AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) and other 12-step recovery programs. Actually, when it comes to maintaining close, supportive relationships, these steps offer some good advice for anyone, regardless of whether drugs or alcohol were ever a problem.

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to these people whenever possible, except when to do so would further injure them or others.
10. Continued to take a personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

Repairing Relationships

Step 2

Distribute *Thinking About Repairs* worksheets and ask participants to spend some time completing them for discussion.

Lead a discussion on participants' responses. Use open-ended questions to encourage discussion about the key issues raised by participants. Some ideas for general process questions include:

What did you learn about yourself as you completed this worksheet?

What thoughts came to mind about how to begin repairing important relationships?

Are there any potential problems or drawbacks that came to mind about making amends?

What is the difference between making amends and simply asking for forgiveness?

In what ways is it helpful to consider the other person's point of view?

What makes you most hopeful about repairing your important relationships?

What do you know about yourself that tells you that you can be successful in making a sincere effort to repair your important relationships?

Thank participants for their work. Encourage them to continue thinking about the issues raised on the worksheets and to share their thoughts with

Repairing Relationships

Thinking About Repairs

What are some of the past behaviors for which you want to make amends?

Which relationships have suffered the most from these past behaviors?

How have you already started to work on making amends?

What are some more steps toward continuing these amends that you will take in the future?

Repairing Relationships

How have your relationships benefited so far from the amends work you have done?

Think about your most important relationship. What would this person say is different about you now since you have been working on changing your past behaviors?

Adapted from Matrix/Neurobehavioral Treatment (NDRI)

Communication Styles

*Source: TCU / Institute of Behavioral Research. From treatment manual
"Straight Ahead: Transition Skills for Recovery"*

Communication Styles

Communication Styles is adapted from the Straight Ahead: Transition Skills for Recovery manual developed at TCU. This session features a leader's script, with notes and handouts for leading a discussion on different communication styles and their impact on relationships. Participants are invited to think about communication habits that can get in the way of sustaining healthy relationships. Materials for a "mini-lecture" highlight problems that arise from passive and aggressive communication. Brief role-plays are used to help participants identify aspects of different communication styles.

Communication Styles

Step 1

Introduce the topic of paying attention to communication style:

This session will focus on what is sometimes called “the art of communication.” Improving social skills and gaining confidence in our ability to communicate effectively can enhance recovery and reduce the risk of relapse. Above and beyond that, it can help us gain something else we may yearn for—better relationships with the people we really care about.

When we talk about “good communication,” we are not referring to using proper English or correct grammar, or sounding like a radio announcer. Good communication (or effective communication) means being able to share ideas, feelings, beliefs, and plans with others in an open, non-defensive way that enhances understanding and keeps the lines of communication open. In other words, effective communication strengthens relationships with people. It can, as it’s said, help “increase the peace.”

The first challenge in learning how to improve our communication skills is to get beyond the common fallacy that communication comes naturally. We are not born knowing how to communicate. Language and communication styles are learned in childhood and young adulthood. We are seldom aware of exactly how we learned our present style of relating to people, but somewhere along the way we did.

The good news is almost everyone who wants to can learn (or relearn) the skills and the attitudes that promote communication effectiveness. Some of the most important skills include:

- Open and honest ways of expressing thoughts, feelings, and needs without blaming others;
- listening;
- dealing with anger and conflict in a way that doesn’t destroy relationships;
- accepting criticism and compliments without overreacting.

Also important is developing attitudes that promote good communication. The foundation of these attitudes is a belief in fairness and equality, and respect for our own personal rights and the rights of others.

In today’s session and future sessions we’ll explore strategies and communication techniques that can improve relationships with family, partners, and friends. A new approach to communication can give you the skills and the confidence you may need to develop relationships with new people or increase your comfort level and participation at community self-help groups such as AA or NA. What you learn here also can be shared with your family and friends. Keep

Communication Styles

in mind that developing an effective communication style will not eliminate anger, frustration, social pressure, or “bad scenes” from your life. Improving your communication skills will not make the world a fair place. However, it can help you deal with people in a fair and honest way, and deal with your feelings in a way that doesn’t threaten your recovery.

Step 2

Distribute *Communication Styles and Characteristics of Communication Styles* handouts. Lead a discussion about communication styles, their characteristics, and their possible outcomes. Model the styles, and provide examples as you lead the discussion.

There are three communication styles which all of us have used at one time or another. These styles generally reflect our attitudes about ourselves and our attitudes about other people. We can have a *passive style*, an *aggressive style*, or an *assertive style*. As you’ll see, an assertive style is our best bet for achieving goals and improving relationships because it respects both our personal rights and the rights of others.

The aggressive style: Everyone has used an aggressive communication style at one time or another. However, when it becomes the primary way in which we communicate it can distance us from people we care about, shut down intimacy and closeness, cause people to withdraw from us, and contribute to emotional distress. It lowers self-esteem, both our own and also the self-esteem of those we talk to aggressively. An aggressive style ignores the rights of others. When we behave aggressively, we express our needs, wants, ideas, and feelings at the expense of another person. This style says to the world: *I am important, but you are not important.*

Characteristics of the aggressive style: People who use an aggressive style express their rights, feelings, and ideas at the expense of others. Avoid the following aggressive characteristics in order to communicate more effectively:

- A tone of voice that is sarcastic, mocking, or threatening
- Violent outbursts; yelling or screaming
- Intimidating gestures; finger-pointing; glaring
- Interrupting or silencing others (*Shut up!!*)
- Blaming or name-calling (*It’s your fault, you stupid fool!*)
- Put downs and jokes at another person’s expense

Communication Styles

The passive style: Most people have used a passive style at one time or another. When we behave passively, we fail to respect our own rights which leaves us open to exploitation or being manipulated by others. When our primary way of communication is passive, we deny our own rights, our goals, our needs, and our feelings. Because we don't honestly express our feelings, we are less likely to achieve intimacy or closeness with others. We may be seen as a "pushover," because we let other people make our decisions or tell us what to do. Passive people may often feel hurt, anxious, inhibited, angry, and resentful. When we behave passively we seldom achieve our goals. This style says to the world: *I am not important.*

Characteristics of the passive style: People who use a passive style fail to express their rights, feelings, and ideas. Avoid the following passive characteristics in order to communicate more effectively:

- A tone of voice that is hesitant and unsure
- Looking down or away when talking with others
- Self-silencing (fear of expressing your ideas, opinions, needs)
- Covering up what you really feel (*It's okay that you wrecked my car*)
- Self-blame; self put-downs (*It's my fault he's left home/I'm so stupid*)
- Whining, mumbling, or speaking in a monotone

The assertive style: This style of communication is considered the most useful for improving self-esteem, enhancing relationships, increasing intimacy and closeness with those we care about, and allowing us to express our thoughts, needs, and feelings in a way that respects the rights of other people. Assertiveness is considered to be the most effective communication style because it promotes equality and fairness in relationships. An assertive style enables us to act on our goals in an open, direct and honest manner. It's a style that says to the world: *I'm important, and I believe you are important, too.*

For a simple analogy of communication styles, think about the story of "Goldilocks and the 3 Bears." Recall that Goldilocks felt that one bowl of porridge was "too hot," another was "too cold," and the third was "just right." And one bed was "too hard," the other bed was "too soft," and the third was "just right." It's much the same with communication styles. The *passive* style is "too soft...too cold," the *aggressive* style is "too hard...too hot." The *effective* or *assertive* style may be thought of as "just right."



Communication Styles

Characteristics of the assertive style: People who use an assertive style are able to express their rights, feelings, and ideas and respect the rights of others. Consider adopting the following characteristics as you develop an assertive style:

A level, polite tone of voice

Facial expressions and gestures matching mood and words spoken

Level eye contact; look at the person with whom you are talking

Listen well; avoid interrupting when others talk

Speak for yourself (Say: *I feel; I think; I believe; I would like, etc.*)

Avoid blaming others (Don't say: *You make me; you should; you are, etc.*)

Step 3

Distribute slips of paper with one of the *Communication Styles in Action* role play situations written on each slip. A page of role-plays situations is included. For convenience, these situations are laid out on the page so they can be copied and cut into slips. Group leaders can provide the “opening line” to which the participants can respond, or participants can work in pairs in front of the whole group. These opening lines are written in italics after each role-play situation. **Use the following directions:**

Step 1: Tell participants that their slip describes a situation that requires a response. Ask each person to consider their situation, and to develop a passive response.

Step 2: When the group is ready, go around the room. Have each person read his/her situation aloud, and then give a passive response after the group leader/partner has provided the opening line. Lead a brief discussion using the following questions:

How did it feel to give a passive response in this situation?

What thoughts went through your head?

How would you normally respond in this type of situation?

Step 3: Instruct participants to trade situations with someone in the room. Ask them to read their new situation and to develop an aggressive response. Go around the room as before and allow each person to experience giving an aggressive response. Provide opening lines to encourage spontaneous responses. Lead a brief discussion with the following questions:

Communication Styles

How did it feel to give an aggressive response in this situation?

In what ways does it feel different from a passive response?

How would you normally respond in this type of situation?

Step 4: Ask participants to trade situations again, and develop an assertive response. Review the characteristics of the assertive style discussed earlier. Remind participants to keep their goals, their rights, and the other person's rights in mind as they build their response. After each situation, ask other group members for constructive feedback on the assertiveness of the response given. Encourage discussion of whether each person's rights were respected. Provide clarification and coaching, as needed. Process the exercise using the following questions:

How did it feel to do this exercise?

Which type of response felt the most comfortable for you?

What are some differences in feelings that you noticed with each of the types of responses?

What style of response comes easiest for you? Is this the style you use the most? Do you think it causes you problems? Explain.

Why is it hard to respond assertively?

What seems to be the most used style in your family? Among your friends? From your partner?

What problems does this create in your relationships?

Step 4

Summarize the discussion:

Often, our choice of a passive, assertive, or aggressive response is influenced by the person with whom we are communicating, or the situation in which we are communicating. This doesn't mean situations or people make us communicate in a certain way. It does mean we're influenced by a variety of factors when we choose a communication style in a given situation. Being assertive is always a choice. An assertive style keeps us focused on our feelings, goals and needs, and enhances fair and equal relationships. It minimizes the chances of communication problems and negative feelings.

Communication Styles

The assertive style is likely to be more effective than either the passive or aggressive style. When we communicate assertively: (1) We express and assert our rights, feelings, and needs; and (2) We respect and acknowledge the rights, feelings, and needs of others. The goal is to create relationships in which both parties feel like “winners.”

Most importantly, an assertive or effective communication style helps preserve relationships, and increase closeness and understanding with special people in our lives. Communicating effectively also helps us establish new friendships, and give us more confidence in groups or new social situations.

Assertive or effective communication is a personal skill. As you begin to develop an assertive communication style, you may also begin to notice many people you meet don't communicate very effectively. In fact, other people may react unfavorably to your new way of communicating. You may want to encourage family members to begin coming to counseling sessions with you in order to learn more about effective communication techniques. You may also want to share what you learn in these classes with your partner, members of your family, and your close friends. In this way you can serve as a teacher and a role model for others. The pay-off is that, with practice, effective communication techniques can help improve your relationships and contribute to your recovery.

Thank participants for their input.

Communication Styles

COMMUNICATION STYLES

AGGRESSIVE	ASSERTIVE	PASSIVE
<i>“too hard”</i>	<i>“just right”</i>	<i>“too soft”</i>
<p>Description:</p> <p>Expresses feelings, needs, or ideas at the expense of others.</p> <p>Expresses personal rights in a way that ignores the rights of other people.</p>	<p>Description:</p> <p>Expresses feelings, needs, or ideas in a way that respects self and others.</p> <p>Stands up for personal rights in a way that respects the rights of others.</p>	<p>Description:</p> <p>Ignores or does not openly express feelings, needs, or ideas.</p> <p>Does not stand up for personal rights and allows others to ignore rights.</p>
<p>Message sent:</p> <p><i>I only care about me!</i></p> <p><i>I'm important, but you are <u>not</u> important.</i></p>	<p>Message sent:</p> <p><i>I care about me and I care about you.</i></p> <p><i>We are <u>both</u> important.</i></p>	<p>Message sent:</p> <p><i>I don't care about me.</i></p> <p><i>I am <u>not</u> as important as you.</i></p>
<p>Possible outcome:</p> <p>Less respect from others.</p> <p>People avoid you or don't like to be with you.</p> <p>May have feelings of guilt or shame after an outburst.</p> <p>Lowers self-esteem.</p> <p>Frequently tries to control others.</p> <p>Achieves desired goals by hurting others.</p> <p>Risky for recovery because it pushes people away and deprives you of chances for positive support.</p>	<p>Possible outcome:</p> <p>More respect from others</p> <p>People value you and enjoy being with you.</p> <p>Good feelings about your relationships with people.</p> <p>Increases self-esteem.</p> <p>Concerned mostly with self-control.</p> <p>Likely to achieve desired goals.</p> <p>Good for recovery because it enhances relationships and increases chances of positive support.</p>	<p>Possible outcome:</p> <p>Less respect from others.</p> <p>People may use you or take advantage of you.</p> <p>May feel angry, hurt, taken advantage of, and resentful.</p> <p>Lowers self-esteem.</p> <p>Allows others to be in control.</p> <p>Rarely achieves desired goals.</p> <p>Risky for recovery because you are willing to be influenced by other people's demands.</p>
<p>Adjectives: dominating, pushy, angry, insensitive, bully</p>	<p>Adjectives: open, honest, direct, respectful, considerate</p>	<p>Adjectives: anxious, inhibited, push-over, submissive, wimp</p>

Communication Styles

CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNICATION STYLES

Characteristics of the aggressive style: People who use an aggressive style express their rights, feelings, and ideas at the expense of others. Avoid the following aggressive characteristics in order to communicate more effectively:

- A tone of voice that is sarcastic, mocking, or threatening
- Violent outbursts; yelling or screaming
- Intimidating gestures; finger-pointing; glaring
- Interrupting or silencing others (*Shut up!!*)
- Blaming or name-calling (*It's your fault, you stupid fool!*)
- Put downs and jokes at another person's expense

Characteristics of the passive style: People who use a passive style fail to express their rights, feelings, and ideas. Avoid the following passive characteristics in order to communicate more effectively:

- A tone of voice that is hesitant and unsure
- Looking down or away when talking with others
- Self-silencing (fear of expressing your ideas, opinions, needs)
- Covering up what you really feel (*It's okay that you wrecked my car*)
- Self-blame; self put-downs (*It's my fault he's left home/I'm so stupid*)
- Whining, mumbling, or speaking in a monotone

Characteristics of the assertive style: People who use an assertive style are able to express their rights, feelings, and ideas and respect the rights of others. Consider adopting the following characteristics as you develop an assertive style:

- A level, well-modulated tone of voice
- Facial expressions and gestures matching mood & words spoken
- Level eye contact; look at the person with whom you are talking
- Listen well; avoid interrupting when others talk
- Speak for yourself (*I feel; I think; I believe; I would like, etc.*)
- Avoid blaming others (*You make me; you should; you are, etc.*)

Communication Styles

Communication Styles in Action Role Play Situations

Group leaders or dyad partners can provide the “opening line” to which the participants can respond. These opening lines are written in italics after each role play situation.

.....
Deciding on which restaurant to eat at.

(“Hey, where do you want to eat dinner tonight?”)

.....
Responding to a friend who wants to borrow money.

(“Come on, loan me \$10. You owe me a favor.”)

.....
Responding to someone who is very angry with you.

(“You stupid SOB! I never want to see your sorry ass again.”)

.....
Responding to someone who has asked you to buy drugs.

(“Look, it’s super high quality. You know you want it.”)

.....
Confronting a partner who comes home late.

(“Aw, gimme a break! I was just out having fun.”)

.....
Someone cuts in front of you at the grocery check-out.

(“Excuse me. I’m in a hurry.”)

.....
Responding to a partner who has made an unkind remark.

(“You eat like a pig – no wonder your clothes don’t fit anymore.”)

.....
Responding to a date who stood you up the night before.

(Hey, babe. Sorry about last night. I got busy and forgot.”)

.....
Dealing with someone who wants to pick a fight.

(“Look, we can just step outside and settle this right now!”)

.....
Confronting a partner who ignores the family budget.

(“I really needed these new shoes. The electric company can wait.”)

.....

Mapping Worksheets

*Source: TCU / Institute of Behavioral Research. From treatment manual
"TCU Guide Maps: A Resource for Counselors"*

Mapping Worksheets

These *Mapping Worksheets* were selected from the manual TCU Guide Maps: A Resource for Counselors because of their specific focus on relationships and communicating with others. Each mapping worksheet follows a “fill in the blank” format to encourage participants to consider various cognitive aspects of how we communicate and manage problems with others. Once participants complete their worksheet, group discussions and commentary on the causes and effects of communication problems and strategies for overcoming unproductive habits are facilitated.

Mapping Worksheets

Session Notes for Using Guide Maps

The Guide Map worksheets in this section can be used for during-group activities or as homework assignments for later group discussion. The following Guide Maps are included:

Are You Having a Problem With Another Person?

Think About An Important Person in Your Life.

An Important Conversation

It is possible to build an entire group session around one map, or participants can be asked to complete and discuss several maps during the course of the group meeting. The general instructions for using the Guide Maps include:

1. Begin with a brief discussion and overview of the discussion topic. In the case of the Guide Maps in this module, participants would focus on the topic communication in relationships. The group leader should provide information in the form of a brief mini-lecture or a review of information about communication covered elsewhere in this module.
2. Distribute copies of a Guide Map to participants and ask them to complete it by filling in the blanks using their own ideas, feelings, experiences, and opinions to answer the questions in the boxes.
3. Once all participants have completed their maps, lead a discussion of the issues raised by the activity. The leader's job is to gently challenge and provide information, as needed. Leaders can choose to process the mapping activity as a large group, or participants can be divided into pairs or triads to discuss their maps before reporting back to the group as a whole.
4. Use open-ended questions to encourage discussion about the key issues raised by participants in completing their maps. Some ideas for general process questions include:

What did you learn about yourself as you completed this map activity?

What plans or ideas for making relationships better did you think about?

How is it helpful to write out what you can do or say to fix a problem?

In what ways is it helpful to consider the other person's point of view?

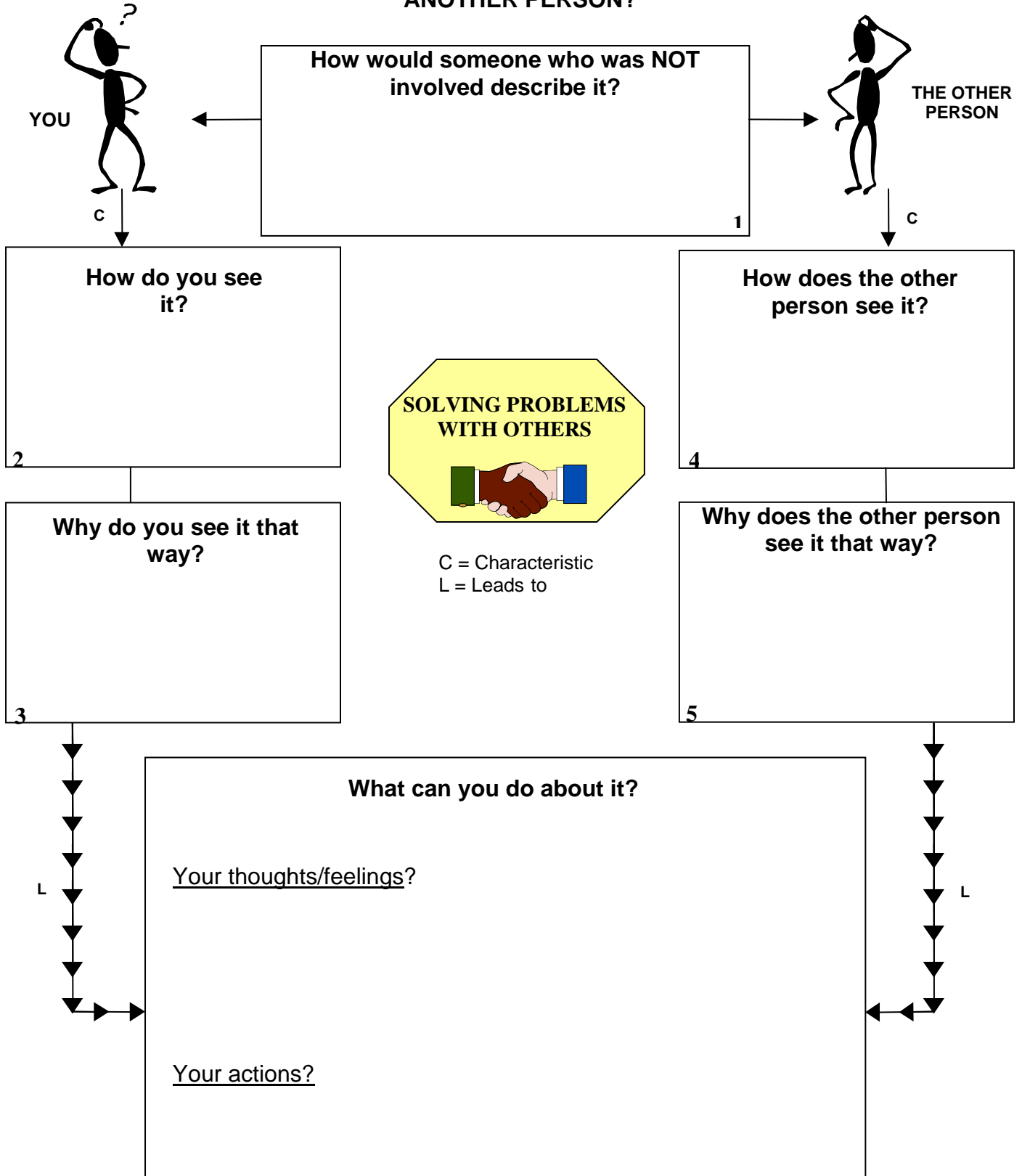
What are some helpful ways you listed to respond to negative emotions?

What would your partner or a good friend say about your responses?

5. Encourage participants to share their mapping worksheets with family, friend, and members of their support network. When appropriate, offer blank copies of the worksheets for participants to complete and discuss with significant others.

Mapping Worksheets

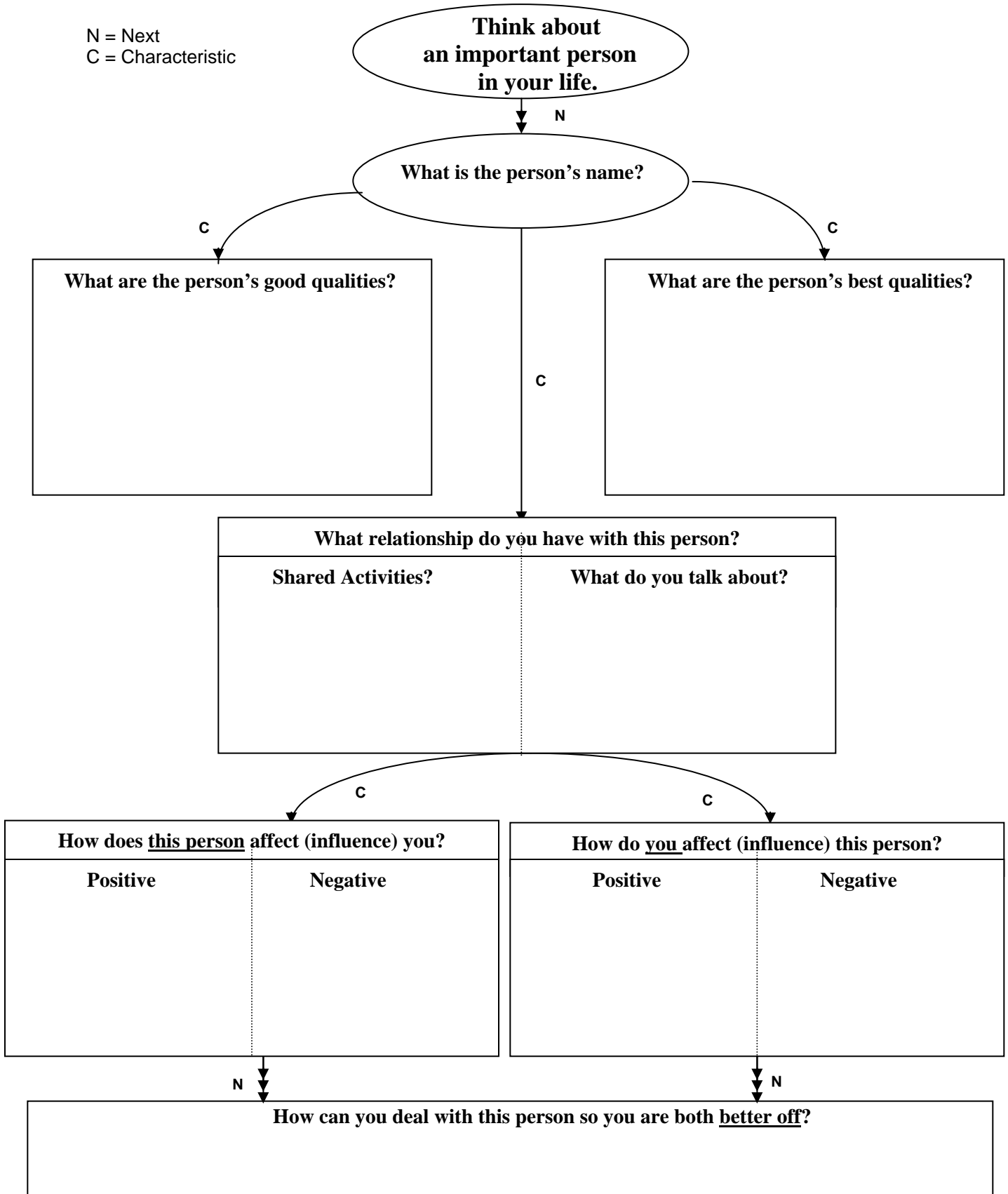
YOU ARE HAVING A PROBLEM WITH ANOTHER PERSON?



C = Characteristic
L = Leads to

Mapping Worksheets

N = Next
C = Characteristic



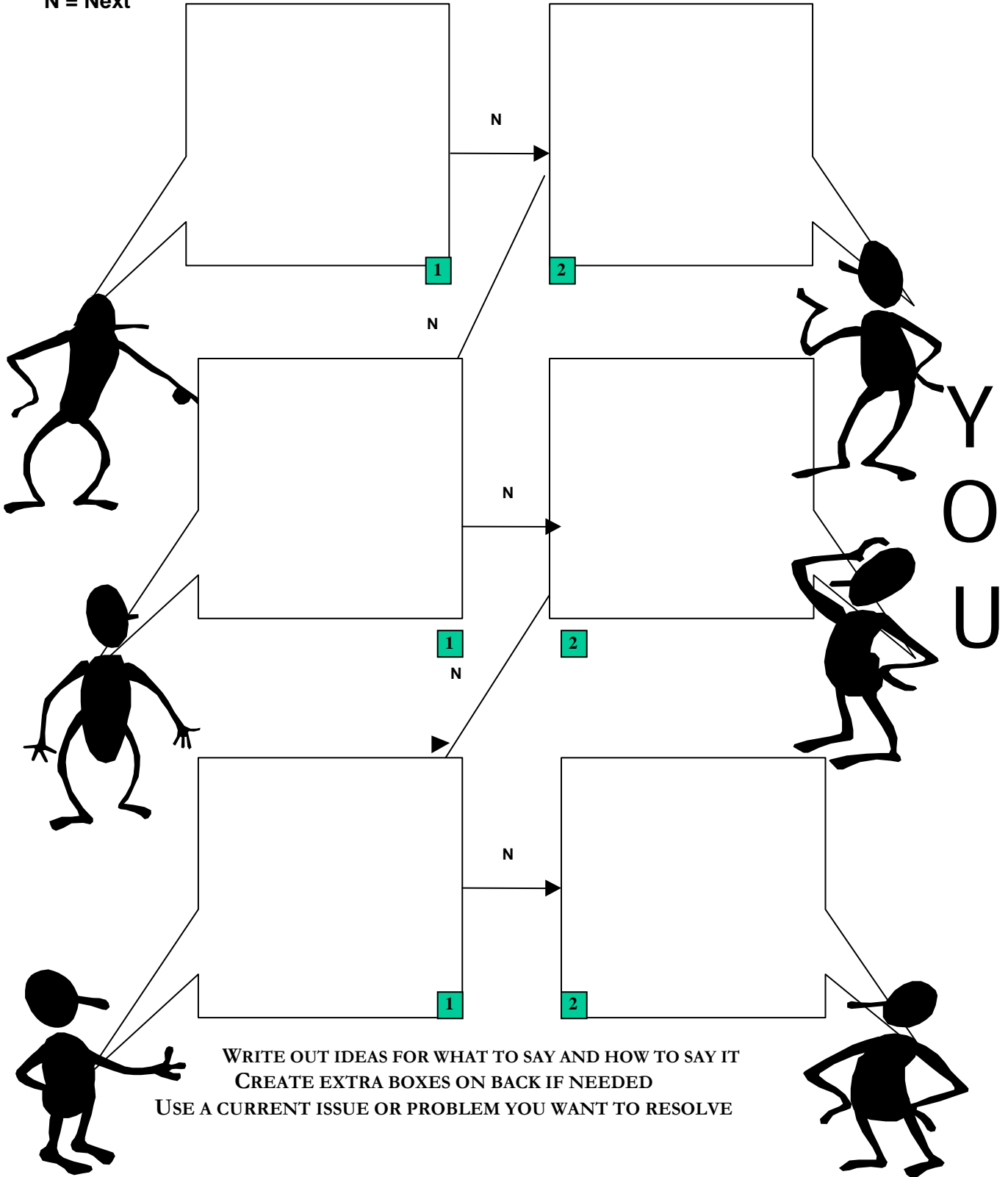
Mapping Worksheets

AN IMPORTANT CONVERSATION

N = Next

OTHER PERSON

YOU



WRITE OUT IDEAS FOR WHAT TO SAY AND HOW TO SAY IT
CREATE EXTRA BOXES ON BACK IF NEEDED
USE A CURRENT ISSUE OR PROBLEM YOU WANT TO RESOLVE

Ideas for Better Communication Links of Interest

A collection of exercises, advice, and articles on building better communication and relationships can be found at the Wespsych Website at:

<http://www.wespsych.com/relship.html>

A series of pamphlets on communication issues, including dealing with shyness and moods that interfere with relationships can be found at:

<http://www.nmht.nhs.uk/download2.htm>

A brief, online communication skills quiz with scoring and discussion is available at the Discovery Health Website at:

http://discoveryhealth.queendom.com/communication_short_access.html

This commercial site offers some free downloads as well as a selection of resources (videos, books, brochures) on a variety of relationship and communication issues:

<http://growthgroups.com/RelationshipSkills.htm>