

Module Two

Introduction: Who am I? Who are we?



Handout

Activity 1: Presentation and communication

(30 minutes)

1. Choose an object from the tray that you think represents you.
2. Take a moment to decide which one and why.
3. Prepare to present yourself through the object you have chosen.
4. Introduce your object and yourself.
5. Discuss the activity with the group.

You are part of the group, a community, a society

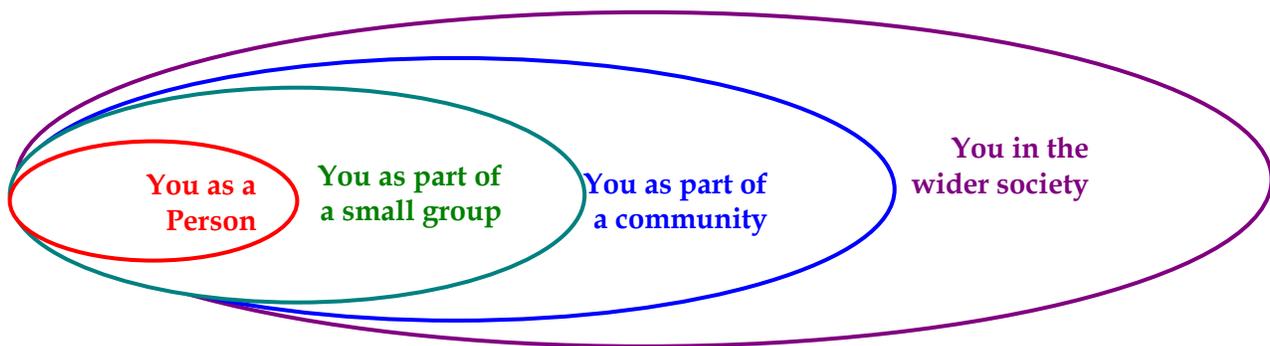
When building a society where people matter, each individual is important

Do you agree with this statement?

Only when you begin to recognize that you, as an individual, are an important part of society will you start to think about how to contribute to society in a positive way.

With self-knowledge, meaning a personal understanding of your own needs, possibilities, strengths, and weaknesses, you are able to become stronger, and make the right decisions for your life, and the lives of those around you.

There are four levels of understanding that you will need to work on:



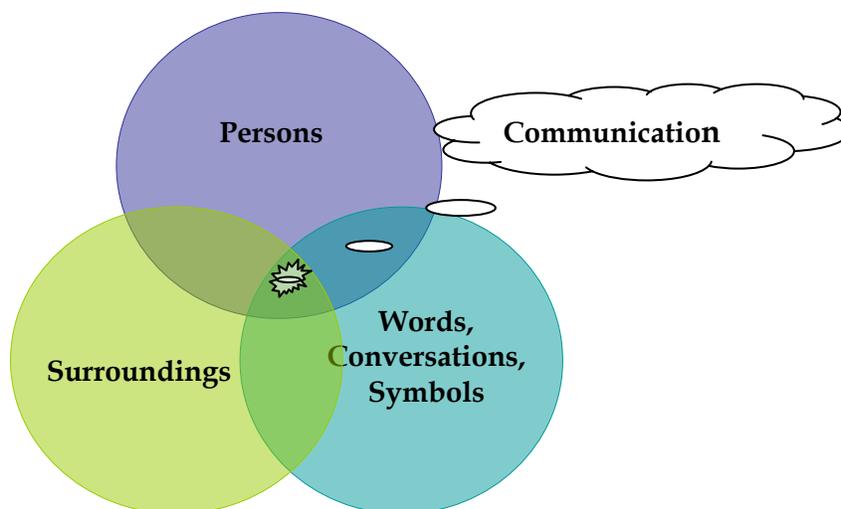
Self-esteem conveys the belief that we are acceptable, respected, and loved as we are, even with our imperfections.

Self-esteem is not an air of superiority. It is being at ease and at peace with yourself. It is the knowledge deep within you that you matter and you are acceptable just as you are. Only you can build your self-esteem.

Doing good things builds self-esteem, as does *doing things well*. Recognize what you are good at and what your strengths are, and then share those strengths with others to reinforce the group situation.

Keep challenging yourself to grow and take on new challenges, even when that means you could fail. View your mistakes as opportunities for learning.

COMMUNICATION



Communication it is made up of overlapping circles of persons, words, conversations, and surroundings. It makes a person understand and share meanings with others. Understanding and sharing meanings become possible only through deep, respectful listening to what another person has to say and how they say it. Conversation in an art that everybody can become good at!

WORDS HAVE A WAY OF TAKING ON NEW MEANINGS

The basic definition of a word is not its whole meaning. Rather, a word can carry various additional meanings called *connotations*. Connotations are made up of different components: those that express one's attitude to the things spoken about (the “emotive” component); and those that indicate the context in which the conversation takes place.

The Indonesian language is a good example of that because it contains very few words. The context in which the words are spoken, therefore, becomes very important. For effective communication to happen, this context needs to be understood. This is one of the reasons why a non-native speaker of Bahasa Indonesian – a foreigner – sometimes gets things wrong, although they might speak the language quite fluently. Because he or she is not familiar with the cultural context, the actual meaning of the foreigner’s words is misinterpreted or misunderstood.

Discussion point: *How many meanings of the Indonesian word for “yes” (“Ya”) can you think of?*

Another example: Father, dad, daddy, pop, old man - are all synonyms, but they have different emotive and contextual meanings. (*Can you think of other examples? Specific to Bahasa Indonesia?*)

A contextual meaning may also appear as a result of the word's relationship with other words. The content of the emotional component of meaning varies considerably. The range of emotions stretches from positive to negative: admiration; tenderness; respect; scorn; irony; and loathing.

A few hints that can help you in conversation

Be careful with your words.

Speak with integrity.

Say only what you mean.

Avoid using words to speak against yourself or to gossip about others.

Use the power of your words in the direction of truth and love.

Be clear and concise.

Use simple, direct language, especially when talking to people who come from different countries or cultures and who do not share your language as their native language.

Remember that real or perceived status between two speakers is a very important factor that can determine the tone and outcome of a conversation (e.g. “Asal Bapak senang”). Think of reasons why you might say you agree with what someone says, even when you actually do not!

Do not take anything personally. Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you will not be the victim of needless suffering.

Especially in a training context, there should be no penalties for “wrong” answers. When “brainstorming”, or discussing initial ideas and concepts, participants should agree that there are no “wrong” answers, only different opinions. During the brainstorming phase, all ideas should initially be accepted as valid and then written down. Do not dismiss or reject ideas or opinions prematurely.

Be proud of learning new things. In many cultures, we are taught to be proud of what we know, and ashamed of what we do not know. We have to overcome this feeling of shame if we want to continue learning throughout life!

Do not make assumptions. Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness, and drama. With just this one agreement, you can transform your life completely.

Always do your best. Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to when you are sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse, and regret.

Be assured...

Most people judge themselves against entirely artificial criteria. Material success is not the only thing life is about. You do not have to accept criteria for success that others have given you. Many of the most materially “successful” people are deeply unhappy, yet they strive and search unsuccessfully for greater material wealth.

Most ordinary good, honest people are fooled into believing that what they have is not worth anything. Do not be fooled. The answer to happiness and fulfillment is usually

found in achieving a simple joy of living, a good life. *Isn't that why we all work to help people/community??*

You might like to think about and discuss this question!