

# **Interpersonal Communication and Human Relationships**

Sixth Edition

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# Introduction

## Interpersonal Communication and Human Relationships

This manual is a supplement to the sixth edition of *Interpersonal Communication and Human Relationships* by Mark L. Knapp and Anita L. Vangelisti.

**The major difference you will find between the approach used in the textbook and, correspondingly in the Instructor's Manual, is that in the traditional format, many concepts were dealt with as intrapersonal or individual concerns whereas throughout this text we look at pairs, units, and relationships.**

Although the text is organized differently from many introductory human communication texts, you will find that almost all the concepts and theories found in more traditional texts are also found in and are applicable to this approach. For example, even though particular headings are not found in the Table of Contents or Index, many of the activities you may have used in the past for units such as communication models, perceptions, and self-concept can still be incorporated into a course using this textbook. The chart on the following page identifies where some of the more traditional themes of basic texts can be found.

### Format of the Manual

This manual is designed to make use of the sixth edition of *Interpersonal Communication and Human Relationships* more effective, more enjoyable, and ultimately more rewarding for both teacher and student. To accomplish these goals, we have provided the following:

1. Sample syllabi for structuring the course.
2. Three long-term projects that may be conducted over the semester.
3. An introductory exercise for the first day of class.
4. An Instructor's outline for each chapter which includes:
  - a. The major ideas covered.
  - b. Notes for every major concept contained within the outline.
5. At least one out-of-class activity designed for students to do prior to class and then used as a framework to link daily experiences with chapter concepts. Specific discussion questions are provided for each activity.
6. At least one in-class activity designed to illustrate concepts covered in the text.
7. A journal assignment for each chapter.
8. At least thirty-five multiple choice questions, ten true / false questions, and two short answer / essay questions appear for every chapter.
9. Handouts and teaching and study aids appear for across multiple chapters to enhance classroom and / or distance learning.

This manual is an updated and revised version of four previous instructor's manuals: one written for the first edition of *Interpersonal Communication and Human Relationships* by Cynthia Stohl and Timothy Edgar, one written for the third edition of *Interpersonal Communication and Human Relationships* by John Caughlin, Anita Vangelisti, and Mark L. Knapp; one written for the fourth edition of *Interpersonal Communication and Human Relationships* by Stacey L. Connaughton, Jennifer L. Baker, Mark L. Knapp, and Anita L. Vangelisti; and one written for the fifth edition of *Interpersonal Communication and Human Relationships* by Geoffrey R. Tumlin, Stacey L. Connaughton, Mark L. Knapp, and Anita L. Vangelisti. Additionally, some of the material in this manual represents "best practices" derived from years of using this textbook as part of an undergraduate interpersonal communication class at The University of Texas at Austin. We owe thanks to Dr. John A. Daly and his teaching assistants for allowing us access to this material.

You will find that the current manual has been modified in helpful ways from previous editions. For example, the chapter outlines have been updated to reflect material that has been added to the sixth edition of the text and we have developed explanations of existing material further. Also, we have increased the number of true-false questions and have added new multiple choice questions to each chapter. Additionally, we have included a key words section for each chapter and we have added a journaling activity to each chapter so that if instructors would like to include a term-long journal assignment as part of their course, they can make use of these activities. We hope that these modifications make the current instructor's manual a useful resource for both teachers and students.

# Chapter Reference Guide to Communication Concepts

## Concepts

	Chapters											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Communication Models	♦					♦			♦			♦
Interaction Stages		♦				♦						
Listening	♦											♦
Perception	♦		♦	♦	♦					♦		♦
Expectations		♦			♦	♦	♦		♦			♦
Communication Patterns	♦											
Metacommunication						♦						
First Impressions		♦			♦	♦						
Stereotyping		♦			♦	♦					♦	
Self Awareness		♦		♦								
Self Fulfilling Prophecy			♦		♦						♦	
Interpersonal Needs		♦	♦	♦					♦			
Self Concept		♦	♦						♦			
Roles		♦		♦							♦	♦
Meaning	♦											
Ambiguous Communication								♦			♦	♦
Intimacy							♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Types of Love							♦					
Nonverbal Communication	♦		♦	♦		♦		♦	♦	♦		
Interpersonal Environment				♦								
Gender Differences			♦					♦	♦	♦		
Interpersonal Attraction		♦			♦		♦	♦				
Self Disclosure		♦				♦		♦			♦	
Trust								♦				
Interpersonal Barriers			♦								♦	
Communicative Competence						♦						♦
Communication Style			♦								♦	♦
Communicative Development												♦
Conflict	♦	♦						♦		♦	♦	♦
Rules						♦		♦				
Small Talk						♦						
Communication and Culture				♦	♦	♦	♦					
Rituals		♦				♦			♦			
Social Exchange Theory		♦							♦		♦	
Social Penetration Theory	♦	♦						♦				
Attribution Theory					♦							
Implicit Personality Theory					♦							
Transactional Analysis											♦	
Systems Theory	♦		♦									
Dialectical Theory		♦										
Uncertainty Reduction					♦							
Loneliness			♦									
Lying								♦				
Commitment									♦			

<b>Persuasion</b>									◆			
<b>Compliments</b>									◆			
<b>Social Support</b>			◆						◆			
<b>Attachment</b>							◆					
<b>Communication Strategies</b>								◆	◆			◆
<b>Relationship Disengagement</b>		◆								◆	◆	

# SAMPLE COURSE SYLLABUS

The activities listed in this Instructor's Manual may be incorporated into the course syllabus in the following manner:

1. The in-class activities may be done by all students for each chapter.
2. Each student could be required to do at least four outside activities during the term. (Everyone should do the out-of-class exercise for Chapter 6). Those students who do the activities will be responsible for leading the discussion that takes place in class. We find it useful to have the students sign up at the beginning of the term for the four activities they choose to do. The instructor may wish to offer extra credit for those who complete more than the required four activities.

## Daily Schedule

<u>Day</u>	<u>Lecture Topic</u>	<u>Activity/Discussion/Reading</u>
1	Introduction to Course	"The Perfect Match"
2	Communication Levels	CHAPTER 1
3	Communication Misconceptions Dimensions of Communication	Discuss "Ideal Relationships" and "Interdependent Interaction"
4	Summary of Chapter	"Candid Conversation"
5	Communication Expectations Communication Model	CHAPTER 2
6	Relational Dialectics Relational Rewards and Costs	"Prisoner's Dilemma"
7	Interaction Stages	Discuss "Cost-Benefit Analysis"
8	Explanation of Long Term Project	
9	A "Needs" Perspective	CHAPTER 3
10	Our Needs and Others' Needs	Discuss "The Needs Questionnaire"
11	Chapter Summary	"Interpreting Interaction"
12	Cultural Environment	CHAPTER 4
13	Physical Environment	"The Messages in the Media"
14	Review for Test: "Where Have We Been and Where Are We Going"	Discuss "Your Place or Mine"
15	TEST (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4)	
16	Perceptions and Attributions	CHAPTER 5
17	First and Lasting Impressions	"Guess Who's Coming to Class?"
18	Correlates of Attraction	Discuss "Attraction Analysis"
19	Communication Rules and Norms	CHAPTER 6
20	Interaction Rituals	Discuss "Breaking the Rules" and "Pick-Ups"
21	Small Talk	
22	Loving and Liking	CHAPTER 7
23	Foundations of Intimacy	Discuss "What I Mean Is..."
24	Chapter Summary	"An Old-Fashioned Love Song"
25	Self-Disclosure, Trust, and Lying	CHAPTER 8
26	Constructive Conflict	"Fill in the Blank"
27	Review For Test	Discuss "Conflict Critique" and
28	TEST (Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8)	"Analyzing Conflict in One's Own Relationship"

29	Commitment to Relationships	CHAPTER 9 Discuss "Commitment Across Relationships"
30	Personal Jargon, Compliments, Sex Talk, and Intimate Play	Discuss "Safe-Sex Talk"
31	Nonverbal Intimacy	Discuss "Observing Intimacy"
32	Terminating Relationships	CHAPTER 10 "It's Too Late"
33	Communication Strategies	Discuss "Breaking Up is Hard to Do"
34	Destructive Communication	CHAPTER 11 "Disintegration Pattern Scenario"
35	Summary of Relational Disintegration	Discuss "A Chance to Change Course"
36	Update on Long Term Projects	
37	Relativity of Effective Communication	CHAPTER 12 "The Pope and the Rabbi"
38	Dimensions of Effective Communication	Discuss "Communication Critique" and "A Second Chance"
39	Perceptions of Effective Communication	
40	Guidelines for Effective Communication	"Who Behaved Best?"
41	Individuals Presentations: Long Term Projects	
42	Individual Presentations: Long Term Projects	
43	Individual Presentations: Long Term Projects	
44	Review for Test	
45	FINAL EXAM (Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12)	

### Grading

100 points for each of the three tests	300
100 points for the term project	100
100 points for the activities	100
<hr/> TOTAL 500	

The syllabus is easily adapted to a quarter system of 10 weeks (4 class periods per week):

1. Have only two tests, a midterm covering Chapters 1-6 and a final covering Chapters 7-12.
2. Eliminate the class period explaining the long term project (day 8). Instead, explain the assignment at the beginning of the previous lecture.
3. Have two individual presentation days (rather than three).
4. Spend four days on developing and analyzing effective communication (rather than five).



## Long Term Projects

This course is designed to help students understand the process of communication within developing relationships. In order for the students to appreciate the content and the perspective of the text, it will be important for them to use their own developing relationships as a model to compare and contrast. It is not expected, however, that the students disclose intimate information about a relationship they are in, although some indeed will want to. The first two long term projects are designed so that the student will develop a new non-threatening relationship over the semester that can be used for examples of various aspects of relational development and communication behavior. One thing that we as instructors of the course do is start virtually every class period with a few minutes discussion of how the relationship is going.

### Project 1: “A Developing Relationship”

Students are required to meet a new person at the beginning of the semester and continue to meet with this individual at least once a week.

The person may be:

1. An elderly citizen in an old age home near campus.
2. A foreign student on campus.
3. A child enrolled in the Big Brother/Big Sister program.

It is important that the individual not be another student in the class or somebody chosen randomly. We find it most successful if prior to the semester we meet with some agency (e.g., Big Brothers / Big Sisters, English as a Second Language class, International Student Association, “Golden Age” group), explain the program to the administrators and the patrons, and then obtain a list of individuals who are interested in interacting weekly with a college student. These names and phone numbers are then provided to each student in the class.

These developing relationships provide an excellent source of experience for the semester, as well as provide the new “friends” with positive social experiences. Students are required to keep a log/journal/diary of all interactions and provide detailed evidence of actual communication. At the end of the semester, students are required to submit a paper describing and analyzing the various stages and communication behaviors of the relationship. Various theories and concepts, as well as Knapp and Vangelisti’s interaction stages, can be analytically applied to the development of the relationship. Students are required to use at least five other sources for documentation and/or observations.

The following questions should help form the organization of the paper:

1. Using the interaction stages presented in the text as a model, describe the development of the relationship.
  - a. What specific interaction sequences exemplify the processes of each stage you went through?
  - b. What specific communication events signaled to you and your partner that the relationship was developing?
2. After your first meeting, what were your impressions of your partner?
  - a. What characteristics about the setting, individual, and conversations helped you form these impressions?
  - b. How did these impressions influence the next few meetings?
  - c. How did these impressions change through the semester? Why?
3. What specific interaction sequences provided evidence that you and your partner developed a larger and more diverse repertoire of communication behaviors as the relationship progressed?
  - a. Provide examples for at least four communicative dimensions discussed in class.
  - b. Under what circumstances did you and your partner not manifest higher levels on some dimensions even though you had in the past? Why?
4. What communication norms developed in your relationship? Use at least two theories discussed in class as a framework for explaining how and why these norms developed (e.g., social exchange theory, dialectic theory, social comparison theory, Schutz’s theory of interpersonal needs).
5. Describe three situations that were most difficult for you and your friend to deal with.
  - a. What specific communication strategies did you use in trying to solve these problems?
  - b. Which of the strategies mentioned in (a) were successful? Why?
  - c. Which of the strategies mentioned in (a) were unsuccessful? Why?

## Project 2: “The Egg Responsibility Project”

This exercise is often used in teaching marriage/family lifestyle courses. This variation is described in K. Galvin and B. Brommel, *Family Communication: Cohesion and Change*. Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman & Co., 1982. It can be adapted to be very worthwhile for this class.

Students need to pair off into “mother-father” dyads. They are informed that they are “expecting” and should think about how they will care for and name their bundle. Single sexed dyads could also be used, and they can be told they are going to adopt a child or help out a close friend. Each dyad is then given a raw egg which they must care for during two weeks. The couple must treat it as if it were a real baby—take it home, carry it to meals, leave it with a partner or arrange for “egg care.” At no time may the egg be left unattended. Broken or lost eggs should be accounted for. All eggs are turned in at the end of the project. Students should discuss how they arranged for egg care, how they negotiated with each other, how they felt about the constant responsibility, how they managed communication, how communicative patterns developed and so on. After two weeks, each student should write a brief report about his or her experience, describing how the relationship developed communicatively.

To further augment the concepts discussed in class, students may be required to tape record various interactions with their partners. These audio-tapes or transcripts can be used to analyze communicative dimensions.

The brief report should address the following:

1. How did the communication with your partner change as the project progressed?
  - a. What factors influenced these changes?
  - b. What evidence of these changes are most apparent?
2. How did you and your partner explain your behaviors (regarding the egg) to others?
  - a. Did you use the same explanation? Why or why not?
  - b. Was/were the explanation(s) used consistent with how you viewed the assignment?

## Project 3: “Dramatic Analysis”

Each student is required to read a play about a relationship during the semester. After reading the play, the student should write a 7-10 page paper analyzing the relationship that exists between the two major characters. The analysis should be an application of the major concepts that were discussed in the course. A list of plays that may be used for the assignment are listed below. We highly recommend that the student be given several options for the play that he/she will read. You will note that the plays listed here concern a variety of different types of relationships. If the instructor desires a model to present to the class, we suggest that he or she read the analysis of “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Wolf?” in Paul Watzlawick, J. Beavin, and D. Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, New York: W. W. Norton, 1967. Although this analysis deals primarily with double binds, it provides an excellent structural model.

Some of the recommended plays include:

1. *The Gin Game* by D. L. Coburn  
The entire play takes place in a room in a nursing home. Two elderly people are the only characters. All interaction revolves around playing gin. Interesting conflict and self-revelations result from these encounters.
2. *Children of a Lesser God* by Mark Medoff  
Sarah is a young deaf woman who falls in love with James, her speech instructor. Her inability to “properly” communicate and function within his world is a trouble spot throughout the relationship. The characters’ relationship goes through all of the interaction stages.
3. *Same Time Next Year* by Bernard Slade  
Two married people meet in a California hotel once a year on the same day to have a “fling.” The relationship takes on new characteristics as they grow older and the culture changes.
4. *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck  
George and Lenny are two drifters in California during the Depression years. Their unique friendship and dependence on each other provides interesting material for an analysis of same-gender relationships.

Other plays which we have used for this type of project include:

1. *Bent* by Roger Sherman
2. *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams
3. *The Delicate Balance* by Edward Albee

The following questions should be helpful in guiding the students in their analysis:

1. Which of the interaction stages in the text do the characters move through? What are the specific communication behaviors exhibited by the characters that are representative of these stages?
2. What are the factors involved in binding these characters together? For instance, what needs are being satisfied in the relationship that make the relationship worthwhile?
3. How do perceptions affect the relationship? Do the characters have accurate perceptions of one another? How might their perceptions of attributions be distorted?
4. In what ways is the dialogue intimate? Does self-disclosure progress systematically?
5. In every play listed, there is some conflict between the characters. Is it destructive? Do they deal with the conflict in a constructive manner? What are the specific communication patterns that lead to conflict?

### Introduction Exercise: “The Perfect Match”

The purpose of this exercise is to allow students to become acquainted with each other. At the same time, the activity provides an introduction to the developing relational perspective of the course.

Each member of the class should be given a list of the statements below. The chairs in the room may be cleared to the side in order for students to mingle more freely. The students are required to find a person in the room who matches each description. An individual’s name should not be placed with more than one item. To begin the activity, instruct the students to get up and begin their search. The exercise is complete when everyone has filled in the blanks for all the statements.

_____	A person who has blue eyes.
_____	A person who is wearing tennis shoes.
_____	A person who is taller than you.
_____	A person of the opposite sex.
_____	A person who is wearing eye glasses.
_____	A person who has read a book.
_____	A person who was born in a different town.
_____	A person who likes spaghetti.
_____	A person who likes to sleep late in the morning.
_____	A person who has studied a foreign language.
_____	A person who has the same color hair as yourself.
_____	A person who has the same major as yourself.
_____	A person who cannot swim.
_____	A person who plays a musical instrument.
_____	A person who wears clean underwear.

After the exercise, students should discuss their impressions. Ask them to make parallels between this activity and similar real-life situations such as fraternity and sorority rush parties, cocktail parties, or beginning of the school year gatherings. This analysis should include the topics discussed, the depth of the conversation, the nonverbal behavior, the stylistic language, the hesitancy of interaction, and ease of interaction. At this point the book’s perspective may be introduced. Students should also be told that during the course of the semester, they will examine how relationships and communication develop from this initial stage of superficial interaction to more intimate levels of behavior.

## **Study Guide for Students: How to Determine What is Most Important in the Textbook**

### **1. Glance through the chapter**

- Notice the main ideas (Look for bold and underlined words and groupings)
- Make a skeleton outline in your notes of the main ideas

### **2. Read the summary at the end of the chapter**

- Get an idea of what concepts are included in the chapter
- Ask yourself what might make for good exam questions

### **3. Read the chapter and break each chapter down into sections**

- Ask yourself what the main idea of each section is and mark each new section
- Mark your text, *especially italicized words, lists, and charts*
- Mark statements that indicate relationships and comparisons
- Mark definitions

### **4. Form an outline based on what you have marked from step #3**

### **5. Review your outlines**

- Associate italicized terms with the main idea of that section
- Chunk elements of lists together. Know the elements of the list as a whole, then differentiate between each item on the list—*know their differences, as well as what list the items belong to.*
- Try to think of your own examples for each concept

# Chapter One

## Communication: The Lifeblood of Relationships

### Chapter Main Ideas:

Most messages contain information about the relationship. All communication occurs within the context of some relationship—thus the study of interpersonal communication is important. Communication is the lifeblood of relationships—this chapter is designed to illustrate this notion.

### Chapter Outline with Instructor Notes:

#### I. Relationship Messages

A. Content Level—what the message actually communicates/the behaviors a message communicates. For example, I say, “I will be over to your house in five minutes” the content indicates that I am physically on my way over to your house soon.

B. Relationship Level—tells us how to interpret the content; may contain some important relationship information. For example, if I say, “I will be over to your house in five minutes,” but my tone of voice is filled with sarcasm, the relationship level communicates that there is no way I am coming to your house soon.

1. Nonverbal—a stern look, a warm handshake, a short voice, standing close to someone while you are talking

2. Verbal—when you are talking to a professor vs. when you are talking to a friend. You would probably communicate the same message in different ways.

C. We process information without conscious thought unless...

Three occasions when we tune in highly to relationship messages:

1. Message drastically violates our expectations—a friend ignores you; a stranger greets you with a kiss on the lips

2. Relationship characterized by high levels of intensity—a couple that is breaking up will be highly tuned in to communication about the relationship

3. Disagreements and conflicts arise

D. People Tend to Talk Directly about Relationships in Terms of...

1. Work—the effort involved, the sacrifices, the energy needed, etc.

2. Commitment—commitment associated with relationships. Both the commitment necessary to begin a relationship and the commitment needed to sustain it.

3. Involvement—involvement is reflected in such things as the time spent together, the quantity and quality of the talk, and sharing

--communal themes: talk about togetherness, interdependence

--individual themes: talk emphasizing separate identities and roles

--impersonal themes: factors/forces outside the marriage which are believed responsible for shaping it

4. Unique/Special—people talk about how their relationship is unique or special

5. Manipulation—manipulation is the control of one’s partner for one’s own gains

6. Consideration/Respect

7. Journey of Discovery—people talk about their relationship as a developing journey of discovery

8. As a game

9. As risky and potentially dangerous

10. As uncontrollable forces

11. As a system of bargaining and tradeoffs

#### II. Some Misconceptions about Communication in Relationships

A. The Assumption of Consistency

(“But that’s not what you said yesterday.”)

-Having others be consistent is valued in our society

## INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL AND TEST BANK

- It helps us make useful predictions about others so we know how to approach our interactions with them
- We do not like it when people point out inconsistencies in our behavior (we may not perceive it to be an inconsistency)

### B. The Assumption of Simple Meaning

("Well you said it so you must have meant it!")

- We can't rely solely on what the words say alone
- Mostly we mean several things at once
- ex: saying "You're crazy." (depends on context and nature of the relationship...)

### C. The Assumption of Communicator Independence

("It wasn't my fault.")

- Many times we talk about our relationships with other people as if our behavior had nothing to do with what the other did
- There is actually communicator interdependence
- ex: recognizing that communication problems are the result of mutual contributions
- Interdependence can manifest in several ways (e.g., response matching)

### D. The Assumption of Obvious Causation

("You can't fool me. I know why you said that.")

- We are often too quick to jump to assumptions about why someone said something
- Be careful about assuming other's reasons for behaving and communicating in a certain way

### E. The Assumption of Finality

("That settles it.")

- People can reach a compromise when they disagree, but the issue in some form, may arise minutes, months, or years later
- Sometimes we act like something is finished because we don't want to deal with it anymore, but it really isn't actually finished

## III. Some Dimensions of Communication in Our Relationships

### A. Narrow-Broad

- During the process of coming together we would predict a gradually increasing variety and amount of topics covered and that they would be covered in more ways (breadth and depth)
- Different breadth profiles:

- Talks about few topics, and reveals little within those topics
- Talks about a few topics, and reveals a lot about those topics
- Talks about many topics, and reveals little about those topics
- Talks about many topics, and reveals a lot about those topics

- When relationships are coming apart – people are less willing to talk about topics, and they narrow the ways in which they will talk about the topics they do discuss

### B. Public-Personal

- The "depth" of social interaction

- Initially our public personality is revealed – as/ the relationship moves forward we will increasingly uncover more and more of our private and personal selves

### C. Stylized-Unique

- When we move from talking to someone in a more stylized manner, as a member of a particular society, and begin talking to someone as a more unique individual. As a relationship grows, we move from stylized to unique.

### D. Difficult-Efficient

- As a relationship grows and more of the other person is revealed to us, there will be increased accuracy, speed, and efficiency in our communication.
- We begin to understand people easier

### E. Rigid-Flexible

- Flexibility: the number of different ways any given idea or feeling can be communicated – this increases as relationships grow together
- In the early stages of growth and the later stages of decay there is a greater demand for standardization of communication involving fewer channels.

## F. Awkward-Smooth

-As we come to know someone, we can predict their (re)actions and that leads to greater synchronization of interaction as we grow together

-*Meshing*: smooth complimentary interaction

## G. Hesitant-Spontaneous

-Meeting new people is naturally accompanied by hesitancy

-In close relationships there is more spontaneity – an informality, an ease of opening up oneself, a comfort in entering areas of the other person

## H. Overt Judgment Suspended-Overt Judgment Given

-The closer the relationship the greater the likelihood of freely giving and receiving positive and negative feedback

-When there are more negative judgments being expressed, relationships are usually in the process of decay

## IV. Dimensions of Communication: Patterns and Variations

-Communication patterns may fluctuate. Frequent fluctuations over time on many dimensions of communication may be the best indicator of instability.

-*Empathic accuracy*: the ability to accurately infer the specific content of a partner's thoughts and feelings. This ability increases as a close relationship develops. But there are also limits to how accurately one can infer a partner's thoughts and feelings. At some point, an optimal level will be reached.

## A. As relationships become more intimate, communication becomes more personalized

(1) *Personalized Communication*

(a) telling another person things we don't tell most people—feelings, secrets, personal things

(b) relying on a greater variety of channels for sending and receiving messages—including nonverbal channels

(c) cultivating and using messages that are more personal to the interacting pair only

## B. As relationships become more intimate, people perceive communication behavior to become increasingly more synchronized

(1) *Synchronized communication*:

(a) conversations that are smooth-flowing, effortless, spontaneous, relaxed, informal, and well coordinated

## C. Both intimate and non-intimate relationships have elements of difficulties or “barriers” to effective communication

(1) *Difficult Communication*

(a) a general strain, difficulty, and awkwardness of interaction

## D. Friends' communication styles



**KEY WORDS:**

Content level  
Relationship level  
Communal themes  
Individual themes  
Impersonal themes  
Response matching  
Breadth of interaction  
Meshing  
Empathic accuracy  
Personalized communication  
Synchronized communication  
Difficult communication

**OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES:**

**Activity 1: “Interdependent Interaction”**

The purpose of this activity is to help students better understand the concept of communicator interdependence. These experiences will also provide a framework for discussion of various models of communication (e.g., one way vs. two way, process models).

Students should choose FOUR people with whom they are to carry out this assignment.

1. Stranger
2. Acquaintance
3. Friend
4. Close friend or intimate (e.g., parent, sibling, spouse)

During a ten minute segment of conversation, the student should intentionally vary at least THREE of the following communication behaviors:

1. The length of utterances (e.g., long utterances for 3 minutes, short utterances for 2 seconds)
2. The amount of self-disclosure
3. The communication climate (e.g., warm/cold; affectionate/hostile)
4. Voice loudness
5. Degree of smiling
6. Amount of head nodding
7. Interpersonal distance

Students should record which responses were matched, counter-balanced, or had no impact.

In the class session following this activity, discuss the following questions:

1. Which type of behaviors were matched or counter-balanced?
2. Were specific relational levels associated with specific matching (counter-balancing) behaviors? Why?
3. Was the other person aware of the interdependencies between communicators?
4. What type of communication model best fits the student’s experiences?

**Activity 2: “Ideal Relationships”**

The purpose of this activity is to help students further understand the misconceptions and assumptions we have about communication in developing relationships.

Students should interview FIVE people, asking them to identify the “ideal relationship.” After the interview, each student should prepare a brief report to present to the class describing the results of the interviews.

During the class period in which students present their reports (or they are collected by you) discuss the following issues:

1. How integral is the process of communication to the descriptions of a close relationship?

2. Can a relationship be described without including the concept of communication?
3. What assumptions were common to all (most) descriptions?
4. Were any assumptions associated with a particular group in terms of ethnicity, race, age, or status?
5. Were the assumptions similar / different from those presented in the text?

### **IN-CLASS ACTIVITY: “Candid Conversation”**

The purpose of this activity is to increase students’ understanding and recognition of the dimensions of communication. Furthermore, in recognizing various interpretations of the dialogue and providing evidence of intimate dialogue that does not manifest high levels of each dimension, the instructor can emphasize that not every conversation among intimates will manifest any or all indicants of the level of the relationship. Students must be aware that a single conversation does not tell the story for any relationship.

Prior to the class, the instructor should tape record ten minute conversations with persons at each of 4 levels of relational development:

1. Stranger
2. Acquaintance
3. Friend
4. Close friend or intimate (e.g., parent, sibling, spouse)

In the class, play segments of the tapes. For each segment, have students in the class evaluate what type of relationship they think it is and identify where the dialogue seems to fall for each dimension. The students should evaluate all eight dimensions. A ditto of the dimensional continua (e.g., narrow—broad) may be given out prior to the exercise (see text for an example). Compare and contrast students’ decisions about relational levels with the actual relational level of the people whose conversations were recorded. (This activity can be done in small groups or with the class as a whole.)

### **JOURNAL ACTIVITY: “Assumptions”**

This journal activity is designed to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their assumptions about the nature of communication in their own relationships and use chapter concepts to partially frame their journal entry.

Consider one of your close relationships (with a romantic partner, friend, or family member) and an uncomfortable interaction you have had with that person recently. Write about how you made inappropriate assumptions when interacting with that person. Use the misconceptions about communication from Chapter One as well as the questions below to guide your reflective thinking about the relationship and to get your writing started. There is no need to answer all of the questions—this activity is a journal, not an essay. Answer the questions that are most compelling to you and feel free expand on the questions below as you see fit. The questions draw on information presented in the chapter please refer back to the chapter if you find it helpful in your journaling.

- \*What assumptions did you make when communicating with this individual?
- \*What happened when you made that assumption? What did you say?
- \*How did your partner/friend/family member respond?
- \*Have you tried to adjust the way you communicate with this individual? If so, how?

## INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL AND TEST BANK

### MUTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (\* indicates correct response and key phrases of the questions are underlined)

1. Deborah and Tyrone have been dating for several months and they have developed a close relationship. They can accurately infer the specific content of each other's thoughts and feelings. Deborah and Tyrone have developed high levels of:
  - A. Communicator adequacy
  - B. Empathic accuracy\*
  - C. Message interdependence
  - D. Conversational transparency
  - E. Interactive congruency
2. Which of the following is NOT one of the communication dimensions identified in Baxter's study of relationship deterioration?
  - A. flexibility of communication
  - B. ambiguity of communication\*
  - C. personalized communication
  - D. synchronized communication
  - E. smoothness of communication
3. According to a study conducted by Tolhuizen, communication patterns during the eight stages of friendship evolution are all of the following EXCEPT:
  - A. ease of communication
  - B. breadth of communication
  - C. evaluation of communication
  - D. depth of communication
  - E. inflexibility of communication\*
4. Maggie talks about her relationship with Jim to other people in order to make sense of the relationship. Based on the findings of studies that have examined how people talk about their relationships, we would expect that Maggie would do any of the following EXCEPT:
  - A. Talk about her relationship as a system of bargaining and trade-offs
  - B. Talk about her relationship as effortless\*
  - C. Talk about her relationship as involvement
  - D. Talk about her relationship as unique
  - E. Talk about her relationship as a game
5. Leroy and Donna are dating and they spend a lot of time together. They have started to use similar types of words and gestures, and they also often both crack jokes. These types of patterns related to communicator interdependence refer to:
  - A. response matching\*
  - B. meshing
  - C. mimicking triggers
  - D. content messages
  - E. public synchronicity
6. Lauren and Matt have just had their first big fight as a couple. At the end of their fight, Lauren turned to Matt and said, "I can't believe this! I didn't do anything wrong!" Which misconception about communication does Lauren's comment demonstrate?
  - A. Assumption of obvious causation
  - B. Assumption of communicator interdependence
  - C. Assumption of simple meaning
  - D. Assumption of finality
  - E. Assumption of communicator independence \*

7. Which communication dimension is also referred to as “depth of social penetration”?
- A. Public-personal \*
  - B. Difficult-efficient
  - C. Stylized-unique
  - D. Awkward-smooth
  - E. Hesitant-spontaneous
8. Mac and Denise’s relationship is growing. Based on this information, which characteristic would we expect their communication to have?
- A. Broad \*
  - B. Overt judgment suspended
  - C. Stylized
  - D. Public
  - E. Awkward
9. Which of the following does NOT describe a manner in which people talk about their relationships?
- A. A Game
  - B. Involvement
  - C. Bargaining and Tradeoffs
  - D. Uncontrollable forces
  - E. Intellectual Pursuits\*
10. Ed and Eleanor have been married for twenty-five years. Lately, they fight all the time. Ed blames Eleanor for the fighting, and Eleanor thinks Ed causes the conflict. They start getting marital counseling, and Eleanor tells the therapist, “It’s not my fault, Ed just keeps creating conflict.” What misconception about communication is Eleanor displaying?
- A. Assumption of Communicator Independence\*
  - B. Assumption of Obvious Causation
  - C. Assumption of Finality
  - D. Assumption of Simple Meaning
  - E. Assumption of Consistency
11. The phenomenon of *meshing* generally occurs as people move towards growth across what dimension of communicative behavior?
- A. Hesitant / Spontaneous
  - B. Rigid / Flexible
  - C. Awkward / Smooth\*
  - D. Public / Personal
  - E. Stylized / Unique
12. Renee is explaining to her friend, Joy, why her relationship with Mike is faltering. She tells Joy, “Mike just does not listen to me and he never tells me the truth about things. We are having problems because of the things he has done. Which of the following misconceptions about communication in relationships BEST explains how Renee is describing her poor relationship with Mike?
- A. Assumption of communicator independence\*
  - B. Assumption of obvious causation
  - C. Assumption of finality
  - D. Assumption of simple meaning
  - E. Assumption of consistency

## INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL AND TEST BANK

13. Jack and Jill have been in a relationship for over two years. As the relationship has grown, they have noticed that it takes much less energy and time to communicate messages to each other because they have become familiar with each other's unique communication styles. What dimension of communication BEST describes this pattern in Jack and Jill's relationship?

- A. Hesitant / Spontaneous
- B. Rigid / Flexible
- C. Difficult / Efficient\*
- D. Public / Personal
- E. Awkward / Smooth

14. Bill and Bob used to be best friends, however, Bill moved out of town five years ago and the two have not remained in contact. They run into each other at the local grocery store one day when Bill has returned to town to visit his sister. Because neither person is sure about the current status of their relationship, the first few minutes of their interaction consists mostly of formal and conventional behaviors. Which dimension of communication BEST describes how Bill and Bob are interacting at the grocery store?

- A. Awkward / Smooth
- B. Hesitant / Spontaneous
- C. Rigid / Flexible
- D. Public / Personal
- E. Stylized / Unique\*

15. Bill sees Misty every day in biology class. They are friendly in class and she seems to like him. One day he decides to call her to go to a movie with some mutual friends. Her response, however, was cold and distant. This frustrated Bill because he thought she had been friendly towards him. He didn't understand why all-of-a-sudden she was so cold. What assumption about communication is Bill making about Misty?

- A. Assumption of simple meaning
- B. Assumption of communicator independence
- C. Assumption of consistency\*
- D. Assumption of obvious causation
- E. Assumption of finality

16. Leonardo and Maritza just had their first big fight as a romantic couple. Maritza turns to Leonardo and says, "None of this fight is my fault. I have done nothing wrong here." Which assumption about communication is Maritza making?

- A. Assumption of communicator independence\*
- B. Assumption of interdependence
- C. Assumption of obvious causation
- D. Assumption of simple meaning
- E. Assumption of finality

17. Margaret called her friend Sue to see if she wanted to go out to dinner and a movie on Thursday night. Sue said she could not go. Margaret quickly jumped to the conclusion that Sue declined her invitation because she did not like Margaret anymore – but actually Sue just had a test to study for. Which misconception of communication is Margaret assuming?

- A. The assumption of simple meaning
- B. The assumption of autonomy
- C. The assumption of consistency
- D. The assumption of obvious causation\*
- E. The assumption of finality

18. Danny and Dana have been dating for two years. When they first started dating, Dana would show her happiness by just smiling. Now, when Dana is happy with Danny, she either rubs his shoulders, calls him her “huggy bear,” or smiles. Which dimension of communication are Danny and Dana exhibiting?

- A. Public-personal
- B. Rigid-flexible\*
- C. Stylized-unique
- D. Difficult-smooth
- E. Hesitant-spontaneous

19. When Ivan met Mandy, she said she loved doing everything together with him. She would accompany him to football games, to the car wash, and to his classes. They’ve been together now for four weeks, and Mandy has begun to be more independent. Instead of going to the game with him on Saturday, she wanted to stay home and watch “Sleepless in Seattle”. She told him that she just needed some “girl time”. Ivan was confused... didn’t she like being together? Which misconception about communication in relationships is happening for Ivan right now?

- A. The Assumption of Obvious Causation
- B. The Assumption of Finality
- C. The Assumption of Consistency\*
- D. The Assumption of Simple Meaning
- E. The Assumption of Assuming

20. Harold has been married to Thelma for 40 years, and was always known as a tightwad. Recently, he surprised Thelma by buying her a brand new red sports car. When he gave it to her, he said, “I think this would look great on you!” Thelma was shocked, “Harold!” she exclaimed, “Just when I think there’s nothing new about you to know, you surprise me!” Which Important Misconception of Communication in Relationships has Harold just shattered?

- A. The Assumption of Obvious Causation
- B. The Assumption of Finality\*
- C. The Assumption of Consistency
- D. The Assumption of Simple Meaning
- E. The Assumption of Assuming

21. When Michelle first met John, she noticed his big “muttonchop” sideburns. Although she hated them, she kept it to herself. Six months have past, and Michelle is taking John to her parent’s house to meet them for the first time. She asks him to shave his sideburns because she thinks they are unattractive, and she’s sure her dad will hate them. Which dimension of communication has changed as their relationship has developed?

- A. Public/Personal
- B. Difficult/Efficient
- C. Rigid/Flexible
- D. Hesitant/Spontaneous
- E. Overt Judgment Suspended/Over Judgment Given\*

22. Billy and Deanna had been planning for weeks on being the very first in line to get Steely Dan concert tickets. However, on the morning of the ticket release, Billy’s mom called and informed Billy that his uncle had died. Billy consoled his mom on the phone for about thirty minutes, which made Billy late to pick Deanna up. Consequently, they did not get tickets to the concert. Deanna screamed at Billy, “You can’t fool me, I know why you were late! You hate Steely Dan and didn’t want to go to see the concert anyway.” Which of the following misconceptions about communication BEST explains how Deanna reacted?

- A. Assumption of Consistency
- B. Assumption of Simple Meaning
- C. Assumption of Communicator Independence
- D. Assumption of Obvious Causation\*
- E. Assumption of Finality

## INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL AND TEST BANK

23. Patricia and Robert have been in a relationship for over two years. As the relationship has grown, they have noticed that it takes much less energy and time to communicate messages to each other. What dimension of communication BEST describes this pattern in Patricia and Robert's relationship?

- A. Hesitant-Spontaneous
- B. Public-Personal
- C. Stylized-Unique
- D. Difficult-Efficient\*
- E. Awkward-Smooth

24. Raoul and Penelope have developed a close friendship and hang out with each other often. They have learned a lot about each other, including private information. For example, Penelope knows that Raoul is a "closet" N'Sync fan. She knows that if this information is revealed about Raoul, especially to his closest guy friends, it would make him vulnerable to insults. Which dimension of communication BEST describes Raoul and Penelope's relationship?

- A. Awkward-Smooth
- B. Public-Personal\*
- C. Overt Judgment Suspended-Overt Judgment Given
- D. Narrow-Broad
- E. Difficult-Efficient

25. Bill doesn't own a car. When he needs to drive off campus, he asks his friend Todd to borrow his car. In return, Bill washes the car and fills it up with gas before returning it. Both men seemed happy with this arrangement until last Friday when Bill asked to borrow Todd's car. Todd responded that he wasn't "Avis rent-a-car" and to find someone else to borrow from. Which Assumption about Communication was Bill making about Todd?

- A. Assumption of Consistency\*
- B. Assumption of Simple Meaning
- C. Assumption of Communicator Independence
- D. Assumption of Obvious Causation
- E. Assumption of Finality

26. Beulah recently moved into a nursing home because she could no longer care for herself. While interviewing nursing homes to pick the best one, she found that she liked the caregivers very much at the Sunshine Home. When it came time to check in, her favorite nurse began to ask her very detailed questions about her health, money, and family history. Beulah was very uncomfortable and frustrated to have to tell this private information to a stranger. This illustrates which Dimension of How Communication changes as our relationships develop?

- A. Stylized-Unique
- B. Hesitant – Spontaneous
- C. Difficult – Efficient
- D. Rigid – Flexible
- E. Public – Personal\*

27. When Shondra and Jackson first met, they were like most new acquaintances. They were polite and specific and detailed about what they meant when they conversed. After 5 months of dating, Shondra can look at Jackson at a boring party and say "bolt". Jackson accurately understands this to mean that they should make excuses and leave. Which dimension of how communication changes as our relationships develop does this illustrate?

- A. Stylized-Unique
- B. Hesitant – Spontaneous
- C. Difficult – Efficient\*
- D. Rigid – Flexible
- E. Public – Personal

28. Jack and Diane are going out on a date. Diane tells Jack to make sure he arrives at 7:00 sharp. Jack rolls his eyes and says sarcastically “Sure, I’ll be there right on time.” Jack knows that it does not matter what time he arrives, he is still going to have to wait an extra thirty minutes while Diane finishes dressing. At what level is Jack sending a message?

- A. Relationship\*
- B. Content
- C. Implied
- D. Intrinsic
- E. Extrinsic

29. Mark is furious that Wendde is talking with her ex-boyfriend. He confronts her and she explains that they have been placed in a group project together and were talking about upcoming requirements. Mark says “You can’t fool me, I know that you were talking to him because you still like him.” Which misconception about communication in relationships is Mark making?

- A. Assumption of consistency
- B. Assumption of simple meaning
- C. Assumption of communicator independence
- D. Assumption of finality
- E. Assumption of obvious causation\*

30. Rick and Rikki have been dating for a few months. As their relationship has grown, they have come to talk about more topics in a number of different ways. Now, they communicate with greater variety and have a larger amount of exchange. What dimension of communication BEST explains how this relationship has developed?

- A. Public / Personal
- B. Stylized / Unique
- C. Narrow / Broad\*
- D. Awkward / Smooth
- E. Hesitant / Spontaneous

31. Randy and Niki have been married for ten years. At this stage in their relationship, they can communicate a message in a number of different ways. For example, Niki knows that Randy is upset when he raises an eyebrow, clenches his fists, or grits his teeth. Which dimension of communication BEST explains this facet of Randy’s and Niki’s relationship?

- A. Hesitant / Spontaneous
- B. Public / Personal
- C. Narrow / Broad
- D. Rigid / Flexible\*
- E. Stylized / Unique

32. Jason sees Jessica at school everyday. He talks with her before and after class and they have lots of eye contact and an overall good connection as a friend. One day Jason decides to call Jessica to go to a movie. Her response, however, was chilly to say the least. This frustrated Jason because he thought Jessica had been friendly towards him and didn’t understand why she was all-of-a-sudden cold. What assumption about communication is Jason making about Jessica?

- A. Assumption of consistency\*
- B. Assumption of simple meaning
- C. Assumption of communicator independence
- D. Assumption of obvious causation
- E. Assumption of finality



## INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL AND TEST BANK

33. Fiona and her boyfriend, Seth, have been together for almost three years. Although she has never met his family, Fiona has heard endless stories about their misadventures over the years. In fact, she has heard so many interesting facts that she feels as if she knows them already. Seth's family, on the other hand, knows nothing about Fiona. When they finally meet, Fiona treats them as if they were old friends, whereas the family treats Fiona as if she were a stranger. This illustrates which dimension of how communication changes as our relationships develop?

- A. Stylized-Unique
- B. Hesitant-Spontaneous\*
- C. Difficult-Efficient
- D. Rigid-flexible
- E. Public-personal

34. Alex and Maria are dating and they just had their first big fight. Maria turns to Alex and says, "None of this is my fault. I have done nothing wrong." Which assumption about communication is Marisa making?

- A. Assumption of interdependence
- B. Assumption of obvious causation
- C. Assumption of communicator independence\*
- D. Assumption of simple meaning
- E. Assumption of finality

35. Lisa and Ted are friends. Lately, Lisa has been upset because whenever they go out to have a drink, Ted starts drinking heavily. After two or three shots, he tells her that he loves her madly. However, the next day, he reacts as if nothing had happened and treats Lisa just as a friend. Lisa is puzzled because she expects Ted to tell her the same things when he is sober. Which misconception about communication in relationships was Lisa making?

- A. Assumption of simple meaning
- B. Assumption of communicator independence
- C. Assumption of consistency\*
- D. Assumption of finality
- E. Assumption of obvious causation

36. Before Edmond could say a word, Lucille told him that she knew why he had been drinking with his friends in that lousy sports bar—to see that waitresses with hardly any clothes on! Edmond replied with sarcasm "OK. Since you can read my mind with such accuracy, I guess I have nothing to say in my defense." Which misconception about communication in relationships is Lucille making?

- A. Assumption of finality
- B. Assumption of obvious causation\*
- C. Assumption of consistency
- D. Assumption of logical reasoning
- E. Assumption of communicator independence

37. When Amanda is around her friends, she is the most outgoing person. She is relaxed and speaks freely because she feels comfortable talking with them. However, when she is with strangers, she does not express herself as much. She usually feels uncertain about how to talk to new people. Which communication dimension BEST explains this example?

- A. Public-personal
- B. Hesitant-spontaneous \*
- C. Difficult-efficient
- D. Rigid-flexible
- E. Narrow-broad

38. Whenever someone asks Winifred about her relationship with Ferdinand, she brags about how great the relationship is. She says that they are made for each other because of all of the wonderful things they share together as a couple. Winifred thinks that their relationship is unlike any other in the world. In this example, Winifred is talking about the relationship in terms of...?

- A. Work
- B. Commitment
- C. Manipulation
- D. Unique/special\*
- E. Involvement

### TRUE OR FALSE QUESTIONS

1. The ability to accurately infer the specific content of a partner's thoughts and feelings is called empathic determinancy.

- A. True
- B. False\*

2. The behaviors that contribute to relationship breakdown are typically found in all relationships, just in smaller doses.

- A. True\*
- B. False

3. Messages can be considered on both the *content level* and on the *relationship level*.

- A. True\*
- B. False

4. Couples sometimes engage in mutually confirming and overlapping talk about shared rules, interpretations, activities, backgrounds, and experiences in their relationships—a process called *meshing*.

- A. True
- B. False\*

5. As relationships grow, the speed with which a couple can communicate with one another often increases.

- A. True\*
- B. False

6. The narrow--broad communication dimension refers to the depth of social penetration.

- A. True
- B. False\*

7. The communication patterns of two partners in a relationship are generally independent from each other.

- A. True
- B. False\*

8. Communication options are unlimited in the beginning stages of most relationships.

- A. True
- B. False\*

9. Although judgments of one's relationship partner are often made, they tend not to be said out loud during the initial stages of relationships.

- A. True\*
- B. False

10. "Response matching" involves the notion that most people tend to speak longer, use more intense words, interrupt more, and reveal more intimate information than their conversational partners do.

- A. True
- B. False\*

## INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL AND TEST BANK

11. Research has demonstrated that friends tend to have more uniqueness, breadth, and flexibility in their communication than acquaintances do.

- A. True\*
- B. False

12. As our relationships develop, our communication changes from being broad (many topics discussed) to being narrow (focusing on a few).

- A. True
- B. False\*

### SHORT ANSWER / ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Define the following terms:

- a. Content level
- b. Relationship level
- c. Breadth frequency
- d. Depth of social penetration

2. The title of this chapter is “Communication: The Lifeblood of Relationships.” From the reading and class discussions, provide specific examples to defend or argue this point of view.

3. Define (in your own words) the dimensions of communication from Chapter 1. For each dimension, be sure to explain how people interact when they first meet, and then, how they interact once the relationship becomes more intimate. Then, for EACH dimension, come up with an elaborate example that represents the type of communication that occurs either when you first meet someone or when you are in a close relationship with someone. You may use dialogue, real-life examples, or hypothetical examples. Finally, describe the patterns and variations that occur across the dimensions.

## STUDY AIDS

### Five Misconceptions of Communication

#### Misconception #1: The Assumption of Consistency

What do we often assume happens when we communicate?

Key word/phrase to remember:

What REALLY happens when we communicate?

#### Misconception #2: The Assumption of Simple Meaning

What do we often assume happens when we communicate?

Key word/phrase to remember:

What REALLY happens when we communicate?

#### Misconception #3: The Assumption of Communicator Independence

What do we often assume happens when we communicate?

Key word/phrase to remember:

What REALLY happens when we communicate?

#### Misconception #4: The Assumption of Obvious Causation

What do we often assume happens when we communicate?

Key word/phrase to remember:

What REALLY happens when we communicate?

#### Misconception #5: The Assumption of Finality

What do we often assume happens when we communicate?

Key word/phrase to remember:

What REALLY happens when we communicate?

**The Eight Dimensions of Interpersonal Communication**

1. Narrow—Broad

Definition:

Example:

2. Public—Personal

Definition:

Example

3. Stylized—Unique

Definition:

Example:

4. Difficult—Efficient

Definition:

Example:

5. Rigid—Flexible

Definition:

Example:

6. Awkward—Smooth

Definition:

Example:

7. Hesitant—Spontaneous

Definition:

Example:

8. Overt Judgment Suspended—Overt Judgment Given

Definition:

Example:

# Chapter Two

## Stages of Coming Together and Coming Apart

### Chapter Main Ideas:

In this chapter the student is presented with a model to explain the development and dissolution of relationships. The model includes various phases of coming together and several phases of coming apart. Within each stage of interaction, emphasis is placed on the communication behaviors that typically characterize that stage. Dialectical theory and social exchange theory are presented as frameworks for explaining movement through the various interaction stages.

### Chapter Outline with Instructor Notes:

- I. Two Communication Relationship Principles
  - A. Expectations for relationships—communication is central to establishing and maintaining relational expectations. Overt communication only gives a partial glimpse into relationships; there is often more under the surface.
  - B. Relational dynamics—relationships exist on a dynamic between superficiality and intimacy.
- II. A Model of Interaction Stages in Relationships
  - A. The model
    - 1. Coming together—five phases that describe the process of becoming more intimate
    - 2. Coming apart—five phases that describe the process of relational degeneration
  - B. Assumptions
    - 1. The model is descriptive—not prescriptive. Coming together is not necessarily good and coming apart is not necessarily bad.
    - 2. The model simplifies a complex process
    - 3. The model is relevant for both mixed-gender and same-gender relationships
    - 4. The model is relevant for voluntary and involuntary relationships
    - 5. The model is primarily focused on dyads, but we cannot forget the influence of social networks
    - 6. The model is closely associated with the dimensions of communication presented in Chapter One.
- III. Interaction Stages
  - Coming Together*
    - A. Initiating—communicators typically try to display themselves as likable in this stage. They are trying to decide if the other person is attractive (overall) here.
    - B. Experimenting—small talk is typical here and there are many functions of small talk. Individuals are seeking more information about the other person.
    - C. Intensifying—the amount of personal disclosure increases. Partners tell some secrets and they start talking about “we” instead of “I”. In addition, nonverbal communication becomes more sophisticated (i.e., a touch can replace a long verbalization). As the relationship intensifies, it is not always easy to work through uncertainties that accompany the blending process. These tensions are experienced by the couple as well as by individuals in their social networks.
    - D. Integrating—partners clearly fuse into a couple and engage in a process called *coupling*. They may start to dress, talk, and even look and sound alike.
    - E. Bonding—a public ritual occurs that announces to the world that a commitment has been formally contracted.

*Coming Apart*

- F. Differentiating—the process of disengaging begins. Partners start to undo some of the coupling
- G. Circumscribing—both quantity and quality of communication begin to seriously degrade; they are decreases in the breadth and depth of communication.
- H. Stagnating—participants are simply “marking time” in the relationship. Almost no topic of substance is brought up because partners believe they already know what the outcome of the conversation will be.
- I. Avoiding—an individual tries to physically avoid their partner; for instance, they may move to another room to get away when partner comes in.
- J. Terminating—the relationship ends. The relationship can either gradually fade away or end quickly or something in between

IV. Movement: In, Out, and Around Stages

A. There are several directions available for movement through the interaction stages:

- 1. Movement is generally systematic and sequential
- 2. Movement may be forward
- 3. Movement may be backward
- 4. Movement may occur within stages
- 5. Movement is always to a new place.

B. The rate of movement through the interaction stages varies for several reasons (e.g., when proximity is high, movement through the stages can be facilitated)

C. Two theories useful in explaining movement through relationship stages: dialectical theory and social exchange theory

1. Dialectical theory—change occurs as we strive to balance the inevitable tensions in relational life

- a. Integration-Separation—merging vs. remaining an individual
- b. Expression-Nonexpression—hide and seek of thoughts and emotions
- c. Stability-Change—predictability vs. spontaneity

2. Social exchange theory

a. Social exchange theories contend:

- 1. We are constantly exchanging resources in relationships
- 2. Resources are evaluated as rewarding or not rewarding
- 3. People tend to seek rewards

b. Rules or principles governing exchange:

- 1. Equity—what you get from the relationship is equal to what you put in
- 2. Equality rule—each partner is perceived as contributing equally and benefiting equally
- 3. Reward level – the more rewards people get, the happier they are
- 4. Need-based rule—people exchange resources in response to what they perceive as their partner’s needs

c. Rewards and costs—figure out if the rewards of the relationship are worth the costs. Although we know very little about how relationship partners talk about rewards and costs, we do know that they weigh one or more of the following and how they affect the relationship as a whole:

- 1. The current encounters
- 2. Past encounters
- 3. Future encounters

We also know that various characteristics of more intimate, long-term relationships affect the ways those partners deal with rewards and costs (e.g., as the relationship becomes more intimate, the value of rewards and costs may increase).

**KEY WORDS:**

Coupling  
 Distance  
 Disassociation  
 Equity  
 Equality rule  
 Reward level  
 Need-based rule  
 Norm of reciprocity  
 Imitation  
 Emotional contagion

**OUTSIDE ACTIVITY: “Cost-Benefit Analysis”**

The purpose of this activity is to illustrate the role of costs and rewards in relationships, by assigning students a cost-benefit analysis of two of their present relationships—one that is satisfactory and one that is unsatisfactory.

The student, choosing one satisfactory and one unsatisfactory relationship, should list the primary rewards and costs of each relationship and compare the value of each to other current relationships, those they have encountered in the past, and the “ideal” relationships of the future. In the class discussion that stems from this assignment, it will be important to note that what constitutes a reward or cost for one individual will not necessarily be viewed in a like manner by another person.

**IN-CLASS ACTIVITY: Prisoner’s Dilemma Game**

The purpose of this activity is to allow the students a chance to participate in an activity where they may witness social exchange theory put into practice.

This game is a variation of an exercise originally devised by Rapoport and Chammah (*Prisoner’s Dilemma: A Study in Conflict Cooperation*; Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1965). This variation is described by Michael Glauser and Linda Putnam (*Instructor’s Manual to Accompany Principles of Human Communication*, Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing Co., 1980). The game creates a situation for the participants where each must decide the relative worth of rewards and costs for him/herself during interaction. For each segment of the activity, the persons involved are constantly taking risks. One may maximize his/her rewards but runs the risk of suffering large costs. One also has the choice of attempting to gain moderate rewards for him/herself and the other person at the same time. Such a choice creates a dilemma for the participants. In this dilemma, neither person is aware of the other person’s decision and the prediction of what the other individual will do affects the choice of both participants. This prediction, in turn, is strongly influenced by the extent to which each person trusts the other one. The essential properties of this dilemma appear in the game matrix below.

The matrix is blocked into four squares. Two people play the game and determine with a combination of their respective choices which squares they play. Person 1 controls the columns and can choose either A or B; person 2 controls the rows and can choose either C or D. Both players can make only one choice and both choices must be made simultaneously; hence, neither player knows the other person’s choice in advance. To illustrate the game, if Person 1 chooses A and Person 2 selects C, both parties win \$15. But if Person 1 picks A and Person 2 picks D, Person 1 loses \$35 and Person 2 wins \$35. However, if Person 1 chooses B and Person 2 chooses D, both players lose \$15. (The instructor may choose a more tangible reward to increase motivation in this exercise such as class points, candy, or pennies.)



		<b>Person 1</b>		
		<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
	<b>C</b>	Person 1 +\$15  Person 2 +\$15	Person 1 +\$35  Person 2 +\$15	
	<b>D</b>	Person 1 -\$35  Person 2 +\$35	Person 1 -\$15  Person 2 -\$15	<b>Person 2</b>
		<b>Prisoner's Dilemma Game</b>		

The object of the game is to win money. Each player strives to win money by cooperating to attain rewards. The game takes place without conversation between players until the 5<sup>th</sup> round of play. In effect, the choices of each player serve as a form of communication. To play the game, each person needs 2 slips of paper or 2 index cards.

1. Players should work in teams of two and sit back-to-back so that they cannot see each other. The person designated Person 1 should print the letter A on one card and the letter B on the other. Similarly, Person 2 should print C on one card and D on the other.
2. When the instructor gives the signal, each person should select a card and simultaneously show it to the other player.
3. Each player then records his/her choice, the other person's choice, amount of money gained or lost, and running total of earnings.
4. This is repeated for five rounds. At the end of the fifth choice, the two players can discuss the game or anything they care to mention for ten minutes.
5. Then the individuals play five more rounds, following the procedure described in steps 1-3.

The class discussion should be guided using the following questions:

1. Were the players seeking to gain rewards only for themselves or were they concerned about the rewards of the other person?
2. What happened if either player attempted to maximize his/her gains or minimize his/her costs?
3. What role did trust play as the game proceeded?
4. How do the dynamics at work here relate to interaction in enduring relationships?