



Community Counsellor Training Toolkit

Facilitator Guide

LifeLine/ChildLine Namibia



In July 2011, FHI became FHI 360.



FHI 360 is a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions. Our staff includes experts in health, education, nutrition, environment, economic development, civil society, gender, youth, research and technology – creating a unique mix of capabilities to address today's interrelated development challenges. FHI 360 serves more than 60 countries, all 50 U.S. states and all U.S. territories.

Visit us at www.fhi360.org.

© Family Health International and LifeLine/ChildLine, Namibia. 2006.
All rights reserved.

This manual may be freely reviewed and quoted provided the source is acknowledged. This book may not be sold or used in conjunction with commercial purposes.

Facilitators who use this manual must be trained in both facilitation and advanced counselling skills.

Developed by Lisa Fiol Powers, Family Health International (FHI), Namibia, in collaboration with staff from LifeLine/ChildLine, Namibia.

The adaptation of this manual was supported by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under the IMPACT Project (Cooperative Agreement HRN-A-00-97-00017-00), which is managed by FHI. The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Government, FHI or USAID.



Foreword

In 1988, I started working as a young community liaison officer for a Namibian non-profit organisation. This experience opened my eyes to the tremendous gaps between the values, norms and cultural influences of the country's different ethnic and racial groups and between those living in urban and rural settings. These differences in experience and perspective added to the tension amongst people, leading to a lack of trust and an inability to work together.

Fortunately, Namibians have experienced tremendous social growth since then, as these manuals for training community counsellors demonstrate. They include such sensitive subjects as stigma, coercion and cultural practices detrimental to health. These pioneering learning tools reflect the significant progress made as a result of the great partnerships developed throughout Namibia over the last 18 years. It is heart-warming to witness the openness and trust people from different cultures have achieved by offering counselling to a neighbour, a friend, a stranger.

I am proud to be associated with these manuals. I am proud of every trainer of LifeLine/ChildLine Namibia and every Namibian trainee who contributed. Thanks go to the many partners in faith-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, and the Ministry of Health and Social Services, especially NACOP—Special Programmes Division, which made such important contributions. Ms. Lisa Fiol Powers, a consultant seconded by Family Health International to upgrade and develop these manuals, deserves special thanks. In addition to these dedicated partners, we also want to thank the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which provided funding. We will forever be grateful to you all.



Amanda W. Krüger
NATIONAL DIRECTOR

LifeLine/ChildLine Namibia

director@lifeline.org.na



Acknowledgements

Over the last eight months I have lived, breathed and dreamt about community counselling, training and curricula. Developing the Community Counselling Training Toolkit has been an incredible experience for me. It enabled me to share my passion and concern to provide psychosocial support and counselling to meet the needs of so many around the world, particularly those affected by and infected with HIV. For me, it has been an honour to live and work in Namibia and to share in the lives of so many who are tirelessly working to fight HIV and its effects.

As is true with all curricula development, the entire team creates the finished product. The team I have worked with at Family Health International (FHI) and LifeLine/ChildLine has been especially generous, delightful and supportive.

Let me start by thanking the training team at LifeLine/ChildLine. The training team includes staff trainers Nortin, Frieda, Maggy, Angela and Cornelia, and volunteer trainers Dube, Christine, Hilarie, Emmy, Emelle and Jonas who have been absolutely fabulous to work with. When I rushed to complete drafts of Facilitator Manuals just days before a training workshop, the trainers never lost patience, even though it meant they had limited time to prepare for their sessions. Their enthusiasm and willingness to try new material has never ceased to amaze me. They have welcomed new ideas and significant changes to both the training materials and the methodology. The encouragement and feedback I have received from the trainers has been invaluable! You have been a delightful group of people to work with on this project.

I would also like to thank Amanda Kruger, Hafeni Katamba and Simon Kakuva at LifeLine/ChildLine for recognising the need to make substantial changes in the Community Counsellor Training Toolkit and for their support throughout the process of curricula development, encompassing piloting and testing new material as well as training trainers in process facilitation.

None of this would have been possible without the incredible support from the entire staff at Family Health International/Namibia. You are all a truly talented, dedicated and fun group of people. I would specifically like to thank Rose de Buyscher for making this whole project possible, not only through the allocation of funds, but also for her support in turning what began as a "harmonisation" into a more extensive project involving significant changes to existing curricula and the design and development of new material. The technical contributions and support for person-centred counselling offered by Dr. Fred van der Veen enabled me to challenge some of the rigid tenets of HIV counselling, and encourage counsellors to focus on their client's emotional needs rather than adhering to fixed protocols.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Patsy Church for her inspiration and generosity in providing so many resources, for engaging in so many stimulating conversations, for being a cheerleader at times, and for always believing that these materials could make a difference. Patsy tirelessly read through drafts and offered valuable feedback and encouragement. Patsy has not only become a role model, she has become a dear friend.

My hope is that, with this Training Toolkit, community counsellors in Namibia will be better equipped to support their clients emotionally, offering them hope as they wrestle with so many difficult issues such as stigma, loss, coping with their HIV status, death and treatment, as well as financial and emotional uncertainty.

Lisa Fiol Powers, MA (Clinical Psychology)
Family Health International, Namibia



TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMMUNITY COUNSELLOR TRAINING TOOLKIT OVERVIEW	6
THE TEACHER/TRAINER/FACILITATOR CONTINUUM	8
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING	11
PROCESS FACILITATION	12
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A FACILITATOR.....	17
THE FACILITATION SKILLS NEEDED	19
FACILITATION AS A FORM OF LEADERSHIP	28
FACILITATING SMALL GROUPS IN THE PERSONAL GROWTH MODULE	31
CO-LEADERSHIP IN GROUP FACILITATION	35
HOW ADULTS LEARN	37
LEARNING STYLES.....	39
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	41
GROUP DEVELOPMENT	48
COMMON CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED IN GROUPS.....	57
TRUST: THE FOUNDATION OF ANY RELATIONSHIP AND GROUP.....	60
HANDLING GROUP CONFLICT	62
FACILITATING ROLE PLAYS	67
TIPS FOR FACILITATORS USING THE COMMUNITY COUNSELLOR TOOLKIT	69
INTRODUCTIONS: THE FIRST SESSION OF A WORKSHOP	72
SUGGESTED CHECK-INS	75
POTENTIAL ENERGISERS	77
REVIEW ACTIVITIES	78
REFERENCES: FACILITATOR'S GUIDE	80



COMMUNITY COUNSELLOR TRAINING TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

Facilitator Guide: This guide introduces the entire training toolkit and contains information on the methodology, philosophy and focus of the curriculum. It is recommended that you read the Facilitator Guide prior to facilitating any of the Toolkit modules.

Module 1: Personal Growth: This first module walks participants through the process of exploring themselves, as understanding and acceptance of oneself is the foundation for becoming a counsellor. Through exploring one's own thoughts, feelings, values and attitudes, one develops self-acceptance, which is the basis for acceptance and empathy for others. By reflecting on one's own experience and then analysing that experience, participants not only develop important reflecting skills necessary for counselling, but facilitators can also assess participants' capabilities to become counsellors. Experiential learning from this module is continuously referred to in subsequent sections of the curriculum.

Module 2: Basic Counselling Skills: This module focuses on the essential counselling skills required for all types of counselling, particularly from a client-centred counselling approach. The emphasis in this module is on practising these fundamental building blocks of counselling, which include listening, reflecting, probing/action and problem management skills. All of these skills are used to build trust, develop empathy, assess the emotional state and general condition of the client, identify key issues or problems and assess their importance, explore options to address these issues, agree on a plan of action with achievable objectives, and organise follow-up sessions to continue the counselling process.

Module 3: General HIV including Sex Education and Sexuality: This module lays out important topics related to HIV, such as prevalence, transmission, prevention, the natural course of the disease, etc. While most of this module is general information, some sessions focus on emotional aspects of the disease, which are then integrated into a counselling framework. Information on HIV would be incomplete without an emphasis on sexuality and relationships, since sex is the most common mode of transmission in Africa. HIV counsellors must be comfortable discussing issues related to sex and sexuality. It is important for trainees to explore their personal values related to sexuality and sexual behaviours before working with clients who may have different values and engage in different sexual behaviours from theirs.

Module 4: HIV Counselling & Testing: The counselling and testing module of this Toolkit focuses on incorporating client-centred counselling with the general Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) topics. Community counsellors are encouraged to use the existing counselling and testing outline as a starting point rather than a fixed protocol. Using the skills acquired during the previous modules, participants then apply them to the specific settings of HIV counselling, testing and follow-up.



Module 5: Adherence Counselling for HIV Treatment: This module applies basic counselling skills in working with clients to support ways of managing HIV at different stages of the disease. This counselling includes preparing clients for prophylaxis and treatment of opportunistic infections, preparing clients to start antiretroviral treatment and working with clients who return for follow-up visits to achieve and maintain optimal adherence.

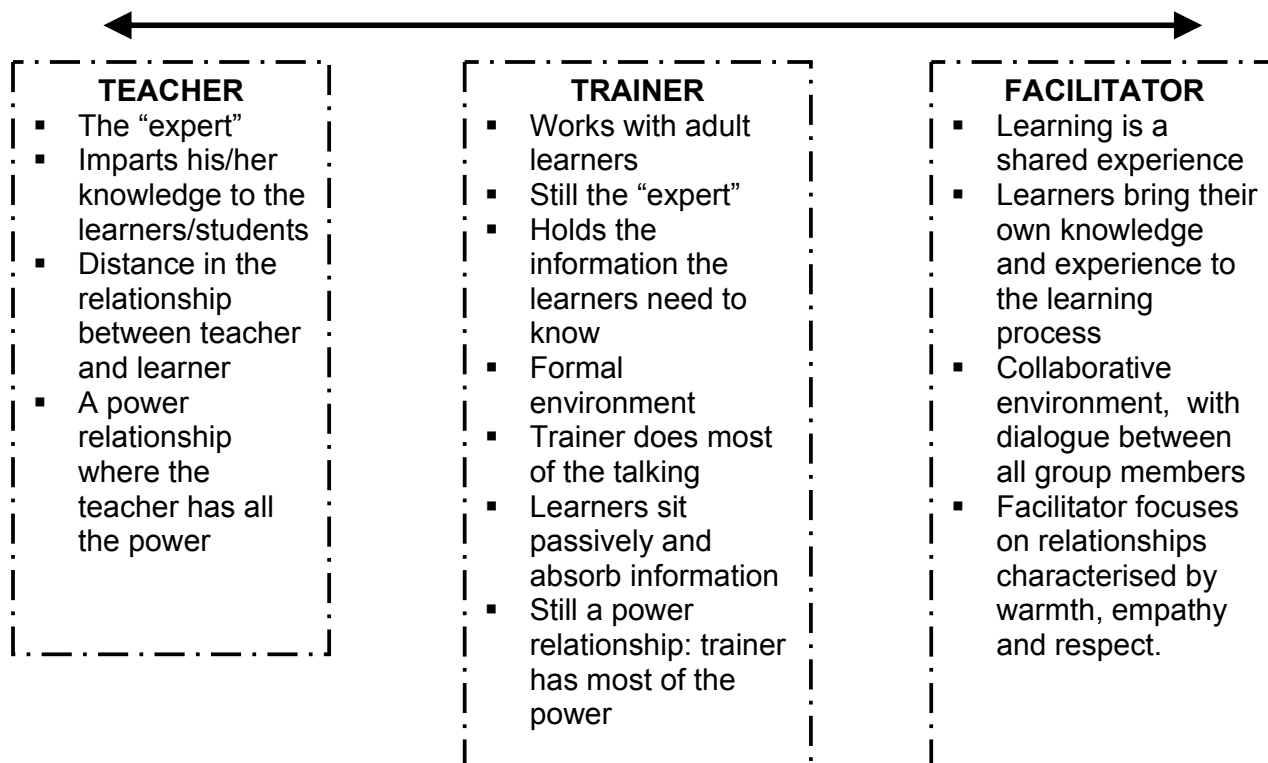
Module 6: Counselling and PMTCT: Counselling in the context of PMTCT builds on the basic counselling skills from a person-centred approach. Counselling for preventing mother-to-child transmission includes counselling and testing as well as infant feeding counselling. Counselling in PMTCT is focussed on supporting the mother to make realistic choices about positive living, HIV prevention and family planning.



THE TEACHER/TRAINER/FACILITATOR CONTINUUM

In the community counsellor curriculum, the trainer will be referred to as a facilitator. It is important to note the significance of this term and why facilitation is central to the methodology of these training materials.

If you reflect back on your life, no doubt you will be able to identify some courses you took or workshops you attended where the leader of the course took on a particular style of working with the group. It can be helpful to think of the different approaches on a continuum.



Teaching

Teaching is on the far left of the continuum. When we refer to teaching, most of us would picture our experiences in secondary school or university where the teacher was the “expert.” This “expert” was the person whose responsibility it was to impart his or her knowledge to the learners, or students. The teacher knew everything we needed to know to pass the examination. This approach is didactic, instructional and oriented around the delivery of content. The relationship between the teacher and the learner is characterised by distance and formality.

Training

The term “training” is usually used to refer to adult learning. The trainer usually sets him or herself up as the expert, holding the information that participants need to know. While there is not as much power in the relationship between the trainer and the adult learners as between the teacher and student, the trainer still holds most of the power. The learning

environment is formal and the trainer does most of the talking while the participants sit passively and absorb the information. This approach has more dialogue between the participants and the trainer, but the trainer is still the focus as the “expert” in the room.

Facilitation

The word “facilitate” means to make it easier for a process or activity to happen. This is exactly what a facilitator does; he or she encourages or leads the process of the group or enables an activity to occur. The facilitator is not the expert imparting knowledge and information to the group; rather he/she is a leading member of the group, drawing on the knowledge of and information from the participants or group members. Facilitators acknowledge that participants come into the room with their own knowledge and experiences that can be shared to enrich their own growth as well as the growth of other participants. In facilitation, the facilitator expects to experience, learn and grow alongside participants. The facilitation environment is more informal than teaching or training and it focuses on dialogue amongst the group. Facilitators try to enable and empower their participants through a relationship that is characterised by warmth, empathy and respect.

The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery.
Mark Van Doren

For me, facilitation is far more like being a choir director than being a teacher. The art of being a really good facilitator lies in knowing just when to start the sopranos singing and when to let the deep basses come in; and controlling how loud or how soft, how fast or how slow the song should be sung.

Below is a diagram to illustrate the difference between the roles of the trainer and facilitator.



TRAINER	FACILITATOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tells information; presents ✓ Participants receive information ✓ Acts as authority or expert ✓ Is expected to know all the answers ✓ “Them-Us” attitude ✓ Separates roles ✓ Believes that some participants come into the room knowing some things, others do not ✓ Lopsided participation: trainer talks, participants listen ✓ May try and communicate only with an individual, not the group as a whole ✓ Formal environment ✓ Organised ✓ Has set objectives and goals to be met ✓ Power is focussed in the hands of only one or two trainers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Probes for information using strategic questions ✓ Focuses on dialogue amongst the group members ✓ Is willing to learn ✓ Does not have all the answers ✓ Participates alongside the group members ✓ Forms relationships ✓ Interdependent with participants ✓ Creates a sense of community, despite differences ✓ Democratic ✓ Empathetic ✓ Respectful and warm ✓ Willing to discuss problems and issues ✓ Empowers participants/group members ✓ Considers all people as learners ✓ Knowingly puts him/herself at personal risk ✓ Ensures the full participation of everyone ✓ Shares and allows for sharing ✓ Forms common ground for group to work on ✓ Creates an informal, collaborative environment

Though there are sessions that rely on a training methodology, the manual has been developed to largely encompass a facilitation approach. The sessions that are didactic are primarily in the later weeks of training; these sessions are focussed on foundational concepts related to HIV, such as ART and PMTCT. Though there are material and information that participants will have to learn, later activities in subsequent sessions seek to apply principles learned previously and to integrate the new information into the counselling setting.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Experiential learning is simply learning by doing. Experiential learning is a process whereby experiences are actually brought into the training room. These experiences can include group activities, discussions, games, demonstrations and role plays. However, experiential learning only starts with the experience in the training room. Bringing the experiences into the training room allows the facilitator to take the immediate thoughts and feelings of the participants and then translate those experiences into broader applications.

Experiential learning is a four-step learning process:

1. Experiencing: create the experience within the training room. This will inevitably draw on participants' backgrounds and previous experiences. However, the experience by itself is empty without the following steps.
2. Identifying: name the experience. This involves naming the feelings and thoughts that participants are having right now. This step is immediate so that the participants are stating their current thoughts and feelings.
3. Analysing: look at or reflect on the experience. In this stage the facilitator helps the participants to take a step back and reflect on the experience. This step often involves the question, "Why?"
4. Generalising: experiential learning would be incomplete without an application. The experience should be generalised so that participants can take their learning beyond the training room.

It is wrong to coerce people into opinions, but it is our duty to impel them into experience.
Kurt Hahn

PROCESS FACILITATION

Process facilitation is a type of facilitation that goes hand-in-hand with experiential learning. It leads the group through the process of experiential learning described above. Process facilitation focuses on the immediate: it is here and now. In many ways, process facilitation is closer to group therapy or counselling than it is to training. Keep in mind that facilitators empower and enable their participants through a relationship that is characterised by warmth, empathy and respect. These characteristics of the facilitator, along with the process of empowerment, should sound very much like characteristics of a counsellor, especially a client-centred counsellor. Through process facilitation, the facilitator models the characteristics of a counsellor as well as the process of counselling.

As a process facilitator, you will be required to use more of your counselling skills (in addition to some new skills) than any teaching or training skills you may already have. Much of the success of process facilitation will rely heavily on the personal qualities of the facilitator, just as so much of the success of counselling relies on the personal characteristics of the counsellor and his or her ability to connect to and build a relationship with the client.

The theoretical framework for process facilitation usually draws from an eclectic mix of different therapies. Rogers' person-centred approach still remains as a central force, but transactional analysis, narrative therapy, systems thinking, Gestalt therapy, etc. all add richness to this work.

In theory, this approach emphasises:

- The **cognitive**, or **thinking**, dimension of workshop participants. So, we might challenge group members on whether or not the ideas and assumptions they make about themselves, others and life in general are based on thoughts and beliefs they cling to from early parental and cultural messages. We also might challenge their beliefs and values and how they view and interact with people who have very different values.
- The value of helping participants identify and express their **feelings**. Just as this is central to Rogers' principles in person-centred counselling, it is an essential skill for counsellors, and one that will be practised over and over again throughout the training modules.
- The value of thinking and feeling as vital components in the process to bring about behaviour or personality change – **behaving** or **doing**. Much of what the counsellors will be working with centres around behaviour change; therefore it is important that they experience behaviour change themselves. Through process facilitation, this crucial process of behaviour change is made possible.

Essentially, the theory is that participants will bring the attitudes, beliefs, feelings and behaviours that they experience **out there** (in their daily lives, in the world) into the training room. Through a process of skilled facilitation and an environment of complete acceptance, empathy, warmth and respect as well as honest but gentle feedback from the group, profound moments of self-awareness and change can take place. The facilitator works with the **here and now** of any group, knowing that any changes that take place in the training room will be mirrored out there. There is “magic” that can happen between people in groups, and as facilitators we need to help release and orchestrate this “magic.”

You will find yourself personally digging deep, and you may be quite challenged by putting this into practise. It takes courage, as well as a certain amount of risk-taking and a profound sensitivity to individuals operating in groups. However, it is an exhilarating experience when it goes right. Once you start to get a grasp of it, chances are you will never want to do it any other way again!

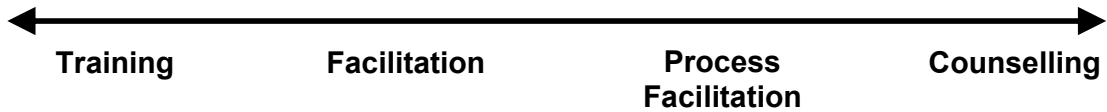
Learning is not just learning things, but learning the meaning of things. Learning is learning to think. Learning should lead to change. If there is not change, there is not learning.

John Dewey

After each activity in the curriculum, there is a list of *processing questions*. The purpose of these questions is to help facilitators ask the questions that enable process facilitation to occur. You will notice that the questions start with identifying the thoughts and feelings associated with the experience, and then they move through the analysing and generalising steps. You do not need to ask every question included. It is just a guide, especially for those who are new to process facilitation. However, I would like to highlight that the mistake most make when learning process facilitation is to move too quickly to analysing or “intellectualising.” Sticking with current thoughts and feelings can be uncomfortable and feel vulnerable at times. However, I would encourage you to keep the group members focussed on their experiences, especially the feelings that the activity brought up. As a facilitator, you may have to push and dig a little with the participants to share their feelings; they are not used to this type of group interaction. Staying in the **here and now** is key to the “magic” that can occur as a result of process facilitation.

Process Facilitation on the Teacher/Facilitator Continuum

If one were to extend the teacher/facilitator continuum from teaching on one end to counselling on the other, process facilitation would fit between facilitating and counselling.



As you can see on the continuum above, process facilitation is much closer to counselling than it is to teaching. This is important to keep in mind when training counsellors, as it is essential that the counselling facilitator model counselling skills throughout the facilitation process.

Meta-consulting

Meta-consulting is one tool that can be used as part of process facilitation. It can be a very powerful tool of process facilitators working together. It involves drawing on the observer status of the co-facilitator to comment on the process at various times in the course of a workshop. The lead facilitator may engage the other facilitator and talk about their concerns and observation in front of the group. Typically it might go like this:

Patsy: Simon, what are some of the things that you have been thinking about or noticing in this session?

Simon: You know, Patsy, I think it has been a real turning point for some people. I noticed that Lucas and Ndapandula expressed their very real feelings about growing up in a divorced family. I sensed that they drew strength from one another.

Patsy: I agree. It was so exciting to see Ndapandula speak out so strongly for the first time. I realised she has some very interesting insights to share with us. I hope she continues to share. I was so impressed with the way the group allowed her to experience her pain and immediately started to use the skills they have been learning. No one jumped in too early to “fix” her pain. But you know, Simon, I am still concerned about Janet. We have not heard from her today...do you think there is a reason?

Simon: I wondered if she maybe find this session intimidating. Perhaps we could ask her just now. Janet, do you think the group is intimidating?

Janet: No, but perhaps one or two individuals come across as knowing so much already. It might help if they held back a bit.

Simon: (*directed at the whole group*) Would any of you like to make a comment or observation at this point?

Though it may seem contrived at first, meta-consulting can be a powerful tool to use when the group is stuck or when there are some concerns about the participation. It provides a way for the group to be in the here-and-now

without making it confrontational and therefore causing participants to be defensive. You can also use meta-consulting where one facilitator plays the role of the “good cop” (defending the group) and another the role of the “bad cop” (attacking or criticising the group).

Striving for a Balance between Thinking and Feeling

Our thoughts and feelings are the two major ways through which we interact with our environment. Both are essential to constructive and meaningful communication. Our thoughts enable us to explain our environment or personal situation, whilst our feelings help us to understand or identify with it. As a facilitator you will need to be aware of group members who show a preference for, or avoidance of, either head-talk (a focus on thoughts and rationality) or gut-talk (a focus on feelings). An ability to be in touch with both aspects enriches our experience of our inner and outer realities. Furthermore, an ability to express your feelings without guilt, fear or embarrassment can be a particularly liberating experience.

“Think” statements reflect thoughts that are attempts to define, assert, give an opinion, rationalise, attribute causal relations between events, or express a perception. Thoughts are governed by rules of logic and inquiry. They can be true or false. They require words to be communicated.

On the other hand, “feel” statements reflect emotions and are attempts to report on internal, non-rational, “gut” reactions to events. They are usually highly personal, subjective and idiosyncratic. They are neither true nor false, neither good nor bad, but only honestly or dishonestly communicated. They may not require words in order to be communicated. For example, a hug can communicate warmth, intimacy, love, celebration, etc. However, words are useful in clarifying the intensity and immediacy of the feeling being experienced.

Beware of comments such as “I feel like...” or “I feel that...” While these sound like “feel” statements they are NOT feelings. The words “like” and “that” inserted in the statement negates the feeling and makes it a “think” statement. This is a common mistake in communication that you will need to be alert to when facilitating.

Many of us have been conditioned to guard, hide, defend or deny our feelings. We may also minimise their intensity, even when our bodily reactions to events are clearly apparent: for example, shaking with fear, pacing in anxiety, insomnia from worry, or frowning in uncertainty. Even our impulses, wishes, dreams and fantasies communicate underlying feelings. For example, “I wish John would shut up!” can reflect underlying irritation. Being able to recognise and acknowledge these feelings, even if only to oneself within one’s environment is important. It is especially important as a facilitator working with counsellor trainees that you help participants learn to identify these feelings through process facilitation. Recognising and acknowledging these feelings can be important tools in counselling.

In the same way as counsellors, facilitators need to be alert to the following pitfalls when dealing with feelings:

- **Projection:** this occurs when we deny our own feelings and attribute them to others.
- **Judging motives:** guessing others' intentions is a sly way of focussing on their feelings instead of your own. It offers an intriguing but irrelevant diversion into explaining why someone is feeling the way they do. It is also a way to create distance; rather than ask the person about his/her behaviour, one makes his/her own assumptions.
- **Meta-feelings:** these are thoughts or feelings about feelings. They can garble communication and are a way of distancing yourself from an immediate experience or intellectualising a potentially rich feeling experience.

Striving for a Balance between Past and Present

Facilitators need to strive for a balance between there-and-then communication and here-and-now communication. There-and then deals with the past. Expressing the past can be easier than dealing with the present, as it cannot be changed. However, exclusive attention to there-and-then discussion can be boring, avoidance, a distraction, or an escape, especially if it is not relevant to the topic and not linked to the present. Therefore, attention must be given to both the past and the present: for instance, sharing an event in the past and then discussing how it has impacted you in the present.

When tasks invite discussion of things that have happened in the past outside the group, you should ensure disclosure is pertinent to the immediate topic as well as the intention behind the exercise or session. This may require subtle or direct intervention on your part.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A FACILITATOR

Who the facilitator is as a person is one of the most significant variables that influence the group's success or failure. It is impossible to list all the characteristics of an effective group leader. Below are some of the characteristics that have been deemed as very important.

- **Courage:** demonstrated by your willingness to be vulnerable at times, admit mistakes and imperfections and to take the same risks you expect group members to take. It is courageous to:
 - Confront others but to stay “with” them as you work out conflicts,
 - Act on your beliefs and hunches,
 - Be emotionally touched by others,
 - Draw on your experiences in order to identify with the participants, and
 - Express your fears and expectations about the group process.
- **Willingness to model:** Through your behaviour and the attitudes you convey, you can create group norms such as openness, seriousness of purpose, acceptance of others and the desirability of taking risks. Beyond that you can also model characteristics of a counsellor and the process of counselling.
- **Presence:** The comfort with and ability to be emotionally present with group members; being touched by others' pain, struggles and joys.
- **Respect:** This implies not exploiting people for your own ego and not manipulating a group's focus away from themselves and onto you in order to make you feel like a “good” facilitator. Respect involves caring for, trusting and valuing people.
- **Belief in Group Process:** You need to believe in what you are doing and trust that learning and growth can come in and through the group.
- **Openness:** This is openness with yourself, towards the members of the group, and to new experiences, lifestyles and values that differ from your own. Being a counsellor requires openness and a non-judgemental attitude towards others who are different from you. Once again, you are modelling this as a facilitator.
- **Non-defensiveness:** Dealing frankly with criticism is linked to openness. Group leaders who are easily threatened, insecure in their work of leading, overly sensitive to negative feedback, and depend highly on group approval will encounter major problems in trying to facilitate.
- **Stamina:** This is taxing and draining as well as exciting and energising. You need physical and psychological stamina to succeed with this facilitating method.
-

- **Willingness to seek new experiences:** A wide range of life experiences helps your capacity to understand the psychological worlds of participants with different values and life experiences. If you genuinely respect the differences among group members and are open to learning from them, you will win their trust.
- **Self awareness:** A central characteristic of any therapeutic person is self-awareness. An ongoing commitment to furthering your own personal growth is essential.
- **Sense of humour:** Absolutely vital! Although dealing with people's personal growth is a serious business, there are many humorous dimensions of the human condition. The ability to laugh at yourself and to see the humour in your human frailties can be extremely useful in helping the group keep a proper perspective and to keep the group from becoming too emotionally "heavy."
- **Inventiveness and flexibility:** The capacity to be spontaneously creative is essential. Approach each group with fresh ideas and let the group influence the training.
- **Be human:** You cannot possibly know all the answers, and you will inevitably make mistakes. Many of you may have expertise in just one area, such as counselling, but may not know much about ART, for instance. Admit when you do not know the answer. Tell the participants that you do not know, but you will get them an answer later. Then seek out a resource person who can give you the answer or even come to the training and explain. This is especially applicable for many of the complex issues surrounding HIV; it is better say that you do not know than to give the wrong information. By doing this, you are also modelling how counsellors should respond when they do not know the answer to a question one of their clients asks.

Old Chinese Verse

Go in search of your people:
 Love them;
 Learn from them;
 Plan with them;
 Serve them.

Begin with what they have;
 Build on what they know.

But of the best leaders
 When their task is
 accomplished,
 Their work is done,
 The people all remark,

"We have done it ourselves."

THE FACILITATION SKILLS NEEDED

An effective facilitator will have:

- Good self-awareness, so s/he can use her/himself consciously and ethically during group work;
- Some knowledge of how groups work and the positive/negative forces groups can evidence;
- Effective inter-personal and facilitation skills; and
- Values that uphold everyone's right to self-determination, expression, and dignity, and an appreciation for the richness offered by diversity.

Ideally, the facilitator will demonstrate as many of the following skills as is necessary, not only so that you can provide the environment, but also so that the group members can experience the positive effects of these skills themselves, both inside the group and outside of it.

Many of these skills are also counselling skills, so you will be modelling good counselling skills.

The following chart labels each skill, identifies its purpose, and describes the action(s) it entails. Which skills do you possess? Which skills do you need to develop? Being aware of your own strengths and weaknesses as a facilitator will allow you not only to improve and grow, but will also allow you to complement your skills with those of your co-facilitator.

SKILL	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION
Active listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage trust, self-disclosure and exploration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attending to members' verbal and non-verbal communication without judging or evaluating
Analysing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To synthesise data for the purpose of determining subsequent action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying patterns; Recognising gaps; Linking cause-and-effect relationships Recognising the multiplicity of factors influencing a person/situation
Assessing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify members' growth needed and goals; To recognise maladaptive behaviours and thought patterns; To estimate what growth challenges a member is ready to handle and then to invite this new learning; To gather pertinent data that will enable you to evaluate the member's accomplishments, challenges and suitability for working as a counsellor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observing members' behaviours, identifying themes or patterns in the members' lives, recording pertinent data, and thus forming tentative and flexible evaluations of each member
Blocking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect members; To enhance the flow of group process and task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intervening to stop counterproductive individual or group behaviour
Balancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure equal attention to both task (what is to be done) and process (how it is done) so that the group's purpose is upheld 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inviting members to notice/speak about what is happening in the group; Acknowledging the nature of the relationships being formed
Confronting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage honest self-exploration; To raise members' awareness of contradictory verbal and non-verbal messages, behaviours, etc; To promote full use of members' potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlighting conflicting information; Challenging members to consider discrepancies between their verbal/non-verbal communication (i.e. words versus actions)

SKILL	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION
Contracting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To determine the boundaries, rules, standards and norms for a group's interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping members to identify and agree on the behaviours that will promote achievement of their purpose and goals
Coordinating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure a match between the task/topic/purpose set for the group by the presenters with the actual tasks/goals/relationships undertaken by the group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being guided by the purpose of each session as set by the facilitators
Describing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gather the fullest information so that issues, problems, tasks etc can be accurately identified and understood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaborating on the factors that pertain to a particular situation
Directing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help the group accomplish its tasks/goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigning members certain roles/tasks; Initiating activity; Orchestrating and coordinating the group's actions
Educating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform; To develop understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing needed information on practical or psycho-educational levels
Energising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To stimulate renewed effort and interaction among group members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledging when energy is sagging, and taking steps to reinvigorate the group's attention to its task and process
Evaluating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote awareness and understanding of a group's movement, direction, progress and outcome, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appraising the ongoing group process and the individual and group dynamics; Encouraging members to evaluate their own responses to the group's interaction
Explaining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To clarify instructions, statements or actions so that common understanding is promoted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving practical examples, clear illustrations, demonstrations or interpretations

SKILL	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION
Facilitating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To foster effective communication among group members; To help members achieve their goals in the group; To assist members in working together on the group's tasks/goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening up clear and direct communication; Helping members assume increasing responsibility for their own growth as well as the group's direction, purpose and outcome
Facilitator self-disclosure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote deeper levels of group interaction; To create trust; To model ways of revealing oneself to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revealing one's reaction to here-and-now or there-and-then events
Focussing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To channel the group's attention and energy to particular topics, processes, dynamics or goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calling attention to what is underway; Directing energy and purpose to a new task
Goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help group members identify, clarify and agree on their purpose, goals and direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping members to individually and collectively define concrete and achievable goals
Harmonising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To restore harmony, cooperation and unity when conflict or other differences surface 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Searching for commonality; Helping members reach understanding
Initiating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To set the pace of the group's process; To prevent floundering; To introduce new focus and energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting group participation; Introducing new direction or topics for discussion; Proposing goals
Interpreting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide group members with a new perspective for considering and understanding their behaviour, thoughts or emotions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering alternative explanations; Reframing a group member's message to consider new angles

SKILL	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION
Intervening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote positive working together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filling silences that are unproductive; Controlling time; Regaining control/direction; Offering feedback, guidance or support to an anxious member; Relieving tension or frustration; Redirecting focus when one group member has finished working through his/her input to the group
Linking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote cohesion in tasks and/or relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting the work that members do to common themes that emerge in the group; Synthesising the meaning/purpose/outcome of various tasks into a meaningful whole; Promoting a thread of continuity and meaning through all interactions
Mediating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help members reach agreement or resolve disputes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping members resolve conflict (see section 8 on Conflict for more detail)
Modelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide examples of desired behaviours; To inspire members to actualise their potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrating desirable behaviour through actions, i.e. positive communication, supportive feedback, etc.
Observing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be aware of all that is happening (overtly and covertly) within the group and responding as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking note of what is happening in the group; Noticing how people are participating; Checking energy and interest levels; Diagnosing blocks or problems; Checking that the content matches the aims of the session/task; Looking for under- or over-involvement by members; Giving feedback to the group on the above

SKILL	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION
Partialising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To break down a complex issue/ communication into manageable pieces; To determine what aspects of an issue the group member is most motivated to work on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarising and compartmentalising the key points made; Inviting the group member to give further attention to the compartments of his/her choice
Pointing out blocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To raise awareness of the challenges facing members or the group as a whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising and acknowledging moments of discomfort, stress, fear so that members can choose whether to retreat from or advance through the challenge
Preparing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prevent unnecessary floundering; To facilitate with confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing the purpose of each topic and task; Getting yourself psychologically ready for a group session; Having an idea of what could be expected to emerge from a particular session, activity, group
Promoting communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To foster interaction between all group members so that everyone participates to their fullest ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asking for ideas, information, opinions, experiences
Promoting healing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To foster well-being and restoration of a sense of wholeness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowing members to feel their pain; Asking them if they need anything from the group; Encouraging members to express their negative as well as positive emotions
Protecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reduce the risks associated with group interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding members from unnecessary or dangerous psychological risks in the group i.e. over-disclosure by a vulnerable member or fragile personality that might be regretted afterwards; Intervening when feedback to a group member is too severe or there is excessive pressure on a member to conform

SKILL	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION
Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To elicit further or deeper discussion/ disclosure/ exploration/ information; To stimulate new thought; To increase clarity; To encourage focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asking open-ended questions that consider the “what,” “how” or “why” of behaviour, emotions, or events Asking closed questions when narrow responses are needed Avoiding multiple questions that are confusing, or value-laden questions that are judgemental
Reducing risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prevent intra- and inter-personal crises that could expose unmanageable feelings or personal conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the purpose to every exercise in order to be prepared for what could be exposed; Stopping any undue pressure as/when it arises Guarding against breaches of confidentiality, hostile confrontation, inappropriate reassurance, etc.
Reflecting feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To let group members know that the feelings underlying a message have been heard and understood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicating understanding of group members’ feelings
Reframing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To offer alternative perspective(s); To enhance creative solutions/ outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redefining an issue/problem; Considering an issue from all angles; Looking for the positive potential to that which initially appears to be negative
Relieving tension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To normalise the dynamics present in groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bringing into the open underlying or unexpressed tensions, themes, problems; Making a well-timed joke; Putting a problem into a wider context; Reframing a negative into a positive

SKILL	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION
Resource provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make skilful use of the resources available To connect group members to needed resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing, suggesting, mediating resources as/when required
Role playing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assess members' responding skills To improve particular responses through feedback, coaching, rehearsal, repetition, etc. To provide a safe environment in which members can gain experience for the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acting out a situation with the help of another member
Self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use oneself consciously and ethically in the group; To recognise and guard against counter-transference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior attendance in the PG and BC modules; An ongoing commitment to conscious living
Sharing leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage shared responsibility for maintaining, challenging, and facilitating the group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging active involvement by the group to take on the different roles of facilitation: time keeping, observing, summarising, energising, intervening, etc.
Speaking on behalf of the group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To express the group's unspoken thoughts, feelings or needs in order to raise the group's awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bringing into the open what is unspoken or below the group's awareness level
Suggesting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help members develop alternative lines of thought/action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving information; Offering ideas, direction; Asking for members' participation
Summarising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To repeat essential meaning; To provide continuity; To give direction; To avoid fragmentation of members' input or group tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pulling together the significant elements of a discussion, exercise, interaction or session; Restating the major points that have been expressed; Re-energising the group; Keeping the group on track and focussed

SKILL	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION
Supporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote trust; • To encourage desired behaviours; • To provide help when members face personal challenges; • To reinforce constructive self-examination; • To help a group member face and cross his/her own personal “edge” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging, reinforcing, containing, and validating members’ actions, emotions, thoughts, and meaning
Synthesising verbal & non-verbal communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make connections between members’ actions and words, and between implicit and explicit feelings and thoughts; • To highlight patterns, themes and trends; • To provide feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using observation, judgement, and intuition to pull together all the “facts” available, and then reflecting these cautiously/tentatively as a “big picture” to the relevant member or whole group, then giving the recipient opportunity to respond to this feedback.
Terminating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help members assimilate, integrate, and apply the learning derived from the group experience to their everyday lives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing a group to end an individual session, or bringing closure to the group’s existence
Time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To accomplish as much as possible within the timeframe allocated to an exercise/session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining awareness of time constraints, and encouraging maximum participation within those constraints; • Intervening to point out if time is running out; • Asking the group/presenters to renegotiate the programme for the extra time that is needed; • Moving the group forward by proposing tasks or goals
Trust building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create cohesion and interdependence in a safe and supportive group environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting members’ openness and risk-taking

FACILITATION AS A FORM OF LEADERSHIP

Facilitation, in the context described above, can be seen as a type of leadership that is predominantly **democratic** in style.

What does this mean in practise?

It means that:

1. The facilitator does not make decisions for the group or its members, but instead listens carefully to the group members' concerns, needs and goals and helps them make decisions not only for themselves but also for the group as a whole.
2. The participation of the group's members is as important, if not more important, than that of the facilitator. Consequently, the facilitator needs to learn to lead from behind, to be unobtrusive, and to encourage active participation from everyone in the group.
3. The facilitator helps members explore themselves in greater depth and allows members freedom to change, or not, as is their right to choose.
4. The facilitator shares his/her own experiences, and establishes an atmosphere of emotional freedom by being open about his/her own feelings. This is particularly true of the Personal Growth Module where the facilitator also can operate at times as a member of the group. This also sets the stage for sharing and safety within the group for subsequent sessions. However, it is critical to find the correct balance between sharing enough about your own experiences while not sharing too much and taking away from the participants' experiences. In the Basic Counselling Skills Module and future modules, the facilitator's input of his/her own counselling knowledge and experience is also a useful teaching tool.
5. The facilitator leads by example, demonstrating the skills needed for effective interpersonal communication and relationships.
6. The facilitator treats each person as equally important and all their interests are represented in the work that the group undertakes.
7. The facilitator is confident in his/her social skills and will inject renewed energy, direction, and focus when the group interaction slackens.
8. As a democratic leader, the facilitator does not present him/herself as an "expert," does not need to "be right," and will be able to acknowledge his/her mistakes.
9. The facilitator is secure enough to be able to easily share or transfer control and leadership functions to the group, especially when group members are ready to take greater responsibility and authority.

Think of this leadership as a form of *service* to others, intended to meet the group's needs, concerns, hopes and interests.



Leadership Affords Power

The facilitator enters the group with a great deal of power. In addition, the group gives you power. They expect you to have certain skills and knowledge and to use or demonstrate this to their advantage.

The group members will bring into the group their own habitual responses, emotions and attitudes to power, based on their own past experiences, especially those of childhood. Group members will not only use their own power in the group but also want to test out the power you give them. In a country where systematic disempowerment was the normative experience of the majority of the population, people are naturally sensitive to the misuse and abuse of power. The facilitator has an important role to play in demonstrating how power can be shared, encouraged, celebrated, transferred and used, especially when it is used to empower others. Once again, the facilitator is modelling the appropriate use of power that can be transferred to a counselling relationship as well.

Shared leadership: the most effective form of leadership

Shared leadership has several benefits:

- It puts the members of the group more fully in charge of their own and the group's experiences and outcome;
- It divides the labour and allocates to everyone the opportunity to work on behalf of the group;
- It encourages members to apply their skills, power, and/or influence;
- It promotes the emergence of indigenous leadership and autonomous functioning; and
- It enhances people's leadership abilities for use in their personal lives outside of the group.

Thus, each group member has an opportunity to help sustain the group's interests, energy, focus and direction, and help the group achieve its purpose, needs and goals.

As the facilitator, you can encourage active involvement in the group's leadership by asking volunteers to take on the different roles (and skills) of facilitation. For instance, at the beginning of a session or exercise you can ask for a timekeeper, observer and summariser. Alternatively, you can tune in to members' different abilities and reinforce members' skills as they use them. Lastly, you can also restrain yourself somewhat back to see if and how other group members step into the leadership gap.



Encouraging members to share responsibility for the group's development, functioning and outcomes reinforces the fact that:

- Learning is an active, not passive, experience.
- Collaborative responsibility fosters membership and ownership of the group and its experience.
- Engaging with others promotes communication, cooperation, alignment, agreement, intimacy and synergy.

Some hints when sharing the leadership role:

- Relinquish or share control whenever you see another group member willing, ready or able to assume greater responsibility.
- Do not assign roles/tasks to others that you are not willing or prepared to handle yourself. For example, do not make it someone else's responsibility to bring a conflict in the group to the group's attention because you yourself do not like conflict.
- Reinforce members' positive interpersonal and leadership skills i.e. active listening, demonstrating empathy, putting forward ideas, summarising, etc. Positive reinforcement is a powerful tool for encouraging and maintaining desired behaviours.
- Encourage member-to-member communication rather than member-to-facilitator.
- Ask for everyone's input before making group decisions.
- Make a habit of pausing before your own intervention into a group process to see if others want to make an appropriate response. If you are always the first to intervene, you run the risk of promoting the group's dependence on you rather than their interdependence and empowerment.
- Maintain an optimistic outlook when others stumble in their leadership efforts.
- If and when you need to reassert your own leadership role in the group, explain why it is you are taking back the leadership. This prevents group members from interpreting your actions as a punishment or disapproval.

FACILITATING SMALL GROUPS IN THE PERSONAL GROWTH MODULE

The Personal Growth Module is structured to involve the use of small groups. These small groups are formed on the first day of the course of one facilitator and four to six participants, who continue to work in the same small group throughout the week. These small groups are designed to foster a safe environment in which to explore and share the many personal topics introduced throughout the week. Within this group work structure, the facilitator is very much a member of the group and needs to be as committed to being open, honest, real, confronting and caring as any other member. You may find that you can learn a great deal more about yourself from your small group and their interaction with you. Sharing the leadership role enables you to have a dual function as facilitator and member. Not only will this encourage others to take on leadership skills, but it will also allow the group members to take as much interest in you as a person as they do in each other.

Naturally, your group members will see you differently. Whilst they are participants in the group, you are both a participant AND an observer. Your skills in observation and intervening based on your observations establish you as the facilitator, and the group is dependent on your additional skills for its functioning. If you find the group members are taking on the role of “followers” or “passive learners,” you may be imposing too much control over the group. If necessary, reiterate your dual role, and speak of the difficulties and rewards of both functions. Separate these roles: identify when you are speaking as a group member and when you are speaking as a facilitator. This too will facilitate the group’s learning process.

When time is limited, it is very tempting to relinquish your turn in a group exercise so that another unheard member may have opportunity to speak. Avoid doing this, as it sets you apart from the group and mars your equality. If it does happen that everyone has participated in an exercise except you, call attention to the time constraint and reinforce the necessity for mindful timekeeping, and then suggest bringing a proper conclusion to the exercise in which you also have the opportunity to share during the tea break or the final group time.

The facilitator’s dual focus: content *and* process

Facilitator skills are directed towards 3 goals:

- Accomplishing the group’s **tasks**
- Promoting effective **relationships** between the group members; and
- Fostering the most beneficial **group atmosphere**, one that derives from a spirit of co-operation, learning, support, interdependence, etc.

To put this another way, the facilitator is concerned not only with **what** the group is working on (its tasks or “content”) but also **how** it is working, i.e. the group’s dynamics, morale, atmosphere, relationships, patterns of communication, influence, etc; this is also known as the “process.”



Sensitivity to the group process will better enable the facilitator to recognise actual or potential problems early on and deal with them more effectively. Since these processes are present in *all* groups, awareness of them will enhance a person's worth to the group and enable him/her to be a more effective group participant/facilitator.

What to watch for in the group's process

Below are some observation guidelines to help you recognise the different dynamics of group behaviour (the "how" or "process" of working together). After these guidelines, you will find guidelines for how to intervene based on your observations.

Participation: One indication of member's commitment to the group is their verbal participation, especially in the context where disclosure, sharing, discussion and role plays feature so prominently. Look for differences in the quantity and quality of participation. For example, who are the high and the low participants? How are the silent members treated? Who talks to whom? Who keeps the ball rolling? Who avoids participation unless pressed to do so?

Influence: Some people may speak very little, yet capture the attention of the whole group. Others may talk a lot but are generally not listened to very attentively; they may make contributions to the group that receive no kind of response or recognition at all. The former will have high influence in and upon the group; the latter will have little or no influence. Influence can take many forms. It can be positive or negative; it can enlist support and cooperation or alienate members. With influence can come rivalry for authority or leadership. How a person attempts to influence another may be the crucial factor in determining how open/closed the other will be toward being influenced. Observe how the differences in influence are demonstrated and the effects within the group.

Decision-making procedures: Many kinds of decisions are made in groups without considering either how decisions are made or the effects of these decisions on other members. For example, how does the group change topic? Why? Watch out for implicit decision-making rules or habits.

Task functions and roles: These functions/roles illustrate behaviours that are concerned with accomplishing the job. Is there anyone attempting to summarise what has been covered? Who is keeping the group on target? Who is ensuring that everyone participates in an exercise?

Maintenance functions and roles: These are important to the morale of the group. They maintain good and harmonious working relationships amongst the members and create a group atmosphere that fosters maximum participation. Who helps others enter into the discussion? Who interrupts or cuts off others? How well are members making their ideas understood? Are some members preoccupied and not listening? How are ideas rejected? How do members react when their ideas are not accepted?

Group atmosphere: This refers to the feeling or tone within the group. Do people seem involved and interested? Is the atmosphere one of work, play, satisfaction, sluggishness, disinterest, etc.? Who seems to prefer a friendly, congenial atmosphere, and who prefers an atmosphere of conflict and disagreement? Do any members provoke or annoy others?

Membership: A major concern for group members is the degree of acceptance or inclusion in the group. Different patterns of interaction can develop in the group that can give clues to the degree and kind of membership. Are there any sub-grouping or alliances that are forming? Do some people seem to be “outside” the group and others “inside?” How are those who are “outside” treated? Do some members move both in and out of the group, i.e. lean forward or backward, move their chairs in closer or further away? Under what conditions do they do this?

Feelings: During any group discussion, feelings are frequently generated by the interactions occurring between members. These feelings, however, are seldom spoken about. What signs of feelings do you observe in the group: anger, irritation, frustration, warmth, affection, etc.? Do you see any attempts by members to block the expression of their own or others’ feelings, particularly negative ones?

Norms: Your group contract will greatly determine the behaviours that should or should not occur within the group. Other norms may only be implicit, or operate completely below the group members’ level of awareness. Some norms facilitate group process and some hinder it. Are certain areas avoided in the group, for example, talking about immediate feelings or discussing the facilitator’s behaviour? Who reinforces both the positive and negative norms? How do members behave when norms are violated?

Responding to group processes or dynamics: One of the most effective ways to promote constructive dynamics is through your group contract. Ensure the contract is as explicit as possible, giving recognition to people’s needs, expectations and goals, as well as to the group’s overall purpose and aims. Make sure each clause/statement in your contract can be put into practise and measured for success.

The most effective response to disruptive or dysfunctional group processes is to **raise the group’s awareness** of the dynamics present. As the facilitator, you will largely decide when and how to highlight the behaviour you are seeing.

When to intervene?

- When the dynamics are harmful to the current or future functioning of the group.
- When something positive might highlight and reinforce helpful and supporting behaviours in the group.

- To facilitate deeper and better understanding of oneself in relationship to others.

Whether to intervene?

Usually a facilitator should intervene when the opportunity presents itself. This depends on whether the dynamics are interfering with effective group functioning, seriously threatening to hurt a fragile group member, or derailing the group's direction, purpose or goal. Intervene then-and-there or as soon as possible after the event.

Why do we intervene?

By raising the awareness of the group, you offer the group the opportunity to see itself anew, identify how a group member's individual behaviour is affecting others or the group as a whole, and choose new behaviour based on the input and feedback given.

How to intervene?

Be sensitive to people's feelings. Invite the group's awareness and response, but do not force it. Use words like "we" rather than "you" so that you do not distinguish yourself as separate from the group and its process. You could say something like: "Can we take a moment to notice what is happening in the group right now? I am observing that we seem to drift from one topic to another without any clear-cut decision on when to close one subject and begin another. Is anyone else noticing this? What could we do to make these transitions more decisive?"

CO-LEADERSHIP IN GROUP FACILITATION

The Community Counsellor's Toolkit is designed to have at least two facilitators for each module. There is much to be gained from working with others, and you may find that this will be your biggest personal growth area. The advantages of co-facilitation are that the group can gain from the perspective of two leaders, the co-leaders can confer before and after group sessions and learn from each other, and co-leaders can model the values and behaviours we are trying to instil in participants.

It is important that co-leaders work as a team. Trust is a key issue: you need to be able to trust that your co-facilitator will be on time, is prepared for his or her sessions and will not let you down, but more importantly, will be there to encourage and "rescue" you if you need it. ANY conflict or unresolved issues between the co-leaders will be unconsciously, and sometimes consciously, experienced by the participants. When conflict is present between co-leaders, you may also find participants moving between the co-leaders and siding with one over the other. This is not a pleasant experience! It is important to remember that the success of the workshop will depend on how well you have worked TOGETHER to enable growth among participants. Little is to be gained by one facilitator setting out to be the shining star at the expense of his/her partner.

Another advantage to working with other facilitators is that the chances of burnout can be reduced. If intense emotions are being expressed by one or more group members, one leader can pay attention to those members while the other notes the reactions of other members. If one of the leaders has been strongly affected by a session, debriefing can occur and one leader can provide useful observations about any counter-transference that might be happening between participants and the other leader.

Essential Do's and Don'ts for working as a facilitator team:

- DO compliment your co-facilitator on a section well done in front of the group.
- If you see your co-facilitator is struggling with a section or a participant, DO gently step in and support them.
- DO draw attention in positive ways to the relationship you have with each other.
- DON'T discuss your co-facilitator with participants during a workshop, particularly if he/she is not present.
- DO encourage participants to speak directly to your co-facilitator if there is a problem.
- DON'T contradict your co-facilitator in public. If you feel he/she has given incorrect information, point this out to your colleague in private and allow him/her to correct any misconceptions he/she may have created the next time there is an opportunity.
- If you have something to add to a section, DO check with your co-facilitator that it is okay for you to do so.
- DO regularly check whether your co-facilitator would like to add something during the sessions you are facilitating.
- DON'T ever take over a session from your co-facilitator if he/she is struggling unless he/she asks you to do this.

ABOVE ALL – DO treat your co-facilitator with the same warmth, empathy and respect with which you treat your workshop participants.

HOW ADULTS LEARN

1. Adult learners are motivated to learn when they have a need to do so, when the learning goals are their own, and when the learning is voluntary rather than compulsory or prescribed.

TIP: Check whether your participants really want to be in the course because they genuinely have an interest in learning more about themselves and in counselling others. Do the participants come with a desire to learn? Are they motivated to attend these courses? What motivates them, and why are they here?

2. Adults need to feel free to direct themselves. People learn best when they have some control over the pace and depth of the learning process, which makes participation an important component of adult learning.

TIP: This is particularly important when dealing with the personal nature of Personal Growth. Do not try to take people to places where they do not want, or are not ready, to go. Always be aware of the pace at which you are moving and the depth at which you are working, particularly if you find there is some resistance. Allow some flexibility in the interpretation of instructions for different tasks.

3. Adults need to understand why they are learning, what they are learning, and how this can be applied in the real world.

TIP: Begin each workshop by sharing the overall objectives and allowing for discussion of these. Introduce each exercise and task with a CLEAR explanation of the purpose of the task. At the end of an exercise or topic, ask participants to consider how they will apply what they have learnt in their context.

4. A certain amount of safety is necessary if adults are to learn. They learn faster and better when they are supported by others, when they sense they are not alone and when they see others struggling alongside them. At the same time, however, there may be times during a workshop when participants will need to take a risk or experience some confusion or other emotions; a certain amount of this is necessary at times for people to grow.

TIP: It is useful to point out to participants that there is not “one right answer.” Consciously find ways to value the diversity in people’s responses.

5. Adults often learn well in environments that are more informal than the traditional classroom, although it may take some time to adjust to this if the learner is used to formal educational settings. Adult learning should be fun!

TIP: An ideal workshop venue should be very flexible, so you can sit in a large circle, work in smaller break-out groups, sit around tables, move around, or even sit on the floor or work outdoors.

6. Adult learners come with their own history and life experience. It is important to relate their learning to previous knowledge and experiences.

TIP: Allow time for participants to reflect on their experiences. Let participants share their stories.

7. Adults respond better when the material is presented through a variety of teaching methods and understood on different sensory levels. Some learners are interactive, some reflective, some like structure, some resist it, some need to feel good to learn, and some like to be challenged with new thoughts.

TIP: Check your workshop design for this before, during and after the workshop. It is useful to ask an objective outsider for feedback about your workshop design.

LEARNING STYLES

With any kind of training or facilitation it is helpful to consider the learning styles of your participants. Understanding learning styles allows the trainer or facilitator to plan their lessons to engage participants who learn in different ways. There are many theories about different learning styles, but the one presented here is based on the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory. There are four different categories, and in each category there are two ends of a continuum. Each person will usually fall into one category or the other, and some categories will fit better than others.

ACTIVE/REFLECTIVE LEARNERS

Active Learners

- Those who learn best by doing something
- “We can try it and see if it works” attitude
- Enjoy group work
- Sitting through lectures without doing something is very difficult

Reflective Learners

- Prefer to think things through quietly first
- “We should think it through first” approach
- Prefer working alone; do not like group projects
- Find it difficult if people they are not given time to think about what is being discussed

VISUAL/VERBAL LEARNERS

Visual Learners

- Like to see pictures, diagrams, timelines, films, demonstrations, etc.

Verbal Learners

- Gain more from words, whether written and spoken
- Learn more when the facilitator does the explaining

SENSING/INTUITIVE LEARNERS

Sensing

- Like learning facts
- Like solving problems using well-established methods
- Do not like complications or surprises
- Are patient with details and good at memorising facts
- Practical and careful
- Do not like courses that they feel do not have a connection to the real world
- Dislike being tested on information not covered in class

Intuitive

- Like discovering possibilities and relationships
- Like innovation and do not like repetition
- Like abstract thinking and ideas
- Work faster than “sensors” and are more innovative
- Do not like courses that require significant amounts of memorisation and routine calculations

SEQUENTIAL/GLOBAL LEARNERS

Sequential

- Like linear steps, with each following logically from the other
- Tend to follow linear steps when finding solutions

Global

- Learn in large jumps, at first randomly and then getting the big picture
- Can solve complex problems quickly and put things together in novel (new) ways once they have grasped the big picture
- Need to understand the big picture first before filling in the gaps

As a facilitator, you will have participants who fit into each of these categories. It is helpful to determine what kind of a learner you are personally prior to planning your sessions. Knowing your own learning style will help you determine what comes naturally to you and what types of learners you may have to work more intentionally to reach. This may mean that you will need to plan special activities for certain types of learners or present things in a different way for others.

The Community Counsellor Training Toolkit has been written with these different learning styles in mind. There are reflective exercises for the reflective learners and participatory activities for the active learners. There are explanations of why we are learning things for the global and sensing learners. However, you may find that with some groups you will need to make some adjustments to the activities and how you present the material. Feel free to make those changes to accommodate your unique groups, but be careful to balance the different learning styles of all your group members.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

When most of us think of intelligence, we only think about cognitive, or thinking, aspects of intelligence such as IQ, memory and learning associated with the brain. However, research in “brain-based learning” suggests that emotional health is fundamental to effective learning. In the past 15 – 20 years, the concept of “emotional intelligence” has become very popular. Salovey and Mayer coined the term in 1990, and describe emotional intelligence as “a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action” (Salovey and Mayer 1990).

In the 1970s, David McClelland, a psychologist at Harvard, along with a group of researchers, became concerned with how little traditional intelligence tests of cognitive intelligence told us about what it takes to be successful in life. A number of studies have shown that IQ, grades in school (GPA) and standardised test scores are not particularly accurate predictors of job performance and future success. Research has found that the biggest predictors of success are social and emotional skills, such as the ability to handle frustration, control emotions and get along with others. In 1995, Daniel Goleman published a book called *Emotional Intelligence*, which popularised the concept of emotional intelligence and its applications for business, education, parenting, and many other disciplines.

What is emotional intelligence?

Emotional intelligence can be thought of in five parts:

1. **Self-awareness:** knowing your emotions, recognising feelings as they are experienced and being able to identify them and distinguish between different feelings.
2. **Emotional Management:** handling feelings so they are relevant to the current situation in order to react appropriately.
3. **Self-motivation:** directing oneself towards a goal despite self-doubt, inertia (a tendency for a situation to remain the same and not change) and impulsiveness.
4. **Empathy:** recognising the feelings and experiences of others and being able to tune into their verbal and nonverbal cues.
5. **Managing relationships:** handling interpersonal interactions, conflict resolution and negotiations.

From this five-part definition of emotional intelligence, one can see that emotional intelligence has as much to do with knowing when and how to express emotions as it does with controlling them and interacting with others. Empathy is also a foundational part of emotional intelligence. Research has shown that people who have the ability to identify others’



emotions and respond to them were more successful in their work and social lives.

Building one's emotional intelligence has a life-long impact. Not only does it positively impact one's success in education and at work, but it positively impacts one's social and familial relationships as well. Emotional intelligence has the capacity to profoundly affect all other abilities by either enhancing or interfering with them.

Emotional intelligence is foundational to understanding and being an effective facilitator and counsellor. Not only should we strive towards personal emotional intelligence, but we should also foster these skills and abilities in the counsellors we are training.

Below is an extensive list of emotional competencies to aid in your understanding of emotional intelligence. You may notice that many of these competencies are also facilitation skills needed. These emotional competencies are divided into two categories: personal competence and social competence.

PERSONAL COMPETENCE¹
<p>SELF-AWARENESS</p> <p>1. Emotional awareness: recognising one's emotions and their effects. People with this competence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Know which emotion they are feeling and why▪ Realise the links between their feelings and what they think, do, and say▪ Recognise how their feelings affect their performance▪ Have a guiding awareness of their values and goals <p>2. Accurate self-assessment: knowing one's strengths and limits. People with this competence are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Aware of their strengths and weaknesses▪ Reflective and learn from experience▪ Open to candid feedback, new perspectives, continuous learning, and self-development▪ Able to show a sense of humour and perspective about themselves <p>3. Self-confidence: Sureness about one's self-worth and capabilities. People with this competence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Present themselves with self-assurance and have "presence"▪ Can voice views that are unpopular and take a risk for what is right▪ Are decisive and able to make good decisions despite uncertainties and pressures

¹ Emotional Competence Framework. The Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organisations. www.eiconsortium.org

PERSONAL COMPETENCE

SELF-REGULATION

- 4. Self-control:** Managing disruptive emotions and impulses. People with this competence:
 - Manage their impulsive feelings and distressing emotions well
 - Stay composed, positive, and undisturbed even in stressful moments
 - Think clearly and stay focussed under pressure
- 5. Trustworthiness:** Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity. People with this competence:
 - Act ethically and are above reproach
 - Build trust through their reliability and authenticity
 - Admit their own mistakes and confront unethical actions in others
 - Take tough, principled stands, even if they are unpopular
- 6. Conscientiousness:** take responsibility for personal performance. People with this competence:
 - Meet commitments and keep promises
 - Hold themselves accountable for meeting their objectives
 - Are organised and careful in their work
- 7. Adaptability:** Flexibility in handling change. People with this competence:
 - Smoothly handle multiple demands, shifting priorities and rapid change
 - Adapt their responses and tactics to fit fluid circumstances
 - Are flexible in how they see events
- 8. Innovativeness:** Being comfortable with and open to novel ideas and new information. People with this competence:
 - Seek out fresh ideas from a wide variety of sources
 - Entertain original solutions to problems
 - Generate new ideas
 - Take fresh perspectives and risks in their thinking

PERSONAL COMPETENCE

SELF-MOTIVATION

9. Achievement drive: Striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence. People with this competence:

- Are result-oriented, with a high drive to meet their objectives and standards
- Set challenging goals and take calculated risks
- Pursue information to reduce uncertainty and find ways to do better
- Learn how to improve their performance

10. Commitment: Aligning with the goals of the group or organisation. People with this competence:

- Readily make personal or group sacrifices to meet a larger organisational goal
- Find a sense of purpose in the larger mission
- Use the group's core values in making decisions and clarifying choices
- Actively seek out opportunities to fulfil the group's mission

11. Initiative: Readiness to act on opportunities. People with this competence:

- Are ready to seize opportunities
- Pursue goals beyond what is required or expected of them
- Cut through red tape and bend the rules when necessary to get the job done
- Mobilise others through unusual and enterprising efforts

12. Optimism: Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks. People with this competence:

- Operate from hope of success rather than fear of failure
- See setbacks as due to manageable circumstances rather than a personal flaw

SOCIAL COMPETENCE

SOCIAL AWARENESS

1. **Empathy:** Sensing others' feelings and perspectives and taking an active interest in their concerns. People with this competence:
 - Are attentive to emotional cues and listen well
 - Show sensitivity and understand others' perspectives
 - Help out based on understanding other people's needs and feelings
2. **Developing others:** Sensing what others need in order to develop and seek to bolster their abilities. People with this competence:
 - Acknowledge and reward people's strengths, accomplishments and development
 - Offer useful feedback and identify people's need for development
 - Mentor, give timely coaching and offer assignments that challenge and grow a person's skills
3. **Leveraging diversity:** Cultivating opportunities through diverse people. People with this competence:
 - Respect and relate well to people from varied backgrounds
 - Understand diverse worldviews and are sensitive to group differences
 - See diversity as opportunity, creating an environment where diverse people can thrive
 - Challenge bias and intolerance
4. **Political awareness:** Reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships. People with this competence:
 - Accurately read key power relationships
 - Understand the forces that shape views and actions of others
 - Accurately read situations and organisation and external realities
 - Have the ability to be attuned to and read the emotional "pulse" of a group

SOCIAL COMPETENCE

SOCIAL AWARENESS

- 5. Communication:** Sending clear and convincing messages. People with this competence:
 - Are effective in dialogue and registering emotional cues to adjust their message
 - Deal with difficult issues in a straightforward manner
 - Listen well, seek mutual understanding and welcome sharing
 - Foster open communication and are receptive to bad news as well as good
- 6. Leadership:** Inspiring and guiding groups and people. People with this competence:
 - Articulate and encourage enthusiasm for a shared vision and mission
 - Step forward to lead as needed, regardless of position
 - Lead by example
- 7. Change catalyst:** Initiating or managing change. People with this competence:
 - Recognise the need for change and remove barriers
 - Challenge the status quo to acknowledge the need for change
 - Champion the change and enlist others in its pursuit
 - Model the change expected of others
- 8. Collaboration and cooperation:** Working with others toward shared goals. People with this competence:
 - Balance a focus on task with attention to relationships
 - Collaborate and share plans, information and resources
 - Promote a friendly, cooperative climate
- 9. Conflict management:** Negotiating and resolving disagreements. People with this competence:
 - Handle difficult people and tense situations with diplomacy and tact
 - Identify potential conflict, bring disagreements into the open and help de-escalate
 - Encourage debate and open discussion
 - Orchestrate win-win solutions
- 10. Team capabilities:** Creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals. People with this competence:
 - Model team qualities like respect, helpfulness and cooperation
 - Draw all members into active and enthusiastic participation
 - Build team identity and commitment
 - Protect the group and its reputation, share credit
- 11. Influence:** Wielding effective tactics for persuasion. People with this competence:
 - Are skilled at persuasion
 - Fine-tune material in order to reach the audience

How do you facilitate emotional intelligence?

The Community Counselling Toolkit has been designed with the above emotional intelligence competencies in mind, so fostering these skills in the training room has been built into the material. However, your facilitation is an essential part of being able to facilitate this process. Your level of emotional intelligence and your skills as a facilitator are foundational to being able to create an environment where emotional intelligence can be learned. Below are some tips for teaching emotional intelligence:

- Know your own emotions and manage them.
- Give recognition for efforts and contributions individuals make to the group, but do not confuse effort with performance.
- Avoid comparing participants.
- Give constant, clear and regular feedback.
- Work to establish mutual trust between participants and yourself.
- Your emotions influence the emotions of others: emotions are contagious.
- You should be enthusiastic, energetic and motivated.
- You should be aware of any unfulfilled needs you have, such as to feel powerful, important, respected, appreciated, dignified and in control. Do not expect the participants to fulfil your needs, in the same way that clients should not fulfil counsellors' needs.
- Experiencing the present moment, the here-and-now of facilitation, is essential.

GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Recognising that groups develop in stages can help you prepare for the different behaviours and concerns that commonly emerge as the group moves through its lifespan. As a facilitator, you are guiding the participants through this group process. The process of the group is part of the experience and learning participants need to be involved in as part of experiential learning.

Basically, groups go through the following phases:

- Forming
- Storming
- Norming
- Performing
- Adjourning

However, this development does not always follow an orderly sequence. Some phases may be revisited more than once, some may be skipped entirely and others may be experienced concurrently. Groups tend to take both forward and backward steps, and members themselves can develop at different paces (and in different directions!). There is also a large overlap of the phases as one unfolds into the next.

The careful design of this curriculum, especially the first two modules, Personal Growth and Basic Counselling, is such that it seeks to reduce many of the struggles groups experience when they are left to generate their own purpose, activities, topics, etc. As a result, the focus here is primarily on what you can expect in the different phases as they commonly occur in a group's development.

The Forming Stage

The forming phase concerns the group's physical formation. It is a time of orientation, getting to know one another, and identifying individual and collective needs and group resources, i.e. what the individual group members appear to offer to the group. Some uncertainty and even chaos are normal during this time as people are getting acquainted, forming connections, discussing group purpose, and there is a search for leadership and direction. Communication patterns are scattered and diffuse as members search for cues from the facilitator regarding required behaviours.

The following table indicates the feelings, behaviours and interaction patterns most common amongst group members during this phase. It also indicates the skills/action the facilitator will need to successfully assist the group through this stage of its development.

STAGE: FORMING		
FEARS/FEELINGS	BEHAVIOURS	INTERACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejection • Anxiety • “I hope they like me” • Ambivalence • Excitement • Trust/distrust • Concern for acceptance and belonging • Members decide who to trust, how much to reveal, and how safe the group is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fidgeting • Poor eye contact • Closed body language • Tense expressions • Overeager • Overly polite • Withdrawn • Observing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach and avoidance • Little or no interaction between members • Members communicate directly with facilitator • Dependence on facilitator • Risk-taking is low; socially accepted behaviour is high • Moments of silence and awkwardness; members look for direction
<p>FACILITATOR NEEDS TO HELP THE GROUP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bond through their shared interests and needs. • Clarify the group’s purpose, norms, standards, tasks and goals: involve everyone in creating the group contract. Also share his/her expectations and hopes for the group/course. • Accept all feelings, especially negative feelings, and deal openly with members’ concerns and questions. • Normalise and reduce members’ anxieties and resistance. • Develop a climate of acceptance, caring and inclusion. • Learn attitudes of respect, empathy, acceptance, caring, and responding by demonstrating these qualities as the norm for the group. • Interact, participate and communicate so that no one feels excluded. 		

Two elements are of particular importance at this time. The first is that of generating **trust**. All future disclosure and interaction depends heavily on members’ confidence that their group is a safe and supportive environment and members can be relied on. Without trust, members’ interactions will be impersonal, feelings will remain undisclosed, and there will be minimal self-exploration and little constructive challenging between members. What is

trust? Trust is when I believe/feel you will not be as critical of me as I am of myself.

Also crucial to the forming stage is the importance of the **group contract**. Your group contract will establish the boundaries, norms, roles and standards for the group's future interactions. As the facilitator, you need to ensure the contracting process is given enough time and consideration to foster genuine commitment to the group's principles by the participants. A clear and comprehensive contract, worked out and agreed to by *all* group members, paves the way for collaborative and committed interaction. It can also help to prevent problems from developing later.

The Storming Stage

The storming phase is a time for exploration and testing, and as its name suggests, it can be a stormy time! Group members may experience the dilemma of integrating into the group or remaining independent, or holding back partially or wholly until their own personal criteria for commitment have been satisfied. In this period, the group's goals and overall vision are developed or revisited and expectations and differing values are expressed or challenged, so some conflict can be expected. There will be concern about authority and status. And because certain group members will feel more attracted to some people than others, pairs or small groups may start forming, which also can cause dissent, rivalry and polarisation amongst group members. Some members will also want to be the "most loved" or "most influential" group member, and this can cause resentment in others.

STAGE: STORMING		
FEARS/ FEELINGS	BEHAVIOURS	INTERACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion • Ambivalence • Doubt • Resistance • Defensiveness • "Do I really want to be here?" • "Will they accept me as I am?" • "Is this group and/or facilitator right for me?" • Anxiety regarding conformity vs. right to self-determination • Fear of being judged • Anxiety about revealing oneself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions • Challenges • Hostility • Resentment • Aggression • Conflict • Cliques, sub-groups, alliances • Distracting • Regression to past behaviours used in coping situations • Testing limits of what is acceptable behaviour • Roles emerge: observer, silent member, clown, dominator, advice giver, etc • Projection and transference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (In)direct challenges to facilitator's authority as members struggle with dependence vs. independence • Conflict between members, sub-groups, and/or facilitator • Expression of negative feelings in order to test levels of acceptance, trustworthiness and freedom within group to disagree, to feel and express negative emotions, and to experience conflict



STAGE: STORMING

FACILITATOR NEEDS TO HELP THE GROUP BY:

- Providing a holding/containing function for members' insecurities.
- Demonstrating acceptance.
- Being sensitive to underlying issues and feelings and expressing these on behalf of the group.
- Acknowledging and examining the group's struggles.
- Encouraging open expression of negative feelings through accepting behaviour.
- Normalising doubts, resistance and insecurity.
- Responding to the feelings behind members' words and actions.
- Encouraging and challenging members to face and resolve group conflicts as well as address their own defences against anxiety.
- Identifying the blocks to communication, i.e. withdrawal, avoidance, resistance, etc.
- Strengthening members' relationships and commonalities.
- Reinforcing appropriate norms.

As the facilitator, you need to see these testing and exploring behaviours as normal; do not take any hostility personally. Members will be watching to see how you respond to the group's anxieties, so as a role model for the group, be open about the tensions, normalise them, and teach members the value of responding honestly to the struggles that arise.

The Norming Stage

In the norming phase, the group's rules, norms and patterns start to emerge and solidify around behaviours that the group values, prefers and reinforces. A group culture and identity grows. The group's norms help to stabilise and regulate behaviour, lessen risks, reduce conflict, promote tolerance, facilitate communication, and enhance predictability and security for the group's members. The principles contained in the group contract reflect its formal, explicit norms. Other norms may be unconscious or implicit. All these norms can be flexible or rigid. The establishment of group norms reduces the need for facilitator intervention regarding members' behaviours in the group.

STAGE: NORMING		
FEARS/FEELINGS	BEHAVIOURS	INTERACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A feeling of “we/us” emerges • “What do we need to be and do?” • “What do we expect and believe about appropriate ways to act in groups?” • Trust and cohesion deepen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members observe one another and the facilitator, adopt behaviours that are reinforced, and modify behaviours that are sanctioned • Roles develop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More intimate relationships develop • Conformity is enhanced • Greater mutual influence
<p>FACILITATOR NEEDS TO HELP THE GROUP BY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating and then maintaining an attractive and cohesive group. • Ensuring that members recognise the group’s goals as important and meaningful to their individual and collective aims. • Developing and affirming caring norms. • Reinforcing or rewarding members’ positive roles and behaviours. • Revisiting the group contract if necessary. 		

Any deviation from the group’s norms is not necessarily harmful. Instead, it may signal a necessary challenge to old or stale ways of working on tasks, the group’s desire for a new direction or experience, or that the group’s norms have become dysfunctional.

When an individual group member deviates from the group’s norms, he/she is confronted with several options: facing the sanctions that follow, conforming to the group’s norms, remaining deviant, leaving the group, or challenging the group to change its norms.

The Performing Stage

The performing phase is a time of mature and sustained effort by the group on its problems, functions and tasks that enable it to achieve its goals. Features of this phase centre around cohesion, interdependency, unity, trust, intimacy, self-disclosure, collaboration and less (or no) dependency on the facilitator.

None of us is as smart as all of us.
Japanese Proverb

Productivity is high and the purpose of the group is fulfilled. Conflict and differences remain present, but serve as catalysts for positive growth and change. Members seek an equal balance between task and relationship maintenance. Feedback is more readily given and received as members



recognise the value of feedback for their own growth as well as that of the group. Members learn and demonstrate new skills, awareness and competencies. The group is seen now as an important place for working out issues.

STAGE: PERFORMING		
FEARS/FEELINGS	BEHAVIOURS	INTERACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust and cohesion • Commitment • Engagement • Concentration • Unity • Intimacy • “We are all OK.” • “How much can I gain from being here?” • “How can I contribute to others’ growth?” • Hopeful • Empowered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation • Increased disclosure • Increased recognition and acceptance of emotional vulnerability • Intimate communication • Willingness to take risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased interaction between members • Less or no dependence on facilitator • Group able to manage its own processes and functions autonomously • Group and individual successes become self-reinforcing • Constructive confrontation • Conflict dealt with openly and effectively • Feedback given and received freely and non-defensively
<p>FACILITATOR NEEDS TO HELP THE GROUP BY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing or relinquishing facilitator authority and expertise and supporting indigenous leadership. • Not doing anything for the group that they are capable of doing for themselves. • Intervening only where necessary, i.e. when internal or external pressures arise. • Encouraging members’ continued cooperative participation, mutual sharing, and growth. • Supporting risk-taking within and outside the group. • Encouraging deeper levels of exploration as well as the translation of insight into action. • Inviting members to ask for what they need and want for the group. • Modelling caring confrontation and sensitive feedback, and disclosing ongoing reactions to the group’s process or dynamics. 		

If the group has not successfully mastered the earlier stages, then its working stage may never be reached or the group may engage in pseudo-working, which is working at a superficial level to avoid dealing with underlying conflict, tension or resistance. In this case, the group is actually still in the storming phase.

The Adjourning Stage

The adjourning phase is the time of termination. It is a period for self and group evaluation, recognition of what has been achieved, acknowledgement of members' contributions, and dealing with feelings like loss and separation. Members make decisions about the learning that has occurred in the group during the course. Groups that have not worked effectively through the earlier phases will show signs of disintegration at this point rather than closure. Any issues the group is struggling with will (re)emerge at this time. Past feelings around loss, esteem, endings, abandonment, rejection, goodbyes and other closures will resurface. This can make closure a stressful period. Issues of dependence and independence resurface. There may be a need to revisit previously resolved issues or to respond to previously unexpressed issues.

STAGE: ADJOURNING		
FEARS/FEELINGS	BEHAVIOURS	INTERACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termination and/or separation anxiety • Abandonment • Loss, "death," hurt • Sadness • Anger • Rejection • Emptiness • Fear of change • Emotional regression • Avoidance • Denial • Grief • Fear of not being able to implement outside the group what was experienced inside the group • Members may consider the group experience to be an end in itself and not a means to further growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal • Separation from group prior to termination • Regression to past negative behavioural patterns • Regression to earlier stages of the group's development • Fight/flight or other distancing behaviours • Tears • Silence • Conflict • Laughter or distracting behaviour • Non-attendance • Poor punctuality • "Doorknob syndrome:" some members know they have not participated as fully as they could have, so they attempt to delay closure • Suggestions for maintaining the group outside of the LifeLine context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group may regress to forming and/or storming phases • Conflict/anger between members or directed at facilitator • There may be a last push for growth when group recognises this period is their final chance for encounters

FACILITATOR NEEDS TO HELP THE GROUP BY:

- Validating and normalising feelings around termination, including the facilitator's own.
- Review, evaluate and consolidate gains made during the programme.
- Support members' renewed independence.
- Assist members to individualise their experiences, complete unfinished business, prepare for the outside world, and carry their learning into their daily lives.
- If the group was particularly meaningful to the members (i.e. caring, supportive, etc.), affirm that this was because the members made it so. Similar commitment can be made to relationships and groups outside the LifeLine context.
- Invite each member to examine the effects of the group on him/herself, and encourage them to be specific.
- Exchange final feedback.
- Reiterate the ongoing commitment to the confidentiality/anonymity clause in the group contract even after group has disbanded.
- Bring closure to the group through ritual(s) introduced by the facilitators, and/or determined by the group itself.

Some useful questions (suggested by Corey, 1990) to pose to the group at this time are listed below. They provide an effective means for considering the experience that is being completed now as well as the experiences that lie ahead.

- How have you perceived yourself and your role/behaviour in the group?
- What conflicts in your life/world have become clearer during our time together?
- What turning points has this experience presented to you?
- What has this group meant to you?
- What do you expect to do with what you have learned?
- How do you plan to continue your journey of personal growth?
- With every ending comes a new beginning. What new beginning lies ahead for you?

Note that the termination phase is not limited to the final session. Termination begins at the time of contracting, when members acknowledge that their time together is limited to a certain timeframe. It is essential that you set aside time for discussing the group's impending closure in the final three or four sessions. Allow members to express their thoughts and feelings about the ending of the group. The final session is then concerned with bringing about the closure that has been anticipated in the preceding weeks.

When groups disband from a positive growth experience, they tend to leave feeling highly motivated to change other people! Of course, they would be better off focussing on maintaining or deepening their own change or growth. If they have benefited from the Personal Growth or Basic Counselling modules, their greatest gift to another person would be simply a word-of-mouth recommendation for the course(s).



COMMON CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED IN GROUPS

The skilled facilitator will be attuned to recognising problematic dynamics and behaviours within the group and have some awareness of how to turn difficult moments into beneficial ones. The following challenges are most common:

- **Problematic roles/behaviour** such as the chronic talker, rescuer, dominator, distracter, clown, negative/resistant member, saboteur, etc. can hinder the group's purpose and outcome.
- **Intense feelings** can pose difficulties when members fear losing control, alienating others, being rejected, are afraid of conflict, etc.
- **Sub-groups** pose problems when members see greater benefit from pair or small group alliances than the whole group interaction. Sub-groups can engage in problematic behaviours like scapegoating, when certain members are targeted for negative attention. Even the mere presence of a sub-group can generate feelings of isolation and marginalisation among the remaining group members.
- **Conflict** is normal and natural in any group, although the potential for conflict can be rather daunting to new facilitators. Conflict is destructive only when it is avoided or denied. Conflict is constructive when it is acknowledged and worked through openly, honestly and collaboratively.
- **Silence** is problematic when it reflects the groups' passive dependence on the facilitator. It can also signal the group's reaction to poor interaction or their passive aggression. Note: positive silences are those that reflect a transition in content, mood, theme, or task, indicate a reaction to new understanding, or provide a time for reflection before or after disclosure or discussion, all of which are therapeutic devices.
- **Problematic attitudes** such as prejudice, insensitivity, or moralising can generate hostility and block group progress.
- **Testing-out behaviours** are evident in direct and indirect hostility intended to challenge the group's boundaries, members' status in the group, the facilitator's authority, or members' own rights to self-determination. These behaviours often reflect members' internal struggles with dependence/independence, leading/following, holding/releasing control, and/or being "in" or "out" of the group. This struggle is normal, especially during the "storming" phase of the group's development, when members are deciding whether to commit themselves fully to the group experience, sit on the sidelines, or withdraw.

Responding to these challenges

How does a facilitator handle these challenges? There are several effective responses.

Normalising feelings

Most often the facilitator will need to **normalise the feelings** (both the overt and covert emotions present). This is done by naming the feeling(s) present in the group, validating them and giving those feelings permission to be present whilst the group attends to its tasks. It is by naming the feelings, especially feelings that are shared amongst group members, that emotions are also **universalised**; that is, members realise that others are also experiencing similar reactions to their own. This helps to reduce feelings of isolation or marginalisation and promotes recognition of our shared humanity.

For example, when group members hesitate to engage the topic put forward by the facilitators, i.e. the subject of human sexuality, the facilitator could say something such as: “I am sensing some nervousness about beginning this topic. I wonder if this is because we are rarely given the opportunity or permission to talk about our sexuality, as it is often a “taboo” topic. It may have raised our levels of anxiety. Could it be that everyone is hoping someone else will be the first to speak?” Look for the nods or other body language that confirms or denies your perceptions. You could also invite the group to choose how it might respond to the anxiety present: “How might we let ourselves both feel the intensity of our immediate emotions AND cross over our own personal edges as this topic invites us to do?”

Identifying and articulating underlying themes

Another technique is to **voice any underlying themes or patterns**. For example, I have facilitated groups where the issue of “difficult relationships” was not only the driving force for members’ enrolment in the Personal Growth module, but this topic also regularly surfaced during “group time,” was a common theme in our group discussions irrespective of the session’s topic, become a unifying interest in the group, and most importantly, served as a motivating force for individual and collective growth and change. Together, we made a point of following and supporting each other’s relationship setbacks and progress over the time we were together.

By identifying such themes or patterns of behaviour within the group such as those identified in this section, the group is invited to recognise, acknowledge and then choose whether to deliberately work together on its prime “issues.” The benefit to this is that the group can openly and honestly confront what has naturally and unconsciously emerged as a common concern. Not only will the group attend to the tasks set by the presenters,

but it will also respond to the dynamics, themes and patterns unique to the group as a whole, even as members simultaneously strive to fulfil their individual and collective goals. This offers the potential for even greater learning and insight on multiple levels.

Initiating group discussion

A third technique is that of encouraging **group discussion**, collaboration and feedback on the difficulties the group is experiencing. This invites members to learn and grow from the group's dynamics. Obviously, your challenge as a facilitator is not only knowing when and how to intervene when difficulties arise, but also making time and space for the intervention within a very controlled session design. You will also want to identify how urgently the intervention is needed and how much time should be given to it. This is where you can seek group members' agreement to process their challenges. Explain why you would like to use "group time" to address a particular issue, i.e. your observations about emerging themes, roles or behaviours, etc. Outline the purpose and benefits of raising the issue and collaborating together to address the concern, and invite the group's engagement on it. This approach has the goal of facilitating new learning and not imposing it.

Naturally, your fellow facilitators are also sources for guidance and support when dealing with problematic situations in the group. Do not hesitate to ask for help if and when you need it. The Facilitator debriefing at the closure of each session is ideally suited to this purpose. Do remember to honour the confidentiality/anonymity clause of your group's contract when discussing group members or their issues outside of the group.

TRUST: THE FOUNDATION OF ANY RELATIONSHIP AND GROUP

Trust is a critical element for all relationships. As has been repeatedly mentioned, the facilitator for this material should model the characteristics and process of counselling. Just as in a counselling relationship, the facilitator is building relationships with members of the group. At the same time, relationships are being developed between group members. In building any relationship, trust is foundational. This training curriculum is designed with trust building in mind. This begins in Personal Growth, as trust is essential for self-disclosure, group development, giving and receiving feedback, members' interactions, participation in activities and discussion of topics that can be very risky for people who are just becoming aware of who/how/what they are. In Basic Counselling, trust is crucial for the small group work, the many role plays, and when providing feedback about each others' developing skills.

As a facilitator, you should never assume that trust will automatically emerge when your group forms. Trust is built, and the facilitator plays a key role in making the group a safe and supportive place. Corey (1990) notes that the development of trust in the group can be encouraged in several ways:

- **The way in which the facilitator introduces him/herself** to the group has a deep impact on the group's atmosphere. Seek to be enthusiastic, fully present, open, trustworthy and trusting. Be genuinely interested in the welfare of individual members and the group as a whole.
- **Encourage members to identify and discuss any attitudes, feelings or behaviours that would promote, inhibit or reverse their trust.** This step reinforces the containing, supportive, and therapeutic environment that is essential for openness, vulnerability, risk-taking and meaningful interaction.
- **Allow plenty of time and thought for the group contract.** Take the group contract seriously. Bring members' attention back to the contract in later sessions if need be.
- **Encourage disclosure of fears,** as this helps members identify with those who share similar concerns. Bonds are formed in this way. Know that in the early stages of the group's development, members will likely want to talk about **safe issues**, their there-and-then experiences. This is one way in which they test out the group's responses. If the response is positive, they will be more likely decide to trust the group with who they currently are, i.e. their here-and-now material.
- **Listen to all negative feelings non-defensively.** Members must know and feel that all feelings are OK, both the positive and negative.

- **Do not encourage or allow patterns of problem-solving interventions** to emerge. Some members will be quick to give helpful advice or solutions to others' difficulties. The Personal Growth Module is intended to promote acceptance and respect, while the Basic Counselling and the subsequent counselling modules teach that advice-giving is disempowering. Group members must be allowed to choose their own time, pace and nature of change without coercion from the group.
- **Be human.** Acknowledge when you make mistakes and apologise to the group. Admit when you do not know the answer to a question.

HANDLING GROUP CONFLICT

Conflict is normal, natural and inevitable in a group environment! It arises because people have diverse views, values, standards, beliefs, and needs. We all have differing experiences of the same situation, filtered by the lenses of our past experiences, beliefs, needs, and expectations. Working within a diverse group means recognising and appreciating people's differences, including differences in language, non-verbal communication, values, solutions, customs, gender, age, abilities, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, race, creed, etc.

Conflict can also arise from behaviours that are intended to diminish others in some way, through domination, defeat, competition, neutrality, injury, violence, suppression, coercion, subjugation, withdrawal, flight, etc. Conflict can emerge at an inter-personal or group level.

Reasons conflict emerges in groups:

Most often, conflict in groups occurs over issues of:

- **Authority:** who holds it, how it is being used, and issues of accepting or rebelling against the authority present.
- **(In)dependence:** the continuing struggle between autonomy on the one hand, dependence on the other, and a healthy interdependence as the goal. Also be alert for members who want to be depended on by others in the group. Actions to promote their empowerment will generate conflict for them.
- **Conformity:** the struggle for individuality despite the pressure to conform to the group's expectations, needs, norms, and goals.
- **Change:** confronting and handling unexpected, unplanned, and/or unwanted change. There is comfort in the familiar; the unfamiliar can provoke anxiety.
- **Unhelpful roles:** when members assume dysfunctional patterns of behaviour, such as the distracter, the clown, the dominator, or the prejudiced/racist member, which hinders the group from working on its tasks or achieving its goals.
- **Non-acceptance, power, personality clashes:** members' reluctance and/or inability to like or accept one another's differences.
- **Ineffective decision-making:** the group has failed to clarify its decision-making structures, or decisions are being made without consensus.
- **Poor communication:** communication that is distorted, indirect, unclear, dishonest, etc.

- **Differing goals, needs, objectives, values, motives, actions, and/or expectations:** dissonance between members' personal versus the group goals, needs, objectives, etc.
- **Unwillingness to collaborate:** Resistance to working through issues, compromising, or attending to conflict.
- **Incomplete norming stage:** the group's norms remain uncertain or are not proving effective.

The benefits of confronting conflict

There are many **benefits** to confronting conflict and inter-personal differences:

- Disagreement stimulates creative interaction within the group;
- Offers new or alternative perspectives;
- Challenges us to reconsider our own positions;
- Invites change/growth;
- Promotes tolerance and acceptance;
- Deepens members' understanding of one another;
- Validates diversity as a cohesive rather than a divisive force;
- Confirms the richness of the human experience and the vast range of meanings that can be ascribed to it.

The end result of disagreement in the group depends on how it is handled by the facilitator and group members. When mismanaged, conflict can destroy trust, cohesion and cooperation. When managed well, conflict can enhance the quality of the group's interaction, tasks and outcome.

Responding to conflict

As the facilitator, you will need to dispel the negative associations surrounding conflict and diversity and replace them with more realistic and positive conceptions. The facilitator is ideally positioned to demonstrate constructive conflict resolution skills. Members can learn how their own behaviour contributes both constructively and destructively to the climate of the group. Once again, you are modelling good counselling skills in effective conflict resolution.

Preventing conflict

Incidents of conflict can be minimised by:

- Avoiding competitive, win-lose situations and discussions
- Emphasising a group orientation and "we" feeling rather than the individual or "me versus you" stance
- Encouraging maximum interaction and communication between members
- Reinforcing a caring, supportive, accepting group environment
- Sharing tasks and roles

Managing conflict

Here are 5 approaches to handling conflict:

<p style="text-align: center;">DENIAL OR WITHDRAWAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling helpless and/or hopeless in a conflict situation. • Believing it is easier to withdraw than face the differences. • This is an attempt to eliminate the conflict by denying it exists. • Here people give up their own personal goals as well as their relationships with others. • Adopting a “you win/I lose” stance. • The main <u>disadvantage</u> of this approach is that it prevents meaningful communication. • The conflict does not go away. • <u>Useful</u> only when the issue of difference is not important or timing is not critical. 	<p style="text-align: center;">SUPPRESSION OR SMOOTHING OVER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimises differences. • Reflects one’s need to be accepted and liked by others and fear of being hurt. • Willing to give up own goals in order to maintain the relationship and be liked. • Harmony is more important; a belief that conflict causes disharmony. • Adopts a “you win/I lose” stance. • <u>Useful</u> when it is more important to preserve the relationship than to deal with an insignificant issue, i.e. dealing with dissatisfied customers whose goodwill you require.
<p style="text-align: center;">POWER OR DOMINANCE, FORCING OR COMPETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intended to overpower others. • Forcing others to accept your solutions/ opinions/ goals, etc. • Goals are more important than the relationship. • Adopts an “I win/you lose” stance. • Will use unfair tactics to achieve goals, i.e. forcing compliance, blaming, using silence as a weapon, manipulating, punishing, rejecting others, refusing to cooperate. • Does not care if others like them or not; relationships are unimportant. • Must win, as losing amounts to failure, weakness or inadequacy. • The <u>disadvantage</u> of this approach is that relationships are destroyed and negative feelings towards you are increased. • <u>Useful</u> only when other forms of handling conflict are clearly inappropriate and the power vested in one’s authority or position (e.g. as facilitator) can be called on effectively. 	<p style="text-align: center;">COMPROMISE OR NEGOTIATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopts a “you win/I win” stance. • Looks for a middle ground that is for the common good. • Concerned with goals and relationships. • Willingness to give up some of personal goals if the other person(s) also will do so. • <u>Disadvantages</u> are that although the relationship is maintained, the compromise solution may be watered down or weakened to the point of ineffectiveness. Parties may feel little commitment to the outcome, or parties may not have learned to compromise so that each gets what s/he wants. Although they may win in terms of the relationship, they may lose in terms of their own goals. • <u>Useful</u> when temporary solutions are needed due to time/resource constraints, when goals/needs are not worth upholding, or when it is necessary to forestall a win/lose situation.

INTEGRATION, COOPERATION OR COLLABORATION

- All parties value both the relationship and their goals very highly.
- Have a positive attitude to conflict: see it as a means of improving a relationship, reducing tension, finding new outcomes, and learning/benefiting from diversity.
- Sees the conflict rather than the other person(s) as the problem.
- Looks for solutions that please all parties: seeks achievement of own goals and the other's goals, and maintains the relationship by resolving negative feelings and tensions between the parties.
- Emphasis is on solving the problem or integrating their diversity rather than defending individual positions or factions.
- Advantage: relationship emerges stronger, healthier and more satisfying, and goals are honoured.
- Requirements for success: Needs energy and time to find best solution, the commitment of participants to be both assertive and cooperative, and creativity and innovation to find workable solutions acceptable to all parties.

Facilitators can reduce group tensions by commenting generally on the feelings the group could be having. Those who are experiencing the feelings (i.e. anger, frustration, suspicion, etc.) will then have their emotions made a part of the experience. If you are uncertain of the feelings, or cannot name the “climate” that has developed, pose it as a question to the group. The first objective in any attempt at conflict resolution is to agree on the problem, concern or difference that has emerged. This is an important first step, as inadequate attention to problem definition can lead to backtracking later or result in conclusions based on an incorrect assessment of the problem, difference or concern that needs the group's attention. When group members recognise that conflict can be a positive force in their group interaction, they become better equipped to adopt effective personal attitudes and behaviours in conflict resolution situations.

It is also important to be aware of and respond to the following four different dimensions of conflict when addressing conflict or differences in the group:

- The **emotional** dimension: allow members to acknowledge and express their feelings.
- The **intra-psychic** dimension: members will tend to attribute their unwanted issues to others (projection). Also encourage group members to look internally for the source of the conflict. Foster self-awareness and empower members to connect with their emotional and rational dimensions.

- The **inter-personal** dimension: attend to the relationships and social context affected by the conflict. Encourage feedback. Strive to understand others' feelings, thoughts and actions.
- The **group as a whole**: recognise that the group as a whole will have a reaction to the conflict or issue, and bring this into the open.

Due to the time constraints of an exercise or session, it may not be possible to find a true and lasting resolution to a conflict. In these situations, seeking temporary solutions is the next best option; at the very least, it is important to find some closure to the conflict that allows the group to move beyond the issue. You can always invite the group members to continue working with their own internal processes around the conflict outside of the group and report back on their process/progress at the next session. Do not believe that you will be able to resolve all conflicts, whether individual, group or global, once and for all. As a facilitator you are not responsible for resolving the group's conflicts. You are responsible, however, for facilitating the process of communication when there is conflict in the group.

FACILITATING ROLE PLAYS

Role plays are an essential part of developing counselling skills. When conducting role plays, focus on the quality of counselling skills and the interaction or relationship between the counsellor and the client. If you must, sacrifice checklists and counselling models for solid counselling skills. It does no good for the counsellor to be able to efficiently make his/her way through the model of pre-test counselling if he/she has not listened to what the client said or has not established a relationship of trust.

Facilitator Tips for Role Plays

- 1. Relay Role Play:** This is done as a large group and is a good way to introduce the idea of role plays to a group. The facilitator is the client and participants take turns being the counsellor. One counsellor will start the session and stop when he or she is stuck, and another volunteer counsellor continues from where he/she ended.
 - Allowing the counsellor to get stuck and then observe while someone else provides an example of how to proceed is an excellent way for participants to learn experientially.
 - This method of role playing can be useful for introducing a new skill so that you can make sure the participants have understand the concept and can apply it.
 - It is also helpful when you want to illustrate different stages of the counselling process, as each new counsellor can then begin at a different stage in the counselling session.
- 2. Small Group Relay Role Play:** This role play is similar to the relay role play described above, but is conducted in a small group. Since it is done in a small group, participants can begin counselling from their seats instead of sitting in the front of the room. During the small group relay role play, it is best to let counsellors rotate without stopping the counselling session. Only pause when you need to redirect the focus of the session or provide feedback.
- 3. Demonstration Role Play:** Sometimes when you are introducing new skills or a new way of conducting counselling, it is helpful to first provide a demonstration before asking participants to apply what they have learned. In a demonstration role play, two facilitators play the roles of the client and the counsellor. Demonstration role plays should be good examples of counselling skills but do not need to be perfect. If you as the facilitator make a mistake or could have done something differently, point this out after the role play is finished. You are then modelling for participants the ability to continually learn and improve your skills.

- 4. Freeze Frame:** This is useful when doing role plays in front of the large group. When the role play starts to deteriorate, stop the participants and facilitate a discussion about what happened and what else the counsellor could do in the situation. Then allow the same counsellor to try again, putting into practise the suggestions from the group or let another counsellor pick up where the previous counsellor left off.
- 5. Time Limited Role Plays:** Role plays should almost always be time limited in order to keep the role plays focussed. Tell the participants before the role play begins how much time they have, i.e. 15 minutes. Do not let them go on too long, as it then becomes counter-productive.
- 6. Trio Role Plays:** Make sure that you mingle among the groups when they are doing role plays in small groups. This is essential in order to assess the participants' understanding of the material. Ideally, there should be enough facilitators for one to observe each small group.
 - Going through the motions of a role play is not good enough; participants must be focussed on developing quality skills.
 - Carefully observed and monitored role plays are the beginning of developing skills. Participant observers are useful but limited, as they are also in the process of learning these skills.
- 7. Feedback:** Feedback is essential to role plays. Feedback provides the counsellor with valuable information to help him/her develop essential counselling skills. Feedback also serves another purpose: it helps counsellors learn how to reflect on their own skills and development. This is important because more often than not they will be in the counselling room by themselves and will need to evaluate their own performance in order to continually improve their counselling skills.
- 8. Processing Role Plays:** After a role play ends, always begin the processing by asking what the experience was like for the counsellor and the client. Then ask the counsellor to evaluate his/her own performance. This puts participants in the habit of evaluating themselves, which is an essential skill for all counsellors. Only after the counsellor has evaluated him/herself should the observer provide feedback.

Conduct role plays in the local language(s) if at all possible, especially if facilitators can speak the particular language. However, if facilitators cannot speak the local language(s), it is difficult to assess participants' skills and ensure the quality of these role plays. In this situation, the facilitators can fluctuate between conducting some of the role plays in English (or a common language) and others in local languages so that participants also have the opportunity to practise their counselling skills in the language in which they will be conducting future counselling sessions.

Another option when conducting relay role plays is divide the group into two, provided you have enough facilitators. This would allow you to conduct each of the relay role plays in a different language, i.e. one in Afrikaans and one in English.



TIPS FOR FACILITATORS USING THE COMMUNITY COUNSELLOR TOOLKIT

- Group rules exist to provide a safe group environment for sharing and learning. When facilitating the group rules session, the idea is not to come up with as many group rules as possible, as this can create a rigid environment that does not allow for participation and creativity. It is essential that all members take ownership of the group; one way to do this is through the process of identifying and agreeing on group rules.
- Time management is crucial in a training workshop. As a general rule when training counsellors, it is best to spend less time on information giving in order to focus on process and practise. Information can always be read in the manuals and then reinforced through practise. Extra reference information is provided in both the participant and facilitator manuals. Do not spend time during the workshop reviewing or reading these reference materials. Encourage participants to read the information in the evenings or during their weeks of practical counselling experience. Often practical experience is necessary in order for participants to grasp new information and understand its application.
- Workshop time is precious. Time should be used well. Only engage in activities that relate to the topics you are discussing and are relevant to the session material and to the development of the group or the counselling skills of the individual participants.
- There are a number of written activities in the curricula; it is often suggested to do these activities as homework. Once again, workshop time is precious and written activities take time. If these activities can be assigned as homework, more time can be spent discussing and practicing new skills during sessions. However, if homework is assigned, do not forget to review it the next day.
- In training counsellors, we are not only giving participants much new information, but more importantly, we are facilitating the development of skills, specifically counselling skills. Role plays are absolutely essential in order to learn counselling skills. However, role plays can easily be treated as “time off” for the facilitator or a chance to prepare for the next session. Instead, all facilitators should become actively involved in the role play process, moving around the room and observing all small groups during their role plays. Insist on good counselling skills. If participants do not start practising good counselling skills during training,