Interpersonal Communication

- What is it and why should we study it?
- Norms/Roles
- Self-disclosure
- Intimacy & Love
- Interpersonal Power

Some thoughts about interpersonal communication

- Most people spend between 80-90% of their waking hours engaging in some form of interpersonal communication
- Interpersonal communication differs from impersonal communication in terms of its quality, not the number of people involved or the setting in which they interact.

Interpersonal Communication (defined)

- Communication that occurs between two people who simultaneously attempt to mutually influence each other, usually for the purpose of managing relationships
- Questions:
  - Setting/channel?
  - Have to be 2 people?
Other thoughts about interpersonal communication

- Most often occurs in dyads
- Interactions face-to-face
- Occurs when people regard each other as unique persons ("I-Thou")
  - In *impersonal* communication, people treat each other more like objects ("I-It")

Characteristics of interpersonal communication

- Uniqueness
- Irreplacability
- Interdependence
- Disclosure
- Intrinsic rewards
- Scarcity

Extrinsic Rewards
Why should we study interpersonal communication?

- Can improve our relationships with:
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Colleagues
- Can improve our physical and emotional health

Norms and Roles

- Norms – rules about behavior
  - Explicit
  - Implicit
- Roles – a set of norms that apply to a specific subclass of society
  - Interrole conflict
  - Intrarole conflict

Self-Disclosure (defined)

- The process of deliberately revealing significant information about oneself that would not normally be known by others.
Types of Information Typically Shared

- Clichés
- Facts (intentional, significant, not otherwise known)
- Opinions
- Feelings

Johari Window

Known to Others
- open
- blind

Known to Self
- hidden
- unknown

Not Known to Others
- hidden
- unknown

Increased Self-Disclosure

Different Johari Windows

Known to Self
- open
- blind

Known to Others
- hidden
- unknown

Not Known to Self
- hidden
- unknown

Someone you've just met

A good friend
Some findings about Self-disclosure

- People differ widely in their willingness to self-disclose
- There is a dyadic effect
- There is little relationship between self-disclosure and touching
- Self-disclosure is related to interpersonal attraction
- Data about oneself varies in accessibility
- There are numerous interaction effects among situations, subject matter, personalities, etc.

Guidelines for Self-Disclosing

- Self-disclose when you believe the disclosure represents an acceptable risk
- Self-disclosure should move gradually to deeper levels
- Intimate self-disclosure should continue only if it's reciprocated
- Understand that people’s attitudes about self-disclosure vary considerably

What is Intimacy?

The dictionary defines “intimacy” as arising from:
- Close union
- Close contact
- Close association, or
- Close acquaintance

How does this differ from
Dimensions of Intimacy

- Physical
- Emotional
- Intellectual sharing

Triangular Theory of Love

All loving relationships can be described according to three dimensions:

- **Passion**
- **Commitment**
- **Intimacy**

Dimensions of Loving Relationships

- **Intimacy** - trust, caring, honesty, supportiveness, understanding, and openness (think SELF DISCLOSURE).
- **Commitment** - loyalty, devotion, putting the other first, needing each other.
- **Passion** - excitement, sexual interest and activity, extreme longing (think ROMANCE).
### Triangular Theory of Love

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### Triangular Theory of Love

- Liking
- Passion
- Intimacy
- Commitment
- Fatuous Love
- Romantic Love
- Consummate Love
- Empty Love
- Infatuation

### Love is...

- Eros (sexual)
- Ludis (game)
- Storge (friends/family)
- Mania (obsessive)
-Pragma (practical)
- Agape (selfless)

John Alan Lee (sociologist)
Interpersonal Power

- The ability to influence another person in the direction we desire
  - It exists in all interactions and all relationships
  - It is derived from an individual’s ability to meet another person’s needs
- Everyone has power
- It is circumstantial
- It is negotiated within relationships

Types of Power Relationships

- Complementary relationships
- Symmetrical relationships
  - Competitive symmetric
  - Submissive symmetric
- Parallel relationships