

Sample Life Skills Activity

Session 21



Communication: Negotiation

Purpose of activity: To identify negotiating skills and methods to bring about a change.

Life skills: Communication & interpersonal relationships, self-awareness, critical thinking.

Important points:

Negotiations are more difficult when you are talking with someone with more power. They can use that power to threaten or silence you or to ignore you. It can be useful to look for go-betweens (an uncle, an older friend etc) who have similar power.

Materials:

A chart showing symbols for the six steps in negotiation

Communication: Negotiation diagram



1.
Say what you feel using I statements.



4.
Together, think of as many ideas as possible that may bring a solution to the problem.



2.
Listen to what the other person has to say to find out what the other person needs or wants.



5.
Agree on a solution.



3.
Tell the person what you think the other person wants so you are sure you understand it.



6.
Try it. If it doesn't work, start again!

Steps

1. Explain that negotiation involves putting yourself in the place of the other person and understanding their point of view. This is good for several reasons:

- It means you appreciate and respect the other person's point of view. This reduces the risk that you will say something that causes conflict and hurt.
- If you recognise the other person's point of view, they will become more willing to recognise yours
- Good negotiation should result in both people gaining something.

2. Explain there are six steps in negotiation:

- Say what you feel using I statements
- Listen to what the other person has to say to find out what they need or want
- Tell the person what you understood, so you are sure you understood it.
- Together, think of as many ideas as possible that may bring a solution to the problem.
- Agree on a solution
- Try it. If it doesn't work, start again!

Remember that sometimes you have to compromise.

3. Divide children into pairs and ask them to practice negotiating using one of the following situations. (Adapt these ideas to suit the experiences of your group but try to include some more simple situations and one or two serious ones.)

- Your friend plays music loudly when you are trying to do your homework. He says it helps him concentrate.
- A group of children tease you for attending life skills sessions. They call you 'the AIDS guy' and pay no attention when you want to share your ideas with them.
- Your partner wants to have sex but you don't think you are ready yet.
- There is a new teacher who thinks that the only way to establish his authority is to shout at the students as much as possible.
- Your father is often drunk and then he shouts at your mother.

4. After the pairs have practised, they demonstrate their role-plays. Encourage the group to make recommendations and act out different options. Encourage children to be realistic: often the powerful person will not accept ideas even if the reasons are good.

Final discussion:

How easy was it to negotiate in these situations? How do the negotiations change when you are negotiating with someone in authority? Or with a group of people?

Do negotiations always work? If they don't, what else can you do?

If you enjoyed this exercise...



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For further details and to purchase, go to LifeSkillsHandbooks.com

