

Antelope Springs
Advanced Parenting
Session 5

“The major barrier to mutual interpersonal communication is our very natural tendency to judge, evaluate, to approve or disapprove, the statements of the other person or group. . . . Although the tendency to make evaluations is common in almost all interchange of language, it is very much heightened in those situations where feelings and emotions are deeply involved.”

Carl Rogers

Agenda

1. Family Constellation Basics.
2. **Emotion Coaching (chapter 3 in Gottman)**
 - a) Being aware of the child’s emotions.

“Empathy is simply the ability to put yourself in your child’s shoes and respond accordingly. Just because empathy is a simple concept, doesn’t mean that is always easy to practice.”
 - b) Recognizing the emotion as an opportunity for intimacy and teaching
 - c) Listening empathetically and VALIDATING the child’s feelings
 - d) Helping the child verbally label emotions
 - e) Setting limits while helping the child problem-solve
3. Review Glenn/Nelson Basics of Working with Perception
 - a. Perceptions are keys to attitudes, motivation and behavior.
 - b. Perceptions are products of four elements: experience, identification, analysis and generalization.
 - c. Perceptions are cumulative.
 - d. Perceptions are unique.
 - e. Perceptions need to be supported and challenged to change
4. Review Sources of Discouragement in Children/youth
 - a. Unrealistic, too high standards
 - b. Competition
 - c. Over-ambition
5. **Methods of encouragement (chapter 3 Dinkmeyer):**
 - a. Valuing and accepting the child as he/she is
 - b. Using words that build the child’s self-esteem and feelings of adequacy
 - c. Showing faith in the child
 - d. Planning for experiences that are guaranteed to produce success
6. Skills of encouragement:

- a. Focusing on assets, strengths and resources
 - b. Perceptual alternative skills
 - c. Humor skills
 - d. Focus on efforts not completion/standards.
7. Praise vs. encouragement
- a. Contrast
 - b. Price-tags/benefit
8. Chapters 4 in Gottman and Glenn/Nelson
- a. Emotion Coaching Strategies
 - b. Developing Strong Perceptions of Personal Capabilities

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“Encouragers and Discouragers”

Take a few moments to contemplate your life before the age of 18 . . . remember some of the people that had a lot of impact (both positive and negative) on your life. Take some time to list at least 5 of them below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Now think about how those people either discouraged or encouraged you. Put a check next to the encouragers and an “x” next to the discouragers. Think about HOW they did what they did with you, what specific techniques did the encouragers use? How did the discouragers discourage you? What were your feelings? What thoughts did you end up with about yourself because of the influence of these people? List some of your ideas below. Did any of Dinkmeyer’s, Gottman’s or Glenn’s ideas about encouragement techniques, perceptions and emotion-coaching play out with those people that encouraged you? How?

Encouragement Concepts

Discouraging	Encouraging
Ineffective listening	Effective listening
Competing, comparing	Cooperative
Focus on negative	Focus on positive
Threatening	Accepting
Uses sarcasm, embarrassment	Uses humor and hope
Humiliates	Stimulates
Recognizes only well done tasks	recognizes effort & improvement
Disinterested in feelings	Interested in feelings
Bases worth on performance	Bases worth on just being

People who are unhappy, depressed, anxious, angry or even unproductive are not disturbed; rather they are discouraged. They lack courage in their ability to grow and take risks in more self-fulfilling directions. This immobilization, fear of failure, or negative goal seeking is reflected in a lifestyle overwhelmed

Losconcy, (coauthor of Skills of Encouragement) suggests that encouragement involves inviting people to correct two basic mistakes in the way they look at life. . . He wrote:

*“Much discouragement is the result of two basic mistaken beliefs about self, others and life. **The first error is the failure of people to face and accept reality as it is. The second major mistake is the failure of people to realize all of the possible alternatives still available to them once they face and accept that reality.***

Discouragement occurs when people fail to overcome one or both of these errors. The unwillingness of people to accept reality as it is results from a superiority complex. The second mistake that hinders human happiness is the unwillingness of people to realize all of the possible alternatives still available to them once they face and accept that reality. When people make that mistake they become overwhelmed by the universal reality, giving it too much credit and blame. These people are unaware of their life possibilities and feel hopeless and helpless. They are passive victims to what they see as the powerful forces of life and other people.

*Either mistake of underplaying or overplaying the importance of reality results in discouragement. **The process of overcoming both of these discouraging beliefs is perhaps the most important road to the courageous life.** Yet it is perhaps the most complicated task of life because many of us continue to go on making error #1, disrespecting reality, or error #2, disrespecting ourselves.”*

STEPS TO SELF ENCOURAGEMENT

Remember that **when we are discouraged, our objectivity goes down and we tend to "trip on our pain"**. Our perceptions of the world around us change dramatically as we become discouraged, and in the extreme we can feel hopeless and helpless because of the shift in our perceptions. The following techniques can help pull us out of discouragement and enhance well-being.

1. Establish a SAFETY MAP:

Take the time to construct, on poster board a strategy map that includes the following 4 items; 1) activities, 2) specific people, 3) certain places and, 4) times that are enhancing to you. (For example; you might have listed on your safety map, under "Places", a favorite place in Snow's Canyon that seems to invigorate and rejuvenate you.)

2. Construct a NEEDS MAP:

This can be an outgrowth of the Safety Map exercise. On a piece of poster board list, the basic needs that you feel are important to you. (examples might be; physical needs, intellectual, spiritual, friendship, recreational, etc...) Now under each one of the headings list the people, places, activities or times that help you FULFILL that need.

3. Make and Use a RED FLAG LIST:

This is technique that can be really powerful, and works well because it involves prevention at an early stage. The way it works is very simple. You take the time to decide how you start to feel and act when you FIRST start feeling discouraged. Some examples might be; skipping work, not returning phone calls, swearing, fighting with specific others, greater intake of food or alcohol, etc... After you have listed at least 10 of those "red flags" on paper you post that paper, either on the bathroom mirror or refrigerator door. A daily reading will result in some phenomenal changes in your life.

4. Set aside some TIME weekly to do NOTHING:

Our society values activity so much that we have lost perspective of the value of incubating, or emotionally resting. Even sleep times have been reduced to the bare minimum for most of us. The need for "down time" is just as great for mental wellness as the need for sleep is. Take a 3 hour period to do nothing. It will be much harder than you would guess. NO reading, sleeping, or other activities... this is time to do nothing. Good Luck!!

5. Oases of Pleasant Thoughts:

This technique involves positive visualization, or taking a few moments every hour or so to just think and image positive, pleasant thoughts. You might think of a particular person, hobby, experience, or place. Close your eyes and actually be there. Smell the smells, hear the sounds, and see the images. You will be amazed as you will then feel those positive feelings. It is like a little oasis of peace and okayness.

Chapter 4 - Gottman
Emotion – Coaching Strategies

1. Avoid excessive criticism, humiliating comments or mocking your child.
2. Use scaffolding and “praise” to coach your child.
3. Ignore your “parental agenda”.
4. Create a mental map of your child’s daily life.
5. Avoid siding with the enemy.
6. Think about your child’s experience in terms of similar adult experiences.
7. Don’t try to impose your solutions on your child’s problems.
8. Empower your child by giving choices, respecting wishes.
9. Share in your child’s dreams and fantasies.
10. Be honest with your child.
11. Read children’s literature together.
12. Be patient with the process.
13. Understand your base of power as a parent.

When Emotion-Coaching is NOT appropriate.

1. When you are pressed for time.
2. When you have an audience.
3. When you are too tired or upset for coaching to be productive.
4. When you need to address serious misbehavior.
5. When your child is “faking” an emotion to manipulate you.

Chapter 4 – Glenn/Nelson
Developing Strong Perceptions of Personal Capabilities

1. Barriers that undermine self-confidence and corresponding builder:
 - a. Assuming in Ways that Limit - Checking
 - b. Rescuing or Explaining - Exploring
 - c. Directing – Encouraging/Inviting
 - d. Expecting (Too much, too soon) - Celebrating
 - e. Using Adultisms – Respect
2. Perception as the product of 4 elements, EIAG (chapter 3)
 - a. **Experience**: Become aware of the experiences, both negative and positive in the young person’s life.
 - b. **Identification**: Help the child identify the significant elements of outcome of a particular event. “What happened? What did you see? What are you feeling? What was the most important thing?”
 - c. **Analysis**: Help the person analyze why aspects of the event were important. “Why was that significant to you? Why do you think it happened?” However since children and youth are used to having parents and teachers using the question “Why?” against them, in some cases it might be less threatening to say, “What made that important to you?” What were you trying to do? What caused you to feel that way?”
 - d. **Generalization**: Help the person discern from the experience a single principle that can be used in similar situations. “How can you use this information in the future? How can you do it differently next time for different results? What do you need to repeat if you want to achieve similar results again?”

By applying the four steps of the EIAG hierarchy in this way, we can affirm and validate the perceptions of the young person we are working with.